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Exploring the importance of critical thinking in creating capabilities
for self-reliance in international community development:
A Kenyan Context

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
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Abstract

Self-reliance as a component of development agendas is often relegated to the background if mentioned at all. This thesis explores the value of self-reliance in meaningful progress, as well as the conditions which enable self-reliance, paying particular attention to the role of critical thinking in that process. It investigates individual and collective use of local knowledge in formulating strategies for progressive community development in collaboration with international agencies. By drawing attention to the practical aspects of development interventions, the challenges can be observed from an equality, justice and inclusion perspective.

The thesis works with the frameworks of Amartya Sen's and Martha Nussbaum's human development and capabilities approach calling attention to the value of freedom in development and the capabilities to do and to be. It adopts a critical theoretical approach from an emancipatory perspective and argues that a useful way to consider self-reliance may be Immanuel Kant's perspective on Enlightenment as emergence from self-imposed inability to use one's own knowledge. This approach emphasises the value in acknowledging the views of those the process is meant to support. By approaching the issues through Freirean dialogue and participatory methods, that address concerns of power relationships, the thesis provides a 'space to speak' for the community groups. This is facilitated by the use of the creative engagement tool 'Ketso'. This thesis argues that meaningful progress is inclusive and that it should pay attention to mutual processes of knowledge production. The findings highlight the role of lifelong learning as a mediating process where knowledge is exchanged and where reciprocation takes place in a way that respects other people's values and interests.

The Two Cold Porcupines

One cold night two porcupines found themselves alone out on the plains. There was no shelter or place to keep warm. They only had their body heat. But they were scared that if they stood too close together during the night one could prick and even kill the other by mistake. After experimenting they found the right distance to stand next to each other. They were close enough together that their bodies gave heat to each other, but far enough apart that they would not prick each other during the night (Traditional African Folk Tales, 2014).

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Acknowledgement

'Ngaatho' (gratitude) to my supervisors Professor Alison Phipps and Dr Niamh Stack for your unwavering kind and encouraging words. Your faith in my capabilities held me up and kept me going when the journey was difficult. Thank you for your encouragement and support, I truly appreciate you and your contribution. For all the participants who took time to share their experiences, I appreciate what you gave and for allowing your experiences to be used to benefit others. Thanks to my family, friends and colleagues for giving everything that you could. This work would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the Adam Smith Research Foundation and the University Of Glasgow College Of Social Sciences Scholarship - thank you very much.

To my nearest and dearest, husband Njiraini and son Nganga, you have been part of this journey and have shared in the struggles and triumphs. For that I am truly grateful and I dedicate this work to you.

Author's Declaration

I, Nancy N K Njiraini, declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature _____

Printed name _____Nancy N K Njiraini_____

Abbreviations

AAA	ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION
AU	AFRICAN UNION
AusAID	AUSTRALIAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CBO	COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION
CDRF	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT RESULTS FRAMEWORK
CDSF	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK
CFK	CAROLINA FOR KIBERA
CGD	CENTRE FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT
CIDA	CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
CLLO	COMMUNITY LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
CLTS	COMMUNITY LED TOTAL SANITATION
DAC	DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE
DFID	DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
EAC	EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
ECOWAS	ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES
EFQM	EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT
GDP	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
HDI	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX
HDR	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT
HE	HIGHER EDUCATION
HIV	HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS
ILO	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

KAF	KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES
MDG	MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
MSC	MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE
NCVO	NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS
NEPAD	NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT
NGO	NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION
OECD	ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
PAR	PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH
PRA	PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL
SC	SIGNIFICANT CHANGE
SLA	SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH
SLF	SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK
ToC	THEORY OF CHANGE
UN	UNITED NATIONS
UNIDO	UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION
UNCTAD	UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT
UNDP	UNITED NATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
UNESCO	UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
USAID	UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
VSO	VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS
WSP	WATER AND SANITATION PROGRAM
WEDC	WATER ENGINEERING AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Chapter 1: Introduction and background

A few years ago, I registered to do a master's degree, which I felt was necessary to enhance my skills as a trainer and facilitator. I had been involved in training and facilitating various courses for adult learners in different settings and often wanted to know how the participants used what was learnt and what the impact of that process was. I had often reflected on my methods and wondered whether they made any difference to their lives or work. At one point, a team I had worked with conducted a small study to establish if, or how, work patterns had changed as a result of the training that we had carried out. The results revealed that a fair amount of what was discussed in a training session had been forgotten or not been found relevant, or there had not been opportunities to introduce new ideas or methods at work. This bothered me and I wondered if it had anything to do with my skills, the learner's ability or other circumstances. After some thought about these possibilities, I concluded that both the facilitator and the learner had a role in impacting the process. The learner may have some difficulties, because it was possible that the learning situation had been imposed on them, and the facilitator may be insensitive to the learner's needs and circumstances. Armed with that way of thinking, I felt the need to find a way to enhance my skills, and that is why I entered the master's degree course on teaching adults.

My expectation for the course was that we would learn about the methods of teaching adults and how to have more impact in that process. However, what I thought was to be a 'how to do' process turned out to be a 'what is'. My expectations for some courses were far from what I learnt; for example, in the 'international issues' course, I was prepared to learn about how adults from different international settings learn. Instead, the course was about movements, social changes and learning as a tool for social justice. In another course, 'curriculum development', my expectations were that we would learn to design different ways to work with adults and how to design effective curricula. The course instead discussed the stance we as educators have and how that influences the learners we encounter. In all these courses, I was

exposed to new ways of looking at adults as learners, different concepts of thinking and a very wide world of ideas. This pulled me right out of my cocoon of thinking about learning as a product to be acquired; I began to see it as a way of looking at life. I began to think about my own learning and education up to that point where I had depended on someone else to 'teach' me. This came from my learning and educational background where learning was didactic and knowledge was 'held' by the teacher. Encountering thinkers like Immanuel Kant, who asked why we have to depend on others for guidance, or Socrates, who believed in questioning, raised a consciousness in my thinking. Why do we, particularly in Africa, often depend on others to make decisions for us? Why do we copy ideas from elsewhere - for example, for education systems - without checking if they are suitable for our needs? Why are we not using the knowledge we have to build our own bridges, in a literal sense?

Answers to these questions were not easy to find, especially as an African woman who has grown up in an African country where there are limits to many things. I cannot pretend to speak for other African women, who will certainly have had different experiences and opportunities from mine, but there are many women like myself who have had limited opportunities. Our lives were, to some degree, planned out for us by virtue of the circumstances we found ourselves in. The plan usually was; you worked hard, you got a decent education, found gainful employment, had a family and you were 'home and dry'. Asking questions about how things work, or how you can influence change was not part of that equation, unless you were a politician. Therefore, when I was in a situation that required me to ask questions - to ask myself, to reflect on, for example, what my stance as an educator is, or ask questions such as; Why do we as a community depend on others for our own growth and development? I was completely stunned to think that my opinion and my stance would be of use to anyone.

This began a practice of reflection, and I wanted to explore thoughts and ideas further and look beyond what was on the surface, to dig deeper to explore what lies beneath. I reflected on the knowledge that we have acquired from experience and from learning encounters, and on how we use it to make our own decisions about the direction of progress. I reflected on how

we depend on others to make decisions for us and wondered why we are not using the knowledge that we have? I asked again, 'Why are we not building our own bridges with the knowledge we already have'? Bridges, in this case, represent different forms of development and progress. We have some knowledge acquired from life experiences, as well as formal learning, and we can use that to begin the process of building bridges (or other developments) in the literal sense. So why are we not reflecting on that knowledge in the first instance?

The question of building bridges can also be reflected upon metaphorically. Using Heidegger's example of the role of a bridge helps us to see metaphoric bridges as connectors. Heidegger (1976), writing about 'building dwelling thinking', used the example of a bridge to describe the way in which it connects the fourfold aspects of earth, sky, mortals and divinities. His aim was to discuss the way in which we dwell and exist on the face of the earth as an extension of our identity and of who we are, which is central to providing a sense of space in which dwelling occurs (Heidegger, 1971, 1976). In this example, a bridge connects two banks which already exist as land or space; they only emerge as banks when the bridge uses that part of the land as its bank. Each bank is connected further to the space of land that lays behind it, which may extend to include more land and others means of existence, such as homes. If we think of ourselves as bridges, connected to the worlds we live in, and the people we interact with as the bridge's banks, then we can use those connections to enable people to cross through us (the bridge) to the other side. The bridge represents what we have in terms of knowledge that we can share with others. That shared knowledge enables a person to cross over and see what the other side of the bridge has to offer in the expanse of land and space it may be connected to. Thus, metaphorically, why are we not building those bridges, or why are we not making those connections and allowing people to use the knowledge we share with them, to cross over to another side? What capabilities are we supporting that enable people to decide when and how to use those connections to support their goals and aim for growth in a self-reliant way, without us attempting to define that journey for them? This is the question I pursue in this thesis, through exploring the importance of critical thinking in supporting the process of creating self-reliance.

Introduction

This chapter introduces the issues explored in this research, beginning with the background, and briefly explains how I will explore those issues. This study explores the way in which adults use their knowledge to improve their circumstances, without depending on others. This requires a practice of reflection on what knowledge is held and thinking critically in order to evaluate that knowledge and establish what use it can be in supporting self-reliance. Using community development as an example to explore these aspects, I examine how development can be useful in supporting individuals and communities to become self-reliant. But first, the importance of self-reliance and the role it plays in social change is considered. The chapter then explains what the objectives, significance and contribution of the study is, and finishes with a summary of the layout of the thesis.

1.1 Overview

Why are we not building our own bridges?

Each one of us can give an account of having some knowledge about a particular issue: for example a mother will have some knowledge about raising her child with special needs, or a person suffering from some type of illness will have knowledge about how to manage and live with that type of illness. This knowledge is acquired from experience, study or interacting with others. It may not be expert knowledge, such as that which may be held by individuals, who have spent significant time studying a particular subject, but it is still knowledge that has value to the individual and that another person may not have. But we can be very quick to dismiss such knowledge, as we may often assume that only substantial knowledge such as that held by an expert matters. We disregard whatever knowledge we have which could have been useful as a starting point and solely depend on someone else to tell us what to do, even when we could have attempted to reflect first on what we know. This, I believe, is what Immanuel Kant was referring to when he wrote his

essay about Enlightenment. Kant (1784) suggested that depending on others for guidance is showing immaturity and is an act of cowardice. Kant gives examples of a physician who decides our diet or a pastor who has a conscience for us; we assume we do not need to think for ourselves, and, instead, we will seek their advice. Kant (1784) does not necessarily mean that we should not take their expert advice; after all, we know the important role played by experts such as medical professionals. It is about consideration of what advice one seeks, combining that with what one knows about the matter, reflecting on that and making your own decision. How often have people consulted an expert, such as a medical doctor or car mechanic, reflected on the advice given and what they know about the matter - but felt the need to seek another opinion? Is that not an act of 'using one's own knowledge' to assess the situation and to act on it and in the process enlightening ourselves?

The ideas of Enlightenment in Kant's time around the eighteenth century centred on promoting rational and logical thinking and using evidence to arrive at reasonable conclusions. Early thinkers such as David Hume, John Locke, Isaac Newton and Adam Smith were associated with this way of thinking. There were many arguments for and against its ideals as well as different use of the term 'Enlightenment'. Those who argued against Enlightenment, such as Edmund Burke, argued that reason alone is an unreliable basis for moral action and has a tendency to be easily perverted. This view of the perversion of reason came about because those arguing against reasoning preferred a restricted view of nature and a limit to human rationality. Those who argued for reason during that period of Enlightenment, also known as the 'Age of Reason', such as Immanuel Kant, questioned traditional authority and argued that humanity could change through rational thought. The contentious issue on rational thinking has not been whether it is desirable or not desirable - but has been the meaning and application of reason. The Enlightenment period was one of optimism, in thinking and believing that knowledge could solve the problems of society. These thinkers applied critical thinking to reason out their ideas; even when they arrived at differing conclusions, they applied the same process of questioning and evaluating issues. Enlightenment that encourages the understanding of our surroundings and builds our capacity to influence our part of the world is the focus of this thesis. In particular, the focus is on Kant's

perspective on Enlightenment, on his call for man [sic] to have courage to use his own understanding. I find his call to 'dare to know' (Kant, 1784) relevant to the issues of using our own capabilities and knowledge, which are explored in this study. In pursuing this interest, I sought to understand how some might depend on others rather than depend on their own knowledge to find their own solutions to improve their circumstances. When we depend on others we rely on their abilities and give ourselves over to them to become our guide, and we therefore go along with their ideas of how we should manage our situations (Kant, 1784).

The ability to use what one knows can be hindered by various factors, such as; the environment and culture in which the individual or group lives. For example, where learning and teaching takes place through a didactic approach, the rote learning does not engage learners to work and think in a way that enables them to evaluate information in order to participate in shaping their knowledge (Walkin, 2000). In that type of environment, learners learn to depend on the teacher who is considered the knowledge-holder and, in later life, this becomes a way of life, of depending on others to have the answers. Such situations can be limiting in the sense that one acquires only the information passed on to them during that encounter. When they are unable to complete a task and need further information, they need to return to the learning situation for more. This, Freire (1990) referred to as 'banking knowledge', where a learner goes to refill or top-up their knowledge from a central place when they run out of it. This creates a power base controlled by those presumed to have knowledge (Freire, 1990). Those who hold that kind of power can dictate to others how they should manage their affairs.

It can be assumed that individuals and communities should be left to manage their own affairs in the way that best suits them, but such issues become more complex when an intervention to support development is needed. Humanitarian, financial or other forms of interventions are needed in different situations for different reasons. A common intervention, particularly for Africa, is one that aims to support development and progress. Communities differ in their understanding of development and progress and it is important for a community to make their own decisions about how that process should be

carried out. This study explored the impact of intervening in a way that imposes ideas about progress that may not be meaningful to a community. By engaging with actors in development, the study explored what would be the practical ways to support communities to use the knowledge they have to make decisions about what works and what is suitable for their community. This would be by supporting the community to rely on their own capabilities and to develop those capabilities in order to 'build their own bridges'. The question of 'why are we not building our own bridges' is a self-reflective one and calls for individuals and communities to be reflective and to begin to look for answers within themselves. This addresses the concern that, even when the aim is to develop capacity, there is still a dependence on another person to deliver that capacity. Therefore the focus on capacity development may not adequately address the self-reliance issue, particularly because it depends on how the other person understands the concept of capacity development. So how would a community achieve self-reliance that enables them to build their own bridges? What is likely to have caused the lack of self-reliance will be explored in chapter two, but first, I review what self-reliance is in the context of this study.

Self-reliance

It takes courage to act on one's own knowledge and to recognise that people have a responsibility for their own lives and the direction they should take. Depending on other people's expertise from time to time may be necessary, but it is the extended use of or the dependence on guidance that might become a problem. In everyday use of the word self-reliance, it is described as having confidence in one's own powers and resources rather than those of others (Simpson, Weiner and Oxford University Press, 1989). Those who provide guidance to others do so from their understanding of their perceived world and may influence those they guide towards seeing and doing things in their way. Being able to reflect on what one is able to do and one's ability to deal with issues without having to turn to others for guidance in the first instance is fostering self-reliance, and a strong belief in what one is able to do. In Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1841 essay on self-reliance, he observed how society can be

influenced to compromise its values, become timid and apologetic and not dare to say 'I think', 'I am', but instead prefer to follow another's opinion (Emerson, as cited in Atkinson, 1940).

This dependence on others can be problematic, because when the help is withdrawn, it leaves the person unable to solve their own problems. A truly self-reliant person should be able to evaluate the advice they are given and reflect on what they know to arrive at a decision that best suits them. They have the freedom to choose what they prefer to do, which gives them control to shape the direction of their development. Community development interventions that ensure people and their needs are central to the process are gaining popularity in the academic literature as well as in practitioner communities. Those promoting this way of thinking about progress, such as Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, suggest the expansion of physical, human and social capital, through the development of the overall human being rather than the physical environment (Sen, 1985, 1999, 2009; Nussbaum, 2000, 2011). This way of supporting community development, it is claimed, encourages self-reliance. There are situations that require interventions for relief from disasters and unexpected events, which need to be addressed in a different way than those which are of a longer-term nature. The lines distinguishing the difference between disaster relief and long term development can become blurred. The relief situation can give rise to the need to support a community to think of ways to become better prepared for such situations, thus turning a relief intervention into a development initiative. The process of supporting those initiatives, depending on the approach, can determine the long-term effects and has the potential to impact issues of social justice (Sen, 1999).

Issues of social justice are concerned with the ability of communities and general society to fulfil their potential and justly receive their share of society's services such as education, healthcare and a clean environment, in an equitable manner. The ideas of social justice are traceable back to thinkers such as Socrates and Spinoza, but the term became popular in the late 1800s with Luigi Taparelli D'Azeglio and Antonio Rosmini-Serbati, and made its way through to the twentieth century through contributions from individuals such as Rawls (1971). Rawls argued for a balance between social equality and

individual freedom, balancing the tension perceived to exist between those two, which is a challenging task. Rawls (1971) presented arguments on social justice in his theory of justice and fairness, with principles of justice that are able to govern some form of social order. He believed in a society that consists of free and equal people, liberties and equality of opportunities, where those less advantaged are offered fairer opportunities. In society, chances and opportunities are not always distributed equally, and the way in which they can be re-distributed is heavily contested. Amartya Sen (1990) and Martha Nussbaum (2011) have taken the ideas further to include capabilities and substantial freedoms, where real opportunity based on the potential and engagement of everyone is necessary in the planning of one's life.

These elements of equal life chances, substantial freedom and capabilities 'to do' and 'to be' are the focus of this research. By looking at the way in which human development deals with expanding choices, this study explored how a process that aims to support capacity development can enable individuals and communities to lead their lives in a way they value, to improve their lives in a way that suits them and to be self-reliant. The human development approach goes beyond economic perspectives and seeks to build human capabilities that enable 'freedom' to lead the kind of life one chooses or values (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011). Human development therefore is an investment in people and not products or services. Investing in people enables them to pursue paths to growth and development in ways they have chosen for themselves and in a sense to 'build their own bridges'. The backgrounds of individuals and communities determine their unique views of the world and how it needs to develop. Supporting them to achieve this would be a more practical way to intervene and to support meaningful progress, rather than imposing ideas and processes that are not useful to their circumstances, particularly those aimed at ending poverty. The interventions that focus on increasing material possessions and wealth rather than those that focus on meaningful and sustainable progress such as developing of capabilities can be limiting. This study explored the process of supporting meaningful progress, using international community development as an example, to examine the importance of critical thinking in creating capabilities for self-reliance. The next section looks at what development means in the context of this study.

Development process

The term 'development' is used in many senses; for example, it is considered as a vision of a desirable state of being for society, a process of social change in which society is transformed over time, as well as deliberate efforts aimed at improvement on the part of agencies. In the context of this study, the term is used to mean the deliberate efforts on the part of international development agencies. International development is about the provision of aid and assistance to regions with less 'development', and it is divided further into categories such as economic, social or human development. International development deals with strategies and policies that aim to alleviate poverty and improve living conditions. The agencies carry this out through international aid, directly to areas where it is needed or working with intermediaries such as governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to support initiatives in community development (Allen and Thomas, 2000). This research confines itself to that part of development where international development organisations intervene to support community development either directly or through intermediaries.

Development intervention decisions are made based on criteria that measure levels of development using assessment of wealth indicators. These measures, although commonly used, do not provide clarity on how wealth is distributed. This lack of reflection on equitable distribution of a country's or region's wealth usually masks a marked difference between regions which have similar average incomes yet differ significantly in the quality of life of their communities. A reasonable quality of life, according to Sen (1999), requires as basics; equal access to health services, education and a clean environment, as well as safety. What this equal access means to communities varies as there are different appreciations of what constitutes these basic needs or what levels would be considered adequate. In attempting to respond to such concerns, leading development organisations, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), use the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Human Development Report (HDR) to report on the performances of regions and countries. These reports are used to provide guidance for future

development plans and to determine the way that aid will be distributed. When aid is provided to a community, it often comes with conditions tied to it, meaning that the aid provider determines how it is to be spent, evaluates the impact that the aid has had and presents reports to interested parties. The reports that emerge from those activities and from such respected bodies as the UNDP, are used by various other bodies to make future intervention decisions. Reports on Africa in particular consistently indicate a slow pace in the development process; for example, the UNDP HDR 2013 reports on the 'rise of the south' and names a few developing countries as showing progress, with hardly any of these countries being in Africa (Malik and UNDP, 2013).

Reports on Africa's growth and development

In describing Africa's state of development, various reports indicate that Africa is slow, stagnant or under developed. The UNIDO/UNCTAD report of 2011 on economic development in Africa found that, despite some improvement in a few countries, most African countries remained stagnant in relation to industrialisation. The report showed a decline in Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the period between 2000 and 2008, as well as lost ground on labour-intensive manufacturing (UNIDO/UNCTAD, 2011). A number of studies reporting on the pace of development in Africa found various reasons for this; for example, Bhattacharyya (2009) looked at the root causes of African underdevelopment and suggested disease (mostly malaria), colonisation, the slave trade and ethnic diversity as among contributing factors. Bhattacharyya (2009) tested the competing theories statistically and concluded that malaria is a powerful contributor. But such conclusions are questioned by others, such as Acemoglu and Johnson (2007), who stated that diseases do not have a direct role in development. Abdulkadir et al. (2010) examined why Africa is developing slowly and suggested that the greatest constraints can be attributed both to internal and external influences. The authors suggested a number of reasons - economic policy, poverty, disease (showing HIV/AIDS as a significant disease), leadership and governance, internal conflict and the exodus of skilled labour. One of the solutions to this situation offered by Abdulkadir et al. (2010) is capacity development, which they describe as

capacity which enhances collaborations with development partners, changes of attitude towards issues such as corruption and strong institutions. They concluded by calling on African states to strengthen democratic institutions, involve people in decision-making and strengthen capacity through cooperation with the international community (Abdulkadir et al., 2010). The differences in these conclusions may depend on who is investigating and what their reasons for that process are and may indicate that there is a lot of work required in terms of examining the reasons for the pace and type of development taking place in Africa.

It is important to note that these are not the only reports about development emerging from Africa. Although they are few and far between, there are reports of progress in various regions of Africa. For example, the cross-border commerce activities within East Africa, where barriers to trade are being dismantled through promoting cooperation among East African countries in the East Africa Community (EAC) (EAC, 2014). In countries such as Kenya, there is great enthusiasm for technology, which is boosting growth of what is becoming popularly known as the 'silicon savannah' in the Konza area, 60 miles to the south east of the capital city, Nairobi (Kenya Vision 2030, 2014). Initiatives such as the Konza 'silicon savannah', albeit influenced by concepts of development from other regions such as the 'silicon valley' in California USA, are considered as originating from within because they are part of local initiatives such as the 'Kenyan Vision 2030' set by the Kenya government in 2006 (Kenya Vision 2030, 2014). Taking such examples from Kenya, as this study explored development interventions in Kenya, goes to show the potential that exists if such ideas are given an opportunity. This is of particular interest at this time when we are coming to the end of the period for Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and there are many discussions related to what steps to take post-2015. The MDGs, decided upon in the Millennium Summit of September 2000, were aimed at reducing extreme poverty, using time bound targets, set at the year 2015 (see appendix). Reports on progress emerging over the period since the year 2000 have stated that Africa is unlikely to meet its targets (MDG, 2014). These reports are likely to be used as reference during the process of planning for future development initiatives. These decisions are important and will require careful consideration to ensure that where ideas,

concepts and projects are designed, they bear the influence and ideals of the community they intend to serve. The MDGs are an important part of the development agenda, but, because this study is about knowledge and capabilities, the study will not pursue the discussion on mechanisms from the angle of the MDGs, other than a brief mention in chapter eight on the role the MDG post-2015 reports will play in future development decision. Research on poverty as an economic problem has been tackled adequately, but the social aspect where it concerns the role of an individual's ability 'to do' and 'to be' much less so, as shown in the literature review in this thesis. This study focused on human development in Amartya Sen's and Martha Nussbaum's perspective of the capabilities approach and self-reliance through critical thinking, from the setting of a community development initiative. Development is explored further in chapter two, where the focus is on why it exists and how it relates to critical thinking and self-reliance, and in chapter three where its realities and practical aspects are examined.

Defining some terms

A number of terms used in this thesis tend to be ambiguous. For ease of reference, some of the key terms are explained below.

Development	Development is a process of social change in which society is transformed over time. It includes deliberate efforts aimed at improvement. (Allen and Thomas, 2000)
International community development	Strategies and policies aimed at alleviating poverty and improving living conditions, working directly in areas where it is needed or with intermediaries such as governments and NGOs to support initiatives in community development (Allen and Thomas, 2000).

Self-reliance	A strong belief in one's ability to deal with issues without turning to others for guidance in the first instance. Having confidence in one's own powers and resources rather than those of others (Simpson, Weiner & Oxford University Press, 1989).
Critical thinking	Working in a way that enables one to see through ideologies and put arguments into perspective by analysing and assessing them and thus transform one's perceptions for the better (Paul and Elder, 2006).
Sustainable livelihood development.	A holistic and flexible framework for understanding, measuring and analysing poverty and ways of poverty eradication and looking at a person's ability to sustain a livelihood (Chambers and Conway, 1992; de Haan, 2005).
Sustainable livelihoods	A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from the stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future without undermining the natural resource base (Chambers & Conway, 1992).
Poverty	Poverty is deprivation in well-being, and comprises many dimensions which include low income and the inability to acquire the basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity. Poverty also encompasses low levels of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate physical security and lack of voice, and sufficient capacity and opportunity to better one's life. (The world Bank Organisation, 2014)
Lifelong learning.	A way of building upon existing education going beyond formal education to build on beliefs that support people to become self-reliant. Learning in this way is not dependent on organised instruction nor takes place in classrooms, lectures, labs or seminars; instead it becomes a feature of life (Tight, 1996).

Human development.	Enlarging people's choices to enable them to improve their lives and increase the richness of human life rather than the wealth of the economy, making human beings the real wealth of an economy (Haq, 1995; Sen, 1999).
Capacity development.	Process of strengthening the use of people's own resources, to support them to reflect and use their abilities. It should be an ongoing process that increases the ability to carry out functions, achieve objectives, learn to solve problems and deal with current issues (Horton et al., 2003).

1.2 Objectives and questions

This research explored the way in which individuals and communities use their knowledge and capabilities to improve their circumstances. Using community development interventions as an example, the study examined the use of, or lack of, critical thinking in such interactions. It explored which capabilities are likely to influence self-reliance within communities. The development activities in two selected communities in the city of Nairobi, Kenya were explored through interacting with various actors, including local community members, intermediary organisations, such as local and international and NGOs, as well as funding and development organisations. By exploring perceptions of development from these different perspectives, I hoped to identify and uncover possible converging and/or diverging issues that impact on progress, in particular progress that is driven by the community. The relationships and interactions between actors present an interesting insight into the process of decision-making at various levels and can expose any power tensions that might exist. The practical aspects of designing, implementing and evaluating a development intervention and the tools used for those processes are examined to establish their usefulness and impact. In the process of pursuing these objectives, I explored questions of freedom, inequality and justice in development as posed by Amartya Sen. I examined the role of

supporting communities to have capabilities that go beyond technical skills to capabilities 'to do' and 'to be', as proposed by Nussbaum (2000, 2011) and Sen (1999) and capabilities for reflecting in a critical way to arrive at critical consciousness as suggested by Freire (1970, 1990).

This research is driven by an overarching question asking why individuals and communities continue to depend on others for their development and growth needs. In this process, I had several objectives:

- to explore the process of development in order to understand how development agencies engage with local communities to involve them in the process of their own development and supporting them towards self-reliance;
- to examine a range of actors involved in development work in order to analyse the process of capacity development and the role of or lack of critical thinking in a meaningful process that supports self-reliance;
- to investigate what measures are in place to support communities towards progressive development in a way that addresses the questions of what people can do and can be in a human development approach.

To achieve these objectives, I refined the focus further to tackle them in a more specific and narrow sense by using the following guiding questions for reference;

- What is the understanding of the role of various activities by the different actors and how are the goals and purpose communicated?
- What systems are in place to empower people and support long-term viability of projects, self-reliance and critical thinking? How are they implemented?
- What frameworks and tools are used, how are they designed, implemented and reviewed? Who is involved in that process?

- What do communities and individuals see as their role, in the process of development; for example do communities expect an intervention to take place and do development agencies believe it is their duty to intervene?

These objectives were used to design the data collection process in this study. The final guiding questions used are contained in the appendix.

1.3 Significance and contribution

This research, by challenging the methods of development interventions hopes to illuminate the issues that affect meaningful progress in communities. By interacting with development actors, the study explored the practical aspects of a development process and the way in which those processes impact the communities they aim to support. Chambers (1997) recognised that some methods of engaging with development actors who undermine the role of those the initiative aims to help are likely to be counterproductive and ineffective. Because the perceptions and meanings of progress and poverty vary, the direction of progress for an intervention is likely to vary. This leads to the question that Chambers (1997) has continued to ask over the last two decades, about whose reality is central in an intervention process.

In recent times, especially since the 1990s, there has been more focus on, and recognition of the importance of, placing people at the centre of an intervention process. However, data in this research suggests that those ideals are yet to be evident in the reality of the lives of the community groups in Nairobi. In examining the process of such interventions, this study has demonstrated the significance of the roles played by each actor and, more so, by those who are to benefit from the intervention. The findings of this study suggest that community development initiatives that work towards supporting self-reliance in communities should aim to be collaborative, where there is mutual respect for each actor's knowledge and experience. The knowledge should be shared, in a process that allows each person to contribute and have

an opportunity to express an opinion about what is of value to them. In that process, those involved have a chance to learn from each other. The findings also suggest that the methodology used in this study adds to the understanding of the importance of using tools that encourage participants to engage with the process, and one that values everyone's opinion.

This research used the Ketso creative hands-on tools, and found that participants appreciated being asked and indicated that they are not always given a chance to express an opinion. By engaging with communities in such an interactive, participatory manner, I pursued a critical engagement approach where participants were given an opportunity to express their view on matters of their own development. By using this method, I argue that such an approach has potential to produce genuine information that can benefit the process of development. This is because those engaged, particularly the communities, see that their opinion is valued and can therefore offer useful and practical responses to the questions posed to them. The use of Ketso, which will be discussed in detail in chapter four, was critical in enabling the participants to feel less restricted by their environment and inhibited or the judged by those around them. Showing the potential for gaining rich data using the Ketso tool will help research communities to appreciate the value of using suitable ways to engage with actors in a meaningful way for both the participant and the research process.

1.4 Structure of the study

This thesis is written in nine chapters, with this, the first, introducing the reader to the context of the issues addressed. The second chapter is one of two that review some of the key literature relating to self-belief and learning in the role of development in supporting self-reliant communities. The chapter begins by exploring some of the reasons behind the need for development, looking at the process from Harry Truman's declaration in 1949, how it has evolved and particularly focuses on Africa. Colonisation is identified as a key contributor to the need for development in Africa and its effects on the continent are examined, with particular interest in the effects of dominance

and the creation of a culture of dependence. The chapter reviews the way in which the African people lost their sense of self-worth from having their possessions such as land, taken away, and being forced to speak the colonisers' languages. The chapter observes how the colonised countries gained their independence in the middle part of the 1900s, yet the colonisers' reign was not quite over. This was due to the fact that the colonisers had installed leaders who would be sympathetic to their needs and to a hegemonic approach to leadership (Ajayi et. al. 1996). I then explore how communities can move forward by being self-reliant, using critical thinking and reasoning in the way that Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) proposed when he called for us to have courage to use our own understanding. I review how learning for life can contribute to encouraging individuals to evaluate their situations in order to make their own decisions, making lifelong learning more of a way of life rather than an end product.

Chapter three continues with the review of development, but this time looking at the process. I explore the practical aspects of development, focusing on those that place communities at the centre of a development initiative, which are increasingly becoming popular and viewed as the way forward. In this chapter, I review the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) with its central focus on project long-term viability, looking at its aims, focus and strategies. The realities of what development, progress or change means are explored, looking at aspects of Sen's (1999) view of development as freedom and the role of equality and justice in liberating individuals and communities from limitations. Human development, where it is concerned with making people's choices wider through methods such as the capability approach suggested by Nussbaum (2011), are explored. I then broadly evaluate nine development frameworks used as guidelines for development by agencies and summarise them into one diagram showing their key processes. This summarised diagram is used later in chapter seven to review the reality of the practice in development initiatives that particularly focus on capacity development.

Chapter four discusses the method applied in this study, beginning with the theoretical concepts where I state the stance that guided my choice of interpretivist perspective. I then discuss the usefulness of critical theory in a

study such as this, elaborating on the emancipatory values it offers and how those values contribute to the study. The Freirean approach and the aspect of dialogue is discussed and appreciated for the richness it offers in enabling people to raise questions and work towards self-reliance through critical awareness and eventually to arrive at critical consciousness. I then review participatory action research (PAR) as a valuable element because it adds the importance of recognising the role and value of each actor in research, as it gives them an opportunity to engage in a genuine manner. Genuine engagement is difficult to achieve, and this required the use of a creative approach, Ketso, which is a tool used for creative engagement in group settings. This tool is discussed at length in chapter four. The research design is then presented, beginning with the rationale for the qualitative approach and then discussing the instruments selected and, methods used in ensuring quality and rigour and the analysis process. I finished by stating the importance of careful ethical considerations.

The summary of themes identified from data from the field work is presented in chapter five. The background to the history of the locations selected is provided so that the situations and circumstances of the participants can be appreciated. Information gathered from the pilot study is presented before I embarked on presenting themes. The information was separated into themes from focus groups and from unstructured interviews, beginning by giving a brief background of participants followed by the key themes. I then show how the themes were selected and presented a brief summary of the three main focus areas that form the analysis and discussion chapters.

The sixth chapter focused on the key findings centred on issues of long-term viability, freedoms and capabilities as important to the aims of well being as opposed to the earlier micro-economic approach to development. The emphasis on keeping people at the centre of development initiatives was central to the analysis at this stage, showing the way in which approaches such as sustainable livelihoods affect actors in different ways. I observe the way in which challenges can arise as a result of different interpretations of the approach and the understanding of such a process. The role of equality and justice is analysed to establish what part they play in enabling freedom to

access rights. Access to rights and how they enable individuals and communities to become aware of wider choices was assessed in order to establish how this can be useful in supporting the choice of development decisions that best suits the community's circumstances and desires. The chapter shows the value placed on the role of capabilities that support self-reliance against those that focus on specific technical skills. The data shows the key factors that affect project long-term viability or the lack of it in development initiatives and points to the need for greater emphasis on development that supports self-reliance. The process of encouraging self-reliance is analysed, and its benefits assessed, and I argue that development should be about capabilities 'to be', specifically to be self-reliant, rather than for specific skills.

In chapter seven, I consider the way in which realities can be challenging to identify as this depends on who is asking the questions and how those questions are asked. The chapter observes how a process of gathering such information is crucial and, where it is not carefully considered, it is likely to result in development intervention strategies and plans that are based on skewed realities. This chapter analyses the process of a development initiative, looking at frameworks used, and looks at the practical aspects of the process, assessing expectations and outcomes as reported by the various actors. Using the summarised diagram of frameworks presented in chapter three, the key aspects are taken apart by section and weighed for meaning and application. This assessment finds that the control of the process lies with the agencies that make decisions at all the stages, despite there being a specific desire to collaborate and engage with the community. Using that information, I argue that a more inclusive approach led by the community should be aimed at where learning is at the centre of the process. Development therefore becomes a process rather than a product, where individuals and communities learn to reflect and decide for themselves what needs to be done. In this process, an attitude of learning on a continuous basis, a lifelong learning approach in development, becomes the focus. Lifelong learning as a process, where actors listen to each other and learn from each other becomes a process of exchange, where those involved reciprocate with each other in an exchange of the knowledge they have.

In chapter eight, the focus is on the significance of reports and evaluations, especially in establishing the direction for future development initiatives. Using selected documents to review, this study finds that reports often originate from evaluations and therefore the process of evaluation contributes significantly to the way the projects are viewed as well as being used to support decisions on future development interventions. Theorising evaluations and assuming that change can be predicted or even catalysed was assessed particularly against the ideals of being sensitive to local ways, cultures and needs. This assessment found that such theory-based evaluations may have their place in enabling a certain amount of clarity in a process, but can be limiting in establishing real and genuine change. Reflecting on some reports, particularly those that emerge from respected development agencies, and the type of influence they wield, I examine the decisions that materialise from such exercises and the effect those decisions have on many parts of the world.

I conclude the key arguments of the thesis in chapter nine. In this concluding chapter, I review in summary, what this thesis identifies and argues. I reflect on the process of the research and what lessons are learnt from the experience.

Summary

This chapter has set the scene for this thesis. It began through a prologue of a personal nature with the background to the inspiration for the question on the use of knowledge acquired by adults. I then presented an overview of the ideas that begin to shape what might be a way to explore the issue and gave the background to some of the areas to be covered. Recognising the value of self-reliance through a process of critical thinking and how these are connected to self-worth is evaluated, in particular looking at the way in which that can affect social change. Immanuel Kant's (1784) response to the question 'what is Enlightenment', was evaluated as a way to respond to why people allow others to take over their lives and impose ideas on them and give themselves over to the experts to be their guide. The choice to use international development to

explore these questions was explained and a background to community development was provided. The significance and contribution of the study was reviewed as well as its objectives and aims. Finally, a summary of the structure of the thesis was presented, giving a brief description of the contents of the chapters.

Chapter 2: Development: self-belief and learning

Introduction

The process of development is highly debated with questions about who needs it, who should give it or what it should be about. This thesis confines itself to that part of development where it relates to enabling communities to become self-reliant and to make progress in the direction that is desired by the community. This chapter explores the question of what development is in the context mentioned and why it is needed; it looks at some of the issues that gave rise to the need for development and identifies colonialism as a key contributor. The chapter examines the effects of colonialism, particularly how it affected self-identity through imposing new cultures and disregarding local cultures. This created a culture where a community depended on others for help, and affected the way communities processed and analysed information for the benefit of their own development and progress. The communities did not use their own knowledge to think critically and evaluate information for its usefulness for their development. The importance of critical thinking is reviewed as a process that liberates communities from the shackles that hold them back from effective development and the chapter ends by exploring the connection between lifelong learning and development.

2.1 The need for development

Development is about change and progress, a continuous process rather than a destination. Seers (1970) identified development as a vision of a state of being, a process of social change within societies which consists of deliberate efforts aimed at improvements. However, it is useful to note that a view of what might succeed as a change or improvement is likely to be influenced by one's view of how social change occurs. Chambers (1997) provided a simple description of development as 'good change', which in his view means

development is positive and progressive. The terms used to describe development are contestable and cause huge disagreement on how to ascertain whether development is occurring. Thomas, as cited in Allen and Thomas (2000) said development is more than 'good change'; it should be all-encompassing, not just improving one aspect or being a one-off process to something better but being a continuous process that builds on itself. This should happen at the level of social change. When there is a change in society, it affects the people living in that society and affects the way they think, interact, make their living and perceive themselves. They are likely to see themselves in a different light that exposes their shortfalls or lack of abilities (Allen and Thomas, 2000). Development can be immanent, which means it is dynamic and grows from within, or it can be intentional, which is a result of interventions through policies and actions of agencies aimed at achieving certain objectives (Cowen and Shenton, 1996). Intentional development is the focus of international aid organisations, where agencies intervene to implement development projects, programmes and policies with specific aims.

Development interventions by international agencies began to take root in the later part of the twentieth century. Part of the reason for this was to reconstruct after the damage caused during the Second World War and to globalise countries after independence from colonisation. The ravages of the World War were in no doubt severe and caused huge damage to parts of the world, and this damage needed to be fixed. This created the era of development, primarily traced back to Harry Truman in 1949 when he spoke about embarking on a bold new programme for making advancements and progress available to underdeveloped areas (Esteva, 1992). The concept of development was, however, not new at the time and had been debated for many years before that (Esteva, 1992). According to Esteva (1992), what was new was the idea that development support was the escape route from underdevelopment, and that those falling under this condition of underdevelopment needed to look elsewhere for help. The western world, particularly the United States of America and some European countries, created ideals and programmes which formed the basis of development to be applied to one part of the world, known as the 'third world' (Esteva, 1992). Peter Worsley (1967) wrote about the third world saying it was a world of poor

countries, where their poverty was a result of colonisation, stating that development interventions arose from the need to support these formerly colonised regions. These development interventions may not necessarily have been genuine, progressive or intended to meet the needs of the communities. Some saw Truman's ideas about development as a way of vying for the newly independent, ex-colonised countries and thus supporting development in these countries was intended to attract an association (Esteva, 1992; Allen and Thomas, 2000). Development, at the time after Truman's declaration, was dominated by economic questions of wealth and prosperity. The development idea was seen as one of evolution where economists began by conceptualising a rapid and sustainable rise in wealth (Easterly, 2001). Economists looked at development from the standpoint of their own examples and decided others needed to be raised to the standards which their own modern economies had reached; thus their ideas were about modernisation. Modernisation is often described as a process of change towards systems developed in the west between the seventeenth and nineteenth century, and spread to other regions such as Asia and Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This concept of modernisation is not often used, but it is not completely discarded as there are still beliefs that modernisation can increase wealth and that that creates benefits that can trickle down through society.

Evolution of development in Africa

Development in Africa has taken different forms since the independence of different African countries from colonisation. The colonial era divided the continent into countries based on the imperialistic quest for wealth and left the continent grappling with social dissolution (Stiglitz, 2002). Most countries received independence in the 1960s, after which the focus was to reconstruct their economies, a challenge that Africa faces even in current times.

The process of development in Africa over the decades has taken different forms. The 1960s was a period of hope and economic growth. The objective was to eliminate the structures imposed by the colonial powers and improve economic growth and the living standards of the African people. With

governments being central to the process, huge investments were made to infrastructure and great plans were made about desired achievement levels for many sectors including education and health. But towards the end of the 1960s, there was a slowdown in activities, and this was mainly attributed to overinvestment and the lack of appropriate skills (Nkurumah, 1985). The 1970s were times of political instability and economic decline. The 'west' wanted to show support for Africa and provided financial support. This was, and still is, seen by many as a sinister move to attempt to gain control of mainly resources. International agencies, especially financial ones such as the World Bank, dictated the terms and conditions of loans and other support provided. This resulted in a sharp decline in support of activities such as social services, leading to a decline in living standards (Potter as cited in Allen and Thomas, 2000). African leaders recognised this decline and attempted to reverse the trend by creating regional co-operations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC). These initiatives however did not produce the intended results and Africa remained at the mercy of international agencies and their terms.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the decline continued and the international community suggested structural adjustments as a way forward. In order to reduce poverty and to grow, a World Bank report, *From crisis to sustainable growth* (1989) emphasised sound macroeconomic activities and structural management as prerequisites to growth. Privatisation and fiscal austerity were imposed but resulted in more unemployment, low wages and inequality, among other factors (Potter, as cited in Allen and Thomas, 2000). As Africa continued to struggle with its state of development, questions about why this was the case were pursued and some of the explanations suggested that colonisation had a part to play in affecting how development took place. Africa was divided into several parts by the colonisers whose purpose was to protect the 'discovered' resources through imposed control. Colonisation was seen as a way to impose control. This tore apart existing economic and social activities and continues to affect African communities, as we shall see below.

2.2 Colonisation and its effects

The link between the past and present for many African communities often appears unclear. Where most western communities would be able to access their history to learn about their own culture, most African communities would, were they to find any written history, find conflicting information. This is evident for example, in the writing about the history of the Kikuyu people of Kenya. Two writers, Jomo Kenyatta, who later became the first president of Kenya and was a native Kikuyu, gave one account based on his own experience and interaction with the older generations. Louis Leakey, the other writer, was a British settler and gave his account based on questions to local people which were communicated through translators. The conflicting histories about the Kikuyu people and other tribes caused a lack of clarity on history and culture. Some of what was written, particularly from the perspective of the foreign groups, assumed that because the native people did not have a written history and a record of their culture, the foreigners should write it for them. Their attempt to do this was seen by others as a devious agenda to re-write history and cultural practices (Mazrui, 1978; Wa Thiong'o, 1986). This was particularly evident in the manner in which the native cultures and practices were assumed to be inferior and un-progressive and, from religious perspectives, evil. It is argued that this was done with ulterior motives to dominate those cultures (Mazrui, 1978; Ajayi et al., 1996).

In order to appreciate the background to colonialism, let us look at the beginnings. The scramble for Africa by European countries in the 1800s began with European explorers who had a quest to discover the 'dark continent'. They waded through the 'darkness' to find, for example, the source of the river Nile, and in the process they found resources they had not anticipated such as copper, palm oil, cocoa and tea. They informed the rest of Europe, who were eager to set up trade links. These trading activities needed to be sustained, and one way of doing this was to impose themselves upon the local people through domination and placing themselves as superior to the indigenous people. They chose to take over through colonisation. Colonialism had the objective of exploiting the inhabitants and generating wealth for the

mother countries. This resulted in forced labour and slavery, forceful taking over of land and the conversion of these lands into vast plantations. In order to maintain this way of life, the colonisers had to find ways to impose their domination on the colonised population. They implied that they were superior and therefore had to be served. The idea of one race being superior over another was particularly emphasised; the exploring community believed they were genuinely superior and were keen to ensure that this was made clear. Those who pursued the ideas of evolution in particular spread the ideas that, in the process of evolution, there were those who were still evolving and that the black man had only just evolved from an ape. This therefore made him inferior to the white man who was a more evolved and civilised human (Polanyi, 1968; Cowen and Shenton, 1996; Nzula et al., 1979; Bernstein, et al., 1992).

The story of Ota Benga demonstrates this. Ota Benga originated from Congo and was taken to the United States of America by the explorer Samuel Verner. Verner had been contracted by the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (Saint Louis World's Fair) to find some pygmies for their fair. When Ota Benga arrived in the United States of America, he was displayed in a zoo alongside monkeys and orangutans and was encouraged to carry around a baby monkey as he would a child, to display that he and the monkey were not very different in the process of evolution. The zoo visitors - men, women and children - would chase him around and poke him in the ribs while laughing at him. A later request by a clergyman for his release and to allow him to attend school received a response that the pygmies are very low in the human scale, and there would be no advantage in him attending school. Ota Benga later shot himself and died at the age of 35 years (Bradford and Blume 1992; Sifakis, 1984). This experience showed a blatant disregard for human life and human dignity, either because there was a lack of understanding of other humans, or because there were ulterior motives.

Other suggestions used to advance the ideas of superiority of one race over another were the eugenics beliefs that proposed that there were superior races that needed to be preserved. These ideas were made popular by Francis Galton (1822-1911), a Victorian scientist who initiated the eugenics movement after he read the book - *The Origin of Species* - by his cousin Charles Darwin (1809-

1892). The book convinced him that humanity could be improved through selective breeding. Galton believed that there should be an attempt to control evolution in the same way as we do the physical environment, to direct it in the way that we choose (Galton, as cited in Brookes, 2004). Several people who believed in such ideas used them to justify their work, such as Marie Stopes who advocated the sterilisation of those who were unfit for parenthood (Stopes, as cited in Marchant, 1920).

The colonisers, armed with perceived ideas of the levels of the human race and the place of the black man in those levels, decided on the need to impose their own ideas (Uchendu, 1979). They began to set up systems - political, health, education and cultural - which were based on the colonisers' culture. The indigenous people's history and background were disregarded and considered irrelevant or inferior and the indigenous people were required to assimilate. As a way of consolidating their colonising power, they realised they could gain strength mostly by mental control rather than by physical control. They would gain this more effectively through an education system (Uchendu, 1979). Uchendu (1979) said the idea that the colonial education that was delivered to the indigenous people in Africa was of European standards was incorrect. He said that the purpose of all colonial education was focused on the 'subordination of Africans'; he added 'what reached African colonies were not metropolitan educational transplants but ... adaptations which served to perpetuate colonial domination' (p.3). With the new education systems, local traditional culture and indigenous history began to slip away. The indigenous people were beginning to have a limited sense of their own history; they were caught between two worlds and did not know which one they belonged to. They felt a lack of identity. Those who resisted these changes were considered backward and uncivilised. With African history and culture neglected, the indigenous people began to experience feelings of self-hate, low self-esteem and lack of respect for their own culture and began to experience a peculiar type of psychological dependency on others (Ajayi et al., 1996; Woolman, 2001).

Ali Mazrui (1978) agreed with the idea that the education systems during colonial times were irrelevant to the real needs of African society. He

associated this approach with the rural-urban divide and observed how western education in African conditions was a process of psychological de-ruralisation. Once educated, the African man was unable to fit in with the village life of tending the cattle or cultivating the land. Previously, African forms of education were focused on social responsibility and participation in local politics, a strong work ethic and morality and spiritual values (Kenyatta, 1965). Kenyatta (1965), in comparing the Kikuyu education system with the new western type of education, observed how knowledge acquired in the African approach was related directly to practical needs, merged into everyday activity and could be recalled effectively when required. Social relations and culture were therefore integrated and were a part of the process of life and growing up within the African culture. It is no surprise that feelings of alienation would arise in response to the isolated nature of the formal colonial education structure in comparison to the realities of the African way of learning. The western competitive and individual ways conflicted with the African traditions of cooperative community. A contrast of this type may have caused Africans who accepted the western culture to reject the viability of their own culture. Ways of life that were acceptable and practical before would no longer be viable; for example, traditional herbal medicines used before were rejected as they were not scientific and did not conform to tested knowledge (Mungazi, 1996; Busia, 1964).

After independence, mostly in the 1960s, the colonial imported ideologies, such as materialism and consumerism, which the indigenous people had embraced, remained (Mungazi, 1996). The local communities attempted to continue with the systems as they were and with leadership which had been handed over to a selected elite local group. These leadership groups continued with a colonial-style leadership of repressive and undemocratic systems and structures, which they had learnt and observed. Squandering resources for personal benefit or for the benefit of a small group of people was not uncommon and the ideologies of the coloniser still remained despite him having left (Mungazi, 1996). Melber (2002, p.269) sees this as the 'transition from controlled change to changed control'. The citizens considered themselves free and independent but were still mentally colonised, still dependent on the former coloniser to provide guidance. They observed how

the coloniser had conducted affairs and copied this without checking how this applied to their circumstances. Colonisation, due to its oppressive ways, had rendered the indigenous people incapable of practicing creativity, and left them without the ability to mould their own lives (Melber, 2002).

Frantz Fanon, in his various writings on colonialism, looked at how oppression shapes who we are or become even when we may not see it or directly experience it. In *'Wretched of the Earth'* (1963), Fanon talked about the way in which the colonised society was changed by the process of colonising and how this may have damaged those who had to go through it. The colonised people who took arms did so in response to what they witnessed as the disintegration of their society, being treated like animals by the colonisers while they were dying of hunger. He talks about psychological manoeuvres, such as depriving the colonised of basic things, creating frustration and aggression and then providing paltry measures such as trivial hand outs which manage to impress the colonised because they have been rendered vulnerable. Fanon observed that on the supposed leniency of the colonisers grip on the colonised, there was a call for 'Africanisation' which he believed was not rooted in genuine nationalisation. He believed that the colonisers, by having a hand in this process, merely transferred power to a 'ruling class that may be sympathetic to their endeavours' (p.104). The colonisers manipulated resources from one part of a country and created wealth for some regions only. This in turn caused the people from the wealthy regions to feel superior to other groups, which created animosity among regions or tribes. Colonialism takes all it can; Fanon said 'it is not satisfied with snaring people in its net or draining their brains of any form of substance; Colonisation takes the peoples' past, distorts it, disfigures it, and destroys it' (p. 149). Fanon argued that the demeaning of the history that existed prior to colonisation contributed significantly in convincing the colonised that they were in a 'dark hole' and needed to be saved from the darkness and backwardness and that the coloniser should stay because if he left, they would regress to barbarism.

The desire to belong, to be accepted

The residue of the colonial experiences, such as inferiority, lack of identity, difference, no sense of belonging, and lack of self-worth, is what Frantz Fanon wrestles with in his look at the black man's struggles with his blackness and the need to be accepted by the white community. Fanon (1967) dealt with the issue of identity in his book, *Black Skin White Mask*. He believed the white mask is an attempt to be accepted in the white man's world; to cover-up one's own 'blackness' which one considers inferior. Fanon saw the black man as caught up in the unending race row and a struggle for recognition. He believed that colonialism supported white racial superiority over non-white peoples. This alienated people and created a sense of division and a lack of self-identity among the colonised people. Fanon recognised that emancipation from the issues of race would mean the need to take up the fight against the superiority of the white man. When the colonised people lost their history, culture, customs and beliefs, they had to take up the colonisers' way of life. This was enforced through the use of the colonisers' language. The colonisers' language became the correct mode of communication that was to be aspired to, and those able to speak the colonisers' language were considered closer to the colonisers. Those unable to speak the coloniser's language were considered backward and uncivilised, which emphasised the feeling of inferiority. According to Fanon, language is important in a culture and in providing a sense of belonging; he says 'a man who has language possesses the world expressed and implied by that language' (p. 17).

The way in which language shapes the culture of colonised people was explored by Wa Thiong'o (1986) as he wrote about the politics of language in African literature. He said colonisers imposed their own language, often forbidding the speaking of native mother tongues, and he indicated how students were demoted or humiliated for speaking their mother tongues. Wa Thiong'o advocated a return to native languages in his book, *Decolonising The Mind*, which he said was his 'farewell to English' and he has since continued his writing in his native language of Kikuyu (and still continues to write in English). Wa Thiong'o (1986), as well as others such as Fanon (1963, 1967), felt that the adoption of the colonisers' language was a way of erasing pre-colonial cultures

and history and in its place impose the colonisers' culture and thereby domination. Wa Thiong'o (1986) saw value in one's own language and the culture transmitted through a language. He said, 'language and orature are the means by which a particular language transmits the image of the world contained in the culture it carries' (p. 15). He added 'language is culture as it is used to communicate the values and norms of a culture...', '...the values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world is communicated through language' (p. 16). Through (the colonisers') language, education was transmitted to the native who was taught that everything s/he previously knew was wrong and unacceptable. In order to progress, to be civilised and avoid backwardness and potential destruction, adopting the coloniser's language was necessary. Wa Thiong'o (1986) suggested that the colonialists' aim was to dominate and control people's wealth. '...the domination of the people's language by the languages of the colonising nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised' (p. 16).

These thoughts echo what Vygotsky believed, that language develops from social interactions and language is human's greatest tool as a means of communication with the outside world (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky believed that language plays two key roles; to transmit information and as a tool for intellectual adaptation. Vygotsky believed human development results from interactions between people and their social environment and although all humans are capable of developing these functions, culture in general and a person's unique social situation contribute to the development process. Language has a key role in connecting people, as expressed by Phipps (2014) in her TEDx talk on learning to live in multilingual worlds. Phipps (2014) talked about the dangerous dominance of a single language, saying that using English as a single language is continuing the structures of inequality which have led to its dominance. This she considers as arrogant and partial, and it conceals the structures of limitation that have imposed the language upon many. Phipps suggested that in learning to live in a multilingual world, we can learn each other's language and share the burden of comprehension and communication. This way, we let languages be 'connectors and not barriers'. Learning to live in a multilingual world will offer a new chance of connecting as human beings (Phipps, 2014).

Dominance of Cultures

As seen earlier, colonisation was justified by the need to 'civilise' indigenous people, to save them from disease, unhygienic environments and lack of culture and to bring light to the poor souls. Those who sought to civilise were looking at things from their consciousness as a superior race. Hardt and Negri (2001) observe how the dominance of cultures and imposition of foreign ideas were developed. The sovereignty of one culture over another, of racial subordination, categorised the colonised as 'other'. The authors show how the colonisers looked at the colonised as the reverse of who they (the colonisers) were, how they behaved in a manner that is opposite to the white man. When people appear different and are categorised as 'other', those who see themselves as superior try to set themselves apart. Freire (1970, 1990) sees these types of people as intolerant. Freire (1970, 1990) said that some may observe others doing things in a 'different' way from them and think of it as inferior, believing that their way of being is better than that of others who are different.

Domination of groups works by ensuring there is no equality so the 'dominators' can maintain the difference and emphasise the inferiority of those they dominate. They exercise authority and power over them in an unjust manner; they oppress them. The oppressors take it as their right to acquire things through what they refer to as their own effort and the courage to take risks (Freire, 1970, 1990). They feel that others do not have more because they are incompetent and lazy and are ungrateful about the generous gestures of the oppressors. The oppressed are characterised by self-deprecation derived from their opinion of what the oppressors think of them. They would often hear that they are not good enough, they know nothing or they are incapable of learning anything, that they are lazy and unproductive. Eventually, they become convinced that they are indeed those things. The feelings of inferiority are enforced and they look up to the 'superior' individual because s/he seems to know everything. When those who have experienced this type of environment encounter a situation where they are asked for their opinion, they say 'why don't you explain this first, that way it'll be less time

and won't give us a headache' (Freire 1970, p. 19). They do not realise that they know things they have learnt from interacting with the world.

Freire recognised the way oppressed people internalised the image the oppressor had of them; the oppressed person is afraid of being free, of being required to think for himself, have autonomy and be responsible. These experiences of oppression can be limiting, and Freire (1970) recognised these limitations as a source of non-critical thinking and naive consciousness. Awareness of these situations and of one's capabilities has the potential to get the oppressed person out of the situation, and education and learning can enable the oppressed to become more aware of their capabilities. Freire (1970, 1990) said education should raise the awareness of the learner so that they become subjects, rather than objects, of the world. This is done by teaching learners to think democratically and to continually question and make meaning by critically viewing everything they learn.

Awareness of domination and moving forward

Education systems set up by the colonial leadership created a sense of disassociation from the native heritage. As native history and culture was regarded as unsuitable and non-progressive, some of the native people were keen to adopt the colonisers' system so that they could have access to resources and the assumed wealth that was promised through this progressive process. As the natives continued with this education and received opportunities to study in the colonisers' lands in Britain and other parts of Europe, the 'blinkers' shielding their view of the reality of colonisation began to fall. Individuals in different parts of Africa, such as Jomo Kenyatta, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Kwame Nkrumah, and Julius Nyerere became aware of the need to appreciate one's own culture and heritage as unique and acceptable.

Once the colonised person loses their culture and history, they lose the ability to create and transform. The process of making the native people conform to the colonisers' views makes them feel unequal, they feel inferior and without the capabilities to think for themselves and to support themselves, they

become dependent on the colonisers' leadership and guidance. Recognising that individuals or communities have the ability to lead themselves and make choices about their own development takes time. A process of learning to appreciate one's own abilities, experiences and knowledge becomes important. Learning to use this knowledge effectively, to analyse it for its usefulness and then apply it, is important. It becomes necessary to find creative ways of thinking in order to find solutions and to have courage to look within for those solutions. Being bold enough to try new things and new ways is useful, as is learning to accept that, if, and when, mistakes are made, this will be a learning process that the individual and community can build on. After all, Immanuel Kant (1784) saw the need for all to be enlightened; he called for us to have courage to use our own understanding without guidance from another, to become self-reliant through a process of critical thinking.

Thinking in a reflective manner can be associated with post-colonial concerns. In particular, ideas that aim at responding to impositions of colonialism and attempting to decolonise, are a liberating way of thinking, a philosophy that comes from critical thinking and interaction between cultures in a creative manner (Dussel, 1978). This type of post-colonial thinking is a way of thinking about responsibility and life, where there is an obligation to answer for oneself and to be the guarantor of one's actions. The underlying concerns are those of what one has left in the hands of another, and taking action to own their future by asking questions, reflecting and beginning to think critically.

Post-colonial thoughts and liberating ideals reflect on a learning that aims to transform the way people think. This approach to thinking is associated with reasoning and with thinkers such as Lacan, Sartre, Derrida, Foucault and others, who saw thinking as a way to understand issues of citizenship as well as development and progress. The resistance of colonial dominance, to be autonomous and to have the ability to say 'I' in the way that Descombes and Descombes (2001) suggested, is to act independently and participate in world affairs. Contributors to this way of thinking argue that post-colonial thinking was as much a mental as it was a physical battle for freedom (Mbembe, 2001; Nandy 1983).

Dubois (1903) raised the issue of 'double consciousnesses' in his book on *The soul of black folks*, where he talked about a veil forced on people of African origin which makes them unrecognisable and incomprehensible. Critical reflection about the circumstances of colonisation can be useful as a starting point for reviewing current struggles, particularly in the context of poverty, where there is need to look back and ask critical questions, then look forward to take on the lessons learnt, because if there are no lessons learnt, the same mistakes will be repeated. This can be an intellectual process of transferring the independent former-colonial countries into a way of independent thinking to deconstruct the perceptions and attitudes of power and oppression adopted during the time of colonialism. This process of decolonising, of post-colonial thinking and learning, is a process of change and reconstruction. It is, in the first instance, an attempt to regain lost power and deal with issues of the past as suppressor and suppressed in a process that can support self-reliance through critical thinking.

2.3 Critical thinking for self-reliance

Making one's own decisions and relying on one's own ability requires some level of thinking. Some decisions may require the use of more than common sense or experiences to inform those decisions, and could mean the need to consult other sources such as friends, experts or written material. However, becoming too dependent on advice on minor issues or on too many issues could indicate a lack of decisiveness or lack of confidence in one's own abilities. Many adults have life experiences, some level of knowledge and some expertise which they can draw on as a starting point in the process of making decisions. Having confidence in what is known means being able to reflect on that knowledge, to question, evaluate, conceptualise and analyse it in order to allow it to be a guide in our actions. This process has been referred to as critical thinking. Can critical thinking be a useful way of making clearer and effective decisions, to be less reliant on others or be confident in working with our acquired knowledge? Some of the early foundations of critical thinking are associated with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Socrates, for example, found that people could not explain their knowledge and there was often no evidence

or rationale behind the knowledge they held. He established the need to examine assumptions carefully, to analyse and reason out what is said and done (Paul and Elder, 2006). According to the observations of Paul (1995), looking through the philosophers of criticality in the middle-ages, thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas encouraged the awareness of the potential power of reasoning, while Francis Bacon observed that the mind cannot safely be left to its natural tendencies. In Italy, Machiavelli did not accept the traditional way of thinking as rational and he analysed particularly the political actions of those in power against their real agenda (Paul, 1995). During the age of Enlightenment, there was a movement towards the need to understand things through reason and on the basis of evidence and truth. Immanuel Kant's answer to the question 'what is Enlightenment' in 1784 suggested that Enlightenment is the courage to use one's own understanding to free oneself from dependence on others. In his emancipation essay in 1784, he declared:

'Enlightenment is man's exit from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in the lack of understanding, but in the lack of resolution and courage to use it without guidance from another. Have courage to use your own understanding!'

(Kant, 1784, p. 2)

It is easy to depend on others and make this 'immaturity' your nature, said Kant (1784), and to be ruled and guided by others without questioning the reason behind the rules. He continues to say that to assume things without questioning and to carry a false belief with conviction can be almost delusional. Sumner (1940) suggested that escaping from such a state requires us to apply critical thinking, which he says is our guarantee against delusion, deception and superstition.

In the 1900s, thinkers such as John Dewey (1933, p. 118) suggested that critical thinking is a 'careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends'. Nietzsche (1968) followed Kant's thoughts more

closely and suggested that critical thinking is about freeing one's self from what culture has implanted in us, enabling us to begin to re-style ourselves. Foucault (1975) took Nietzsche thoughts further to say that critical thinking is an individual effort; each individual questioning and re-thinking their own history and reviewing inherited concepts and ideas to work out new thoughts. Individuals possess knowledge and information applicable to them, but their dependence on others makes them lack courage and determination to use their own reason. Foucault (1975) reasoned that the role of the 'expert' should not be seen as that of a problem solver, but rather as one who provides the instruments for the analysis of knowledge and information.

Freire (1970) recognised the need to raise a learner's awareness by teaching them to think democratically. He encouraged learners to ask questions continually and make meaning by critically reviewing their knowledge or what they learn. Freire discusses what he called the 'banking' system of education', like a bank where learners come to withdraw the knowledge they need for life. He said knowledge should not be a commodity passed from the teacher to the learner, but, instead, learners must construct their own understanding from the knowledge they possess and the information they acquire and critically appraise that information to make meaning. Freire's main focus was on the oppressed, and the limiting factor to the success of the oppressed majority is non-critical thinking. He acknowledged that learning is a process whereby knowledge is presented to us, then shaped through understanding, discussion and reflection (Freire, 1990).

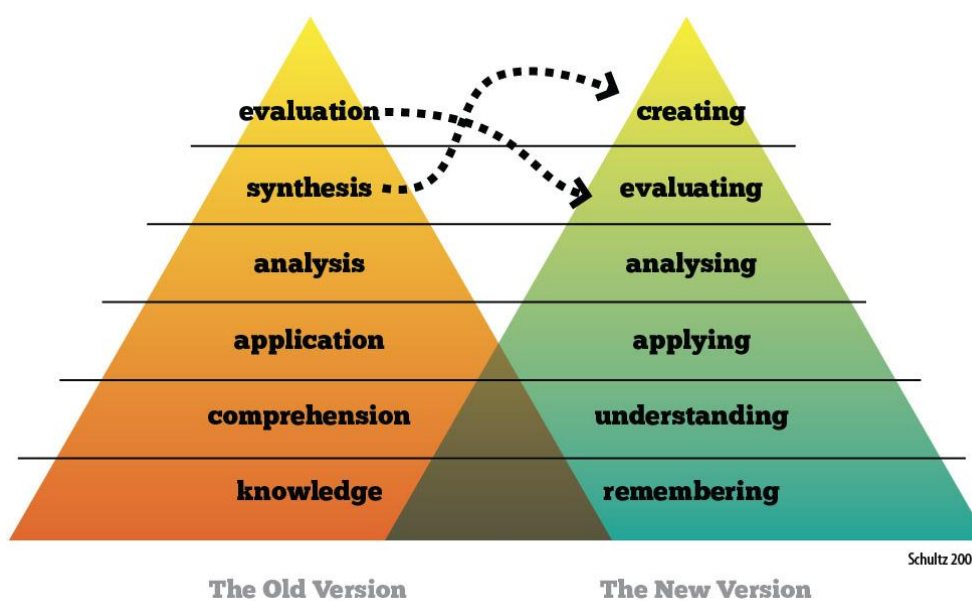
In recent times, there have been various contributions from thinkers such as Brookfield (1987) who believed that a teaching process can be used to either empower or oppress the learner. Brookfield (1987) suggested four processes of critical thinking - identifying and challenging assumptions, challenging the importance of context, imagining and exploring alternatives reflective scepticism - and then deciding what to do (Brookfield, 1987). Another contribution by Facione (2007) recognises that teaching people to make good decisions is equipping them to improve their own futures and become contributing members of society, rather than burdens on society (Facione, 2007). He reminds us, however, that practising good judgement does not

guarantee happiness or economic success, although it may offer better chances for those things and avoid the consequences of poor choices that drive us to become burdens to others. Paul and Elder (2006) believe that critical thinking is a way of opening systems, which enables us to see through ideologies and to put things into intellectual perspective. He says that critical thinking analyses thought, assesses thought and transforms thought for the better.

Critical thinking continues to develop in its form and nature and the various definitions available show the different ways to look at it. Some common descriptions include one by Dewey which suggests that critical thinking is 'an active, persistent and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey, 1933, p. 118). Sumner said it is the examination and test of propositions of any kind which are offered for acceptance in order to find out whether they correspond to reality or not (Sumner, 1940). Ennis (1958, 1996) suggested it is reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do. For Brookfield (1987), it is rational and purposeful attempt to use thought to move towards a future goal and is productive, positive, open and engaging process. Paul (1995) sees it as the mode of thinking about any subject content or problem in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skilfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them. He says critical thinking is a process where one thinks about thinking in order to improve their thought process (Paul, 1995). There is no particular consensus on a definition, but these definitions or descriptions agree that it is a way of thinking that demonstrates skills in analysing and assessing issues. It is a process of questioning, evaluating, reflecting and critiquing 'common sense' and being open to other views in a self-directed manner in order to put things in perspective. It is an active, persistent and careful process that is more than passive listening.

Critical thinking requires skills to generate information and then analyse that knowledge to guide our decisions. This process is not as simple as it might appear, and over the years some have attempted to come up with lists of steps, such as Glaser (1941). His list included; recognising problems, finding

practical means of solving those problems, gathering important information, recognising unclear assumptions and values, understanding and using language clearly and accurately, interpreting data, assessing evidence and evaluating statements, recognising existing logic and then arriving at a conclusion and generalisation. There is an assumption that different levels of thinking are required for the process, from the knowledge level to the analysis level. Bloom (1956) recognised the need for this process to move in a hierarchy and he created the taxonomy of learning, which included six domains - knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation - all building upon each other. This was later reviewed by Anderson et al. (2001), who changed the names from noun to verbs and rearranged the hierarchy, with the last two changing places. He believed these changes reflected a clearer idea of the process of thinking critically.



Blooms taxonomy and Anderson's revision. Source Schultz, 2005

Figure 2.1 - Blooms taxonomy

So, if learners follow a series of steps, will it really enable them to think critically? Is critical thinking a skill that we acquire, or is it a way of life that enables us to use logic, to reason and to stimulate our curiosity? Barnett (1997) talks about becoming more than just critical thinkers and suggests it is more wholesome to become a critical being.

The Critical Being

Barnett (1997) looks at critical thinking as being more than a set of skills. He sees critical thinking as an approach to life and proposes the concept of 'a critical being' which embraces critical thinking, critical self-reflection and critical action. He said 'critical persons are more than critical thinkers. They are able to critically engage with the world and with themselves as well as with knowledge' (1997, p. 1). He encouraged awareness through self critique and challenging what is stated. Barnett (1997) said individuals should be changed or transformed through learning, and which changes their world in that process. Critical beings need to develop their own knowledge systems, to place themselves in a context where they test what they know and how that knowledge is influenced. He suggests a way of looking at being critical in levels and comes up with three domains - critical reason (knowledge), critical reflection (the self) and critical action (the world). He emphasises the need for education to be transformatory, for learners to be able to contest and challenge issues as a way of freeing themselves from beliefs and knowledge systems that limit their potential.

According to Barnett (1997), speaking particularly in the context of Higher Education (HE), there are some approaches, such as those orientated towards outcome, for example learning outcomes, problem based learning, and competencies, which may have a tendency to limit critical thought as the outcome is already defined. He suggested there should be learning resources which include 'open conversation where the end is uncertain' (p. 59). Such ideas would require critiquing whole thoughts, which brings in the capacity to interrogate and reflect on concepts and presuppositions. This also seeks to understand the origin of a thought and its current function in society as well as the power it wields in society. Barnett said there is recognition of the need for critical thinking in which individuals should not allow themselves to form a culture of, or a dependence on, one way of doing things but must work towards self-reliance, to develop a wide range of skills. 'The self has to develop... and it has to be up to the individual to determine how they will develop themselves as selves' (p. 121). The world is continually reshaping itself with each individual responsible for the quality and development of their work. It

therefore becomes necessary for individuals, and indeed communities, to think about their abilities to achieve, which needs to be built on the basis of their belief in their capabilities to do things for themselves. The concept of doing things for ourselves comes from the strength of belief in our ability to achieve what we set out to do, the ability to produce an intended result - our efficacy.

Self and collective efficacy

Efficacy is the power and competence to produce a desired effect. Self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's efficacy, a belief in one's capabilities to produce or take action. It is different from self-esteem, which is about self-worth, and different from confidence, which is about the strength of a belief. Our attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills make up the self-system, which plays a major role in the way we perceive situations and behave in response to different situations. Self-efficacy is an important part of the self-system. According to Bandura (1995, p. 2) self-efficacy is 'the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations'. It is the belief in one's own ability to succeed in a situation, determined by the manner in which people think, behave and feel. Setting goals and thinking about things we would like to accomplish or achieve is not entirely difficult; what becomes a challenge is putting the plans into action. Bandura (1995) found that self-efficacy plays a role in the way in which goals are approached. He suggested that those with a strong sense of self-efficacy view tasks as problems to be mastered; they develop deeper interest in activities, form a stronger sense of commitment to their interests and recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments. On the other hand, those who avoid challenging tasks and believe tasks are difficult and situations are beyond their capabilities focus on personal failings and negative outcomes and quickly lose confidence in personal abilities.

Self-efficacy beliefs begin to form early in life as one begins to deal with a wide variety of experiences, tasks, and situations. They continue to evolve throughout life as people acquire new skills, experiences and understanding. Bandura (1995) identified the major sources of self-efficacy as mastery of

experience, where performing a task successfully strengthens a sense of self-efficacy while failing in a task can reduce or weaken it. Social modelling is another source; this involves observing others succeed in a task which then leads people to believe they can also perform the same task and have the capabilities to succeed. Another source is social persuasion, where people can be persuaded to believe they have the skills to succeed through verbal encouragement which can be useful in overcoming self-doubt.

Using sources such as those suggested by Bandura has the potential to influence individual self-efficacy beliefs that are generally useful in human functioning and in changing external circumstances through belief in one's action to achieve a goal. In the same way, acting in a group, collectively, is an important motivator to achieving group goals (Prossia and Kinicki, 1996; Bandura 1977). Thus, a belief in an individual's contribution towards a group goal can support overall collective participation (Corcoran, Pettinicchio and Young, 2011; Hornsey et al., 2006; Mummendey et al., 1999). In recent times, there have been suggestions that perceived collective efficacy is a promising approach to consider in building capacity as it has been found to influence group performance effectiveness and goal attainment (Stajkovic, Lee and Nyberg, 2009, Goddard, LoGerfo and Hoy, 2004). Shared knowledge, the skills of different members and the interaction and transaction dynamics all support a group to attain collective agency. When a group's collective belief in its ability is strong, the group's shared thoughts and commitment towards achieving the goal are increased (Goddard et al., 2004). Beliefs lead to actions, as the choices that individuals and groups make are influenced by the strength of their efficacy beliefs (Goddard et al., 2004). As judgments and actions are partly self-determined, people are able to effect change through their own efforts, according to Bandura (1977).

Alinsky (1971), in his approach to community organising based on self-reliance, believed that people should be supported to do things for themselves. Alinsky suggested that the role of a community organiser is not to solve the community's problems but to help the residents develop capabilities to solve their own problems. The community organiser should serve as an enabler towards constructing a self-directing community that unifies, enables and

motivates its residents. Such a goal requires equipping people with skills, a belief in their own efficacy and an incentive, built on increasing awareness of the benefits of change and of innovations beyond mere attitude change. This change should aim at fostering desired behaviour, where people behave in new ways that they can associate with their own actions and not those based on support from others.

Why is it important?

If critical thinking helps us make better informed decisions, then we are able to avoid certain mistakes that would have occurred unnecessarily. There is no specific guarantee that critical thinking will provide success and happiness, but it helps avoid dependence on others and choices that may lead to unnecessary difficulties. In the words of earlier thinkers such as Immanuel Kant, critical thinking liberates us, guides us through the journey of finding meaning for ourselves and helps us understand why we believe what we believe. As critical thinkers or critical beings, we do not naively accept knowledge or situations, we re-think our circumstances based on the evidence we gather, in order to improve our situations. Critical thinking is not being suggested here as the perfect route to freeing man from what Kant (1784) referred to as 'immaturity' but it can pose as a starting point for assessing what one needs.

Critical thinking has been criticised for its potential to be a process of over-thinking issues and not effectively arriving at a decision, a process of analysing that does not end, or even an attempt to crush ideas without a useful purpose. But if critical thinking is used constructively with the purpose of attempting to understand our knowledge and to reason things out, then we are able to put issues into perspective and this can be a positive process. Critical thinking allows us to question things, and this enables us to construct new ideas from knowledge that we have and to build on that knowledge rather than always depending on other people to 'help' or 'advise' us without applying ourselves first. The process of critical thinking becomes useful in a learning process, as each learning encounter becomes an opportunity to analyse the information and knowledge acquired and mine the information for its usefulness to a

process such as that of developing our communities. Learning throughout life is an ongoing process that is self-motivated and aimed at gaining and improving knowledge and skills that would help people to live the life they choose. This is a form of learning process that is continuous and directed at specifics that are useful to the learners, as we see below.

2.4 Lifelong learning and development

Lifelong learning is about acquiring and updating all kinds of abilities, interests, knowledge and qualifications. It promotes the development of knowledge and competences that will enable people to adapt to society and actively participate in all spheres of social and economic life, taking more control of their future.

Lifelong learning places value on all forms of learning, including formal, non-formal and informal learning. It is about providing opportunities to update skills and advance levels of knowledge. Lifelong learning reminds us that learning is not something solely associated with childhood or with formal education; it goes beyond that to mean many different things to different people (Field, 2000; Rogers, 2003). For some, it represents competitiveness and skills. For others, it is an economic perspective tied to a concern with continual professional and vocational development throughout a person's working life. There is also traditional formal adult education for 'mature learners' after the end of compulsory school. Here, providers often offer opportunities to learn that are not tied to issues of employment or economic performance, such as learning new languages or how to paint, stressing the value of learning for continued adult well-being. Others insist on the importance of the many different kinds of learning that extend beyond the worlds of teaching, education and employment (Gelpi, 1985; Hayes, 1998; Lengrand, 1975; Rogers, 2003).

Yeaxlee (1929) and Lindeman (1926) are some of the people credited with the idea of education as a continuing aspect of everyday life. They drew on developments in adult education that were described as helping people to live

more successfully and gain greater fulfilment in their personal lives, as well as to assist them in solving personal and community problems. This was the definition provided by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982). The idea of adult education was that learning should be for life thus, 'lifelong learning'. Lifelong learning is seen as a way of building upon existing education that goes beyond formal education and settles on beliefs that individuals are, or should become, self-reliant (Tight, 1996). Learning in this context goes beyond organised instruction that takes place in classrooms, lectures, labs or seminars. Learning thus becomes more than a special activity that happens from time to time in special places; it becomes a feature of life. The ability to integrate learning as a way of life can be affected by psychological habits and strategies of learning. There are certain dispositions, self-beliefs and habits of mind that underpin a generally positive and open-minded attitude that enables learning to take place (Dweck, 1999, 2006). Attitudes and habits of mind formed early in life enable learners to extract from their experience. Dweck (1999, 2006) has shown, in a wide range of studies and contexts, that people's levels of resilience in the face of difficulty or frustration reflect beliefs and assumptions they have acquired about their own mentalities and abilities.

Critical thinking in lifelong learning

Growth and progress require knowledge, ideas and know how. Because of the nature of lifelong learning, it includes multiple types of people and is conducted in different types of formats and mostly consists of adult learners. Adult learners have different learning needs; it is claimed that they enter into learning purposefully, with great motivation, and tend to retain and make use of what they learn better and longer than do other learners (Rogers, 2003; Knowles 1975). Merriam and Caffarella (1999) see the process of adult learning as that of transformation through experience, critical reflection and eventually development. They see this as a learning process where the learner actively constructs new ideas or concepts. Constructing ideas requires internalising knowledge and building the learning based on the information learnt. Piaget (1950) referred to this process as accommodation and assimilation, where individuals construct new knowledge from their experience and their learning.

This means learning becomes an individual's active process to discover principles, ideas and facts. Critical thinking enables people to go through this process, to focus on their development and to review their motivation, self-efficacy and even their attitudes towards the learning process.

Theorists such as Kolb (1984) followed on from the works of Dewey and Piaget to develop ways of enhancing critical thinking. Kolb created a model of experiential learning based on four elements; experience, a reflection on experience, forming abstract concepts arising from that reflection and finally testing the concepts. Schön (1983) talked about reflective practices, which is perhaps best understood as an approach that promotes autonomous learning and aims to develop students' understanding and critical thinking skills. According to Schön (1983), reflective practice is a set of abilities and skills that indicate that critical thinking has taken place in an attempt to solve a problem and may involve activities linked with thinking about the learning experience.

Lifelong learning and development are linked in a process that can be dependent on each other. Lifelong learning supports the development of skills, boosts confidence and helps build the networks and resources needed to tackle problems and become aware of opportunities. Learning within a development process is about enabling individuals to successfully achieve future goals. A development process that integrates learning should have the capacity to support and work in partnership with local communities to plan, design and deliver individual and organisational development.

Summary

This chapter has reflected on the ways in which development unfolded in the early stages and considered issues that gave rise to the need for international development. It explored colonialism, reviewing its origin and its effects and observed how colonialism affected the individual and community's views of themselves and their abilities to conduct business that affected them and their communities. Drawing on philosophers of criticality, a lack of critical thinking was discussed as a contributor to the challenges faced by developing

communities, reflecting on its effects on local culture and language. Critical thinking was also reviewed as a way to support communities and individuals to begin to ask questions about what they know for the purpose of ensuring that the decisions made are those that they have chosen for themselves. This means that learning, particularly lifelong learning, becomes part of a development process, aimed at equipping development actors to view learning as a way of life, as a continuous process and a key focus of development. If the purpose of supporting development is to encourage self-reliance and long-term viability of projects, then development programmes need to be designed in a way that reflects that process. The next chapter looks at development realities by unpacking and reviewing the process of development programmes to establish how they support real change and how the various actors are engaged in the process.

Chapter 3: Development: realities and capabilities

Introduction

Development, if it is seen as having the potential to lift people out of situations of poverty, should be centred on those who need to be lifted out of poverty. Poverty as a concept can be as ambiguous in the same way the concept of development is. Questions, such as why some people are poor and others wealthy and why some countries with valuable resources are desperately poor and those with limited resources well off, are difficult to answer. Using the views discussed in chapter two, in the case of Africa, many have blamed colonialism for playing a role in the destruction and extraction of resources. Colonialism has also been blamed in part for affecting self-efficacy and eventually critical thinking and self-reliance, abilities which are essential for meaningful progress. This chapter takes a different angle; where the previous chapter acknowledged history and its effects, this chapter looks at how to put right some of the wrongs and focuses on ways of moving forward. For development to be effective in lifting people out of poverty, it needs to place the people in need at the centre of the process, through an emphasis on engagement, participation and long-term and viability of projects. This chapter evaluates the effectiveness of approaches such as the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA), which are designed with people at the centre of the process. The chapter then reviews the question of what real change is and how the concept of reciprocity contributes to meaningful progress. Human development is then explored through the capability approach, which seem to have potential for a real contribution to genuine development.

3.1 Sustainable livelihoods

Development is often linked to poverty where it is considered as a way that can improve the conditions of people in poverty. Approaches to development

that have become popular in recent times are those that adopt a perspective of understanding the conditions of poverty and establishing suitable ways to intervene. This type of approach begins with assessing assets, including strengths and capabilities, and connecting them with a wide context of information to design an intervention plan that will bring positive change. Intervening in this way is seen as useful in involving those who are affected by poverty and in building up a holistic view of the situation based on what they have and what can be done. This is a useful approach to understanding their lived realities and the different aspects that form their way of life and their coping mechanisms. Sustainable livelihood approaches differ from others in the way they examine lives as a whole and do not focus on specific aspects such as financial situations only. They also provide a participatory framework that is useful basis for a process of reflecting and acting together, both individually and collectively (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Neefjes, 2000).

The process of developing and implementing sustainable livelihoods can be useful in identifying barriers that prevent the poor from accessing services to improve their well-being. In order to create long-term viability in development projects, clear objectives, development priorities and an emphasis on putting people at the centre of development are all necessary. This type of development approach involves assessing community assets, adapting strategies and technologies contributing to livelihoods, and analysing policies and investment requirements that will enhance livelihoods. Livelihoods are about securing necessities such as shelter, food and water, and a sustaining livelihoods process means going beyond aspects of income generation to look at ways in which vulnerable people are excluded. A sustainable livelihood process is therefore a holistic and flexible framework for understanding, measuring and analysing poverty and ways of poverty eradication and looking at a person's ability to sustain a livelihood (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Carney, 1998; Neefjes, 2000; de Haan, 2005).

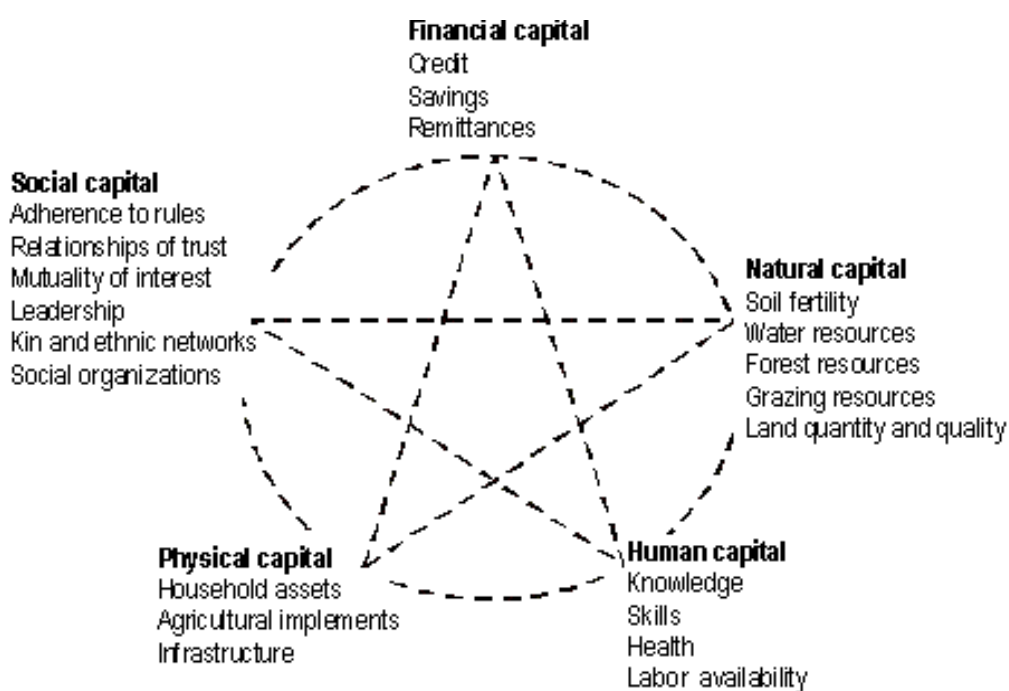
The concept of sustainable livelihoods first appeared in the Brundtland Commission Report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The report provided a definition that contained the key concepts of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, and the idea of

limitations imposed by organisations on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). When organisations intervene in response to a need by providing aid for that specific situation and do not ensure a strategy for longer-term viability of the programme, they may end up creating situations that require further interventions. To address such situations, the HDRs from 1990 focused on development in terms of individual and household general well-being, thus shifting the focus away from the macroeconomic bias of earlier development thinking towards a more integrated approach. In subsequent HDR reports, the focus continued to be on poor people and their needs, the importance of citizen participation, and an emphasis on self-reliance and project long-term viability. Chambers has contributed widely to the concept and, together with Conway, came up with a comprehensive definition that is commonly used. There is focus on the ideas of capability, equity and an emphasis on the ability to recover from 'stress and shocks' and to 'maintain and enhance' capabilities into the future (Chambers and Conway, 1992, p. 4). Their description says,

'A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long-term'. Chambers and Conway (1992, p. 7)

In order to construct livelihoods, basic material - social, tangible and intangible assets - are required. These are conceptualised as 'capitals', stressing their role as a resource base from which to derive different productive streams (Scoones, 1998). The framework below identifies five key types of capital, and these are in no way exhaustive. The first is the human capital, which includes skills, knowledge, good health and the ability to work together. Social capital is second and covers social resources such as relationships, networks and the trust which people draw on when they need to

reciprocate or exchange. Third is physical capital, which is the tools and equipment needed for productiveness as well as basic infrastructure such as housing or transport. Financial capital is the fourth and includes income, savings, welfare and benefits. Finally, there are the natural assets; for example, soil fertility and livestock and in some cases, public assets such as libraries or local government facilities are taken into account.



Bebbington (1999) and Carney (1998)

Figure 3.1 SLA Capitals

Different capitals draw attention to various resources and can often be used in combination, with some combinations being used over seasons and between years depending on set goals. These capitals work together in assessing the potential opportunities for a community and are useful in designing a framework for intervention that is people-centred and sustainable.

Sustainable livelihood process

There are many approaches to sustainable livelihoods, and development agencies select a suitable framework that will benefit an intervention (Butler and Mazur, 2007). The sustainable livelihood process supports the idea that development interventions should begin with a reflective process to create a broad vision, one where ideas of what needs to be achieved are identified. The history of development interventions shows that projects planned to deliver change to a community without careful consideration of its requirements often end with results that are not clearly visible. The SLA aims to change this by being people-centred and involving those intended to be helped by the change. This encourages engagement in line with participatory approaches and in general it provides opportunities for community-based learning where people can learn from each other as well as from outsiders (Butler and Mazur, 2007). The combination of the five key capitals mentioned earlier forms an attractive holistic approach built in from the beginning and not added on at later stages. The approach builds from an existing knowledge and experience base and takes into consideration and acknowledges that livelihoods are dynamic and not static. Reviewing the local background helps development actors to appreciate why things are the way they are, why people do what they do, the nature of decision-making and the trade-offs and conflicts that are likely to occur. This process is useful in setting clear objectives for the interventions and is about creating specific frameworks that suit each situation. There are no specific or precise methods that must be used; the flexibility of the approach means it can be implemented in many different ways depending upon the local context and the expertise of those doing the analysis (Carney, 1998; Neefjes, 2000).

However, the SLA is not without its critics, as identified below. One of the main criticisms is the lack of visibility of people. In the capitals or assets figure shown earlier, they are supposedly represented by 'human capital'. Guyer and Peters (1987) say this can become rather mechanical and a quantitative process, playing squarely into arguments of post-modernist critics. Neylan (2008) argues that this does not need to be a disadvantage as there can be advantages in using numbers and statistics for information. The number of

elements represented in each type of capital makes it difficult to select how many and which assets. Trust among actors is also closely related to measurement of the capitals, due to the importance of reliance on participants to respond accurately to questions. When asking participants for information, for example about asset ownership, the line of questioning may appear suspicious to the local participant and the response given may therefore be inaccurate. This has the potential to affect the outcome of the process (Carney, 1998). People have different ways of adapting to change their circumstances and the process of sustainable livelihoods may not detect this heterogeneity. The sample sizes used in the process may not be large enough to represent all the actors and this has a danger of becoming more of an end in itself. The SLA places great emphasis on the abilities to cope with and recover from stress and shocks, and to maintain capabilities and assets. These can often be necessary during unpredictable situations for example a credit crunch, political instability or outbreak of disease. These shocks can have a huge impact and can only be predicted at short notice. The SLA may provide a neat and simple representation of processes, but real lives are often more complex.

Despite the criticisms raised, the SLA forms a good place to begin an intervention process if the focus on key elements of importance is maintained. For example the UNDP focuses on three elements which they deemed to be of central importance; income, health care and education. Using information about these elements can make substantial contribution and decisions can be made about the analyses and the interpretation to those that need to make use of it (Sanderson, 2002; Pawson, 2006).

Adopting sustainable livelihoods in practice

Embracing an SLA supports a commitment to participatory approaches in development and it ideally appeals to both continuity and change. Many earlier development programmes assumed communities were homogenous, and as a result development interventions were focused on specific aspects that supposedly fitted all (Pawson, 2006). Understanding the elements affecting

communities enabled the developer to create a 'sustainable livelihood framework' (SLF) suitable for specific initiatives. An SLF provides a useful conceptual base for understanding people's living circumstances and analysing the impact of regulations on their livelihoods. Its flexibility allows it to be adapted to incorporate elements necessary for the success of different development circumstances and it builds on established perspectives as well as re-aligns new ideas in order to focus on effective development. Using an SLF means making a conscious effort to promote livelihoods by looking at ways to strengthen asset bases and find points of leverage so that interventions make the maximum impact. Usually, an important objective is to create opportunities for people to diversify their livelihoods, broaden their asset base and develop conscious strategies to reduce risk and vulnerability and to cushion shocks and stresses. For example, the United Kingdom (UK) Government's Department for International Development (DFID) conceptualises SLF in ways in which people operate within a vulnerable context. They look at how it is shaped by different factors such as constant changes of constraints and opportunities, economic shocks and longer-term trends. The inter-relationship of different elements and their influence on one another is reviewed while keeping the core as people-centred. It also advocates for the development of policy and practice in ways that flow from an understanding of the poor and their livelihoods. The framework encourages analysis that cuts across different sectors and recognises a range of actors and influences as well as multiple livelihood strategies and outcomes. It is dynamic in the way that it understands change over time and the complex interplay between different factors (DFID, 2000).

The CARE international framework uses the approach as a planning method. Using Chambers and Conway's (1992) livelihoods definition, they put fundamental attributes of human capabilities, access to tangible and intangible assets and the existence of economic activities into the framework. There is an emphasis on the dynamic interrelationship between the different aspects of the framework in the same way as in the framework from DFID, but, rather than look at the five capitals, it distinguishes between capabilities and activities. The CARE framework lays emphasis on a 'light' conceptual framework and attempts to include other approaches, while allowing for

flexibility in adaptation, lessons to be learnt and multiple actors to contribute to the evolution of the livelihood framework (Drinkwater and Rusinow 1999; Frankenberger and Drinkwater 1999).

UNDP sees livelihoods as the means, activities, entitlements and assets by which people make a living. To the UNDP, sustainable livelihoods are those that are able to cope with and recover from shocks and stresses such as drought, civil war and policy failure through adaptive strategies that are economically effective, ecologically sound and socially equitable. People's strengths rather than their needs are considered important in making the necessary micro-macro links (Carney, 1999; Drinkwater and Rusinow 1999; Frankenberger and Drinkwater 1999).

The examples above demonstrate the commitment on the part of development agencies to support activities towards sustainable livelihoods. Despite emphasis on different aspects, the core of their aims is similar. The key question of how these commitments and core aims translate to transforming lives still remains, as do the concerns about the role played by different stakeholders.

Transformation of roles among stakeholders

McLeod (2001) argues that being pro-active in development opens opportunities for transformation through the development process. If the community is actively involved in identifying, designing and implementing projects, different points of views and an unwillingness to compromise can prevent consensus over such activities. Dialogue is key to the success of such initiatives where discussions, negotiations and interactions between actors can demonstrate an inclusive attitude that can support activities for change. Success is dependent upon the effectiveness of good relations between the implementing agency and the local communities, and critical engagement promotes inclusion and recognition of the influence of each actor. McLeod (2001) stresses the importance of the capacity of communities in determining the effectiveness of projects. He says that when local communities take responsibility for their own development, they invest time and knowledge and,

in the process, create further knowledge base about their own community that is essential for future projects. This process of actors working together creates links and networks of government officials, private sector professionals and NGOs that enables access to the sharing of skills. This is illustrated by Lowe and Schilderman's (2001) example of participatory design workshops, which accelerated the approval of housing and small commercial business premises in a number of informal settlements in Nakuru, Kenya, reducing the time taken to obtain building permission as well as reduced costs.

3.2 Realities of 'good change'

Such relationships between actors and the opportunity for dialogue as seen above can be useful in identifying realities as perceived by a community, and thereby creating a chance for 'good change'. Reality is about looking at the way things actually are rather than the way one might imagine them to be. Identifying the realities is a useful component in the process of development and Chambers is at pains to emphasise this in his various writings on rural development. Chambers (1993, 1997) believes in developing the human condition, the environment and creating sustainable livelihoods for the well-being of all. He said previous development approaches provided support to the communities from the perspective of the developer, while ignoring the interests, experiences and knowledge of the local people. The objectives of development should move from being income related to enhancing well-being, from increasing employment to sustaining livelihoods, based on the priorities identified by the local people. Local people need to have the freedom to be able to identify their own development priorities, and to do this, equality and justice needs to exist. This is what Sen (1999) saw as a prerequisite to a meaningful process of development.

Development as freedom

According to Sen (1999), a lack of freedom contributes extensively to a lack of development. Poor economic opportunities, systematic social deprivation and

neglect of public facilities are some of the contributors to lack of progress and development. Despite the increase in general wealth, there are denials of elementary freedoms as argued by Sen (1999). Sen (1999) argued that the lack of substantive freedoms relate directly to economic poverty that robs people of the ability to satisfy hunger, to obtain remedies for illnesses or to adequately provide shelter for themselves. What is achievable is influenced by economic opportunities, social powers and enabling conditions. Exercising freedoms of choice and making decisions that encourage progress of opportunities are interconnected (Sen, 1999). There are many instances of denial of freedoms: famine denies people the opportunity to survive, lack of access to health facilities and a clean environment denies people the opportunity for good health, and lack of functional education denies people the opportunity for gainful work opportunities. Having freedom to do things one values is significant to the person's ability to foster valuable outcomes and is a basis for determining individual initiative and social effectiveness (Sen, 1999). The quality of life becomes central to the process of freedom and of development. Sen (1999) did not suggest that freedom is a panacea for development but rather pointed out the importance of freedom in the development process in order to effectively evaluate issues that really matter. Debates and discussions that may arise from such a process may indeed be development in themselves.

Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania, saw the connection between freedom and development, and added education as a valuable contributor to that process. He believed strongly in the role of education, particularly adult education, as a means of freedom. He pegged the role of education to social change and therefore development. Accordingly, development should be about liberation from restraints and limitations of ignorance and dependency. He said,

‘...education has to increase men's physical and mental freedom, to increase their control over themselves, their own lives, and the environment in which they live’

(Nyerere, 1978. p. 27-28)

Nyerere's argument was that education needs to give people the tools they require to develop themselves and to be able to decide for themselves what development should be. He was clear that if the aim of education is to obtain a certificate, the liberating impact will not be present. He called it the 'disease of the acquisition society' where one accumulates knowledge in the form of pieces of papers, uses them like legal tender, but does not effectively use the knowledge acquired for their own development (Nyerere, 1978).

Nyerere (1974, 1978) looked at development and freedom as linked together in the way that chicken and eggs are; you need one to get the other. He identified freedoms as national and individual - the national level as that which enables citizens to determine their own future and govern themselves, and the individual level where the right to live in dignity and equality with rights and authority to make decisions about one's own life is enabled. Defending one's rights effectively comes from an understanding of what those rights are and how to access them using existing systems. Understanding such mechanisms and those rights, according to Nyerere is part of development (Nyerere, 1978). Nyerere created 'ujamaa' (role of the family in Swahili) as a socialist system of village cooperatives, based on equality and self-help. Through the 'ujamaa' programme, Nyerere laid emphasis on the development of people and not things, focusing on the importance of governance from within the villages themselves rather than from outside and on the need for self-reliance (Nyerere, 1968, 1978). The ideas of 'ujamaa' had mixed results in practice, as noted by Samoff (1990) in his detailed study of education in Tanzania. He recognised the complex internal and external dynamics within that process, as did Pratt (1976) in his study on 'the critical phase in Tanzania 1945-1968'. Both Samoff (1990) and Pratt (1976) believed that the implementation strategy was to blame, as Nyerere did not address the scarcity of trained and experience personnel to take the ideas forward. Pratt (1976) believed that the lack of a strong, competent and creative public service meant that sufficient issues to take the ideas of development forward were not addressed.

Equality and justice

Freedom can be a contested concept. It encompasses equality, and involves the question of where an individual, national or other type of equality begins or ends. At what point does one person's freedom and equality begin to interfere with the next person's? Being able to appreciate other people's values and consider issues of justice can often provide a starting point. Sen (2009) reviewed the manner in which philosophers such as Rawls, Hobbes, Rousseau and Kant took the model of a social contract as the means to secure agreement over the allocation of freedoms, obligations, equality and goods among individuals. We perceive justice on the basis of our own customs, values and interests but when we use our critical reasoning abilities, we can go beyond our own environments and begin to appreciate other people's values. Adopting Adam Smith's idea of the 'impartial spectator', Sen encouraged comparisons and stepping outside one's own values and prejudices in order to reason about them and identify those that do not stand up to such reasoning. Advancing justice, therefore according to Sen (2009) is a process of collective reasoning, building up information and observing various perspectives. It is the possibility of continually voicing what is happening within one's society (Sen, 2009). In his view, development is about social justice, and he believed that people care about others, with the support of just institutions, but that just institutions cannot ensure social justice if equity - fairness and impartiality - does not exist.

Equality requires justice in the process of the equal distribution of resources. This may leave us with difficult questions about how to determine what 'justice' is. In his book - *'The Idea of Justice'*, - Sen (2009) gave us a scenario with three children and a flute. One wants the flute as she is the only one who can play it, the next one claims it because he has no other toys, and the third one says she should have it because she made the flute. These are all legitimate claims; how should this be decided? To answer this, we would need to consider human fulfilment, poverty reduction and the entitlement to own what one has made. How we approach this problem will be based on our view of justice and our ability to justify what we stand for based on the needs of our communities. To be totally just to each of these situations may not be

practical, so we should be reasonable in how we approach the issue and should focus on alleviating some injustice in order to enhance equality for everyone.

Equity could therefore be stated to be about moral equality that seeks to treat people as equals. This enables the possibility of the fair distribution of goods and services in society and offers equal life chances and equal concerns about people's needs. Power imbalances in many societies lead to injustices and have negative effects on development. The equality concept is based on the idea that despite their many differences, people share common human dignity and therefore need to treat each other with consideration. Our actions towards each other should be governed by respect and with standards such as relevance and consistency (Williams, 1962). Relevance is the connection between the way one person responds in providing aid to those in need, while consistency is about the reasons behind our intentions, so that means that we respond to those in need without being selective. Equality is a useful concept in setting goals for actions by governments and states, as well as showing respect for moral equality in the relationship between the governments and state with its citizens, as argued by Rawls (1971).

The interpretation of equity and what qualifies as relevant ways of distributing goods and services is complex. Following arguments by Sen (2009) and Sandel (2009), a dialogue on justice needs to be a central to the process. Important principles include equality of life chances, where the central principle is that there should be no differences in life chances based on factors beyond a person's control. If factors that may influence a person's welfare outcomes, such as family circumstances or place of birth, are used as a guide for deciding on support, this may suggest that the principle has been violated (Roemer, 1998). A concern for the needs of all people equally will consider the distribution of goods and services using criteria that respects people's humanity. The goods and services referred to here are those that satisfy basic needs such as food, shelter, health and basic education, which are prerequisites to people being able to contribute as part of society (Wiggins, 1998). Inequality contributes a great deal to poverty and slow development as seen in a number of measures of well-being that show a strong correlation to more equal countries doing better. This is evidenced in the study by Wilkinson

and Pickett (2009), which shows the relationship between equality and life expectancy, trust, crime, birth-weight and HIV among other factors in their study '*why equality is better for everyone*'. Another study by Vandemoortele (2009) looks at the way in which high inequalities between income groups, classes or castes can contribute to insecurity, crime and violence, as societies become more polarised and conflict is more likely. In a similar way, inequalities between groups that differ in religion or are from different regions potentially contribute to destabilisation, violence and social disintegration (Stewart, 2001).

The difference in perspectives and priorities between the agencies and the local community is evident from the examples above. This means that greater clarity is required when dealing with development issues to ensure that what is of value to a community is central to the development intervention. This way of considering development needs to begin with the values that are important to the community and think about what can best serve that community, building on the capabilities the people already have. Value is a complex concept which can be difficult to pin down, and the next section reviews what value is in the context of this study.

3.3 Concept of value and reciprocity

What is of value to a person or community forms a value system which is the foundation on which other measures such as those of integrity are based. A value can be broadly described as a preferred course of action or outcome and reflects a person's or community's sense of right, wrong, fairness and equality. They are abstract concepts of what is important and meaningful. In examining the concept of value and exchange, Graeber (2001) described value as those things that exist in relationships and associations and inspire action. To Graeber, value becomes something social, something people care about but which is sometimes not given adequate attention, such as play, leisure, hobbies, learning, or entertainment and which people sometimes hold in private only. We hold these issues close to us, but we also like to share them. In analysing Mauss' work, Graeber (2001) pointed out how Mauss asks about the

natural human idea of sharing, of gift-giving, such as when a friend invites us to dinner and we bring a drink in exchange for the gift of being invited. These feelings of the need to reciprocate are human feelings that are often discounted, said Graeber on Mauss. Graeber (2001) argues that even when objects of great value are exchanged, it is the relationships between people that matter, and the exchange is about creating friendships or obligations. Graeber (2001) asked why gifts should be repaid or exchanged and responded by suggesting that although they do not have to be, the process of the exchange plays a role in the relationships that are formed or likely to be formed.

Reciprocity and gift exchange

Reciprocity is an exchange relationship of gift giving; Gregory (1982) believed that one gives gifts in order to establish relationships, by placing people in debt. Gregory (1982) suggested that the relationship of debt is necessary for the process of reciprocation. Reciprocity in anthropology is a way in which people exchange in an informal manner and forms part of informal economic systems. Marshall Sahlins (1972, 2004) identified three main types of reciprocity. The first is, generalised reciprocity where sharing and giving is uninhibited and occurs without expectations of anything in return. Sahlins (1972) said this is an act of reciprocation because the giver gets a sense of satisfaction - for example with parents and children or a married couple. The second, balance reciprocation, is about giving to someone else and expecting a return in exchange. This is likely to happen among, for example, friends, neighbours or co-workers and is based on trust that an exchange will happen at some point in the future. Finally, negative reciprocation is similar to barter where goods or labour are given and an exchange of the same value is expected immediately; this usually takes place among strangers.

Reciprocity as a mechanism of voluntary exchange indicates that those participating are willing to continue in a social bond and shows an expression of goodwill and of sharing among those involved. It is founded on the trust that, as long as there is an exchange/reciprocation taking place, there is a

willingness to continue the engagement. This activity embodies social engagement elements of an egalitarian relationship of equality between those involved (Restakis, 2010). Reciprocity can be driven by basic generosity towards cooperating with those who think in the same way that we do and, those engaged in this are called 'homo reciprocans'. Homo reciprocans care about the wellbeing of others and about the process towards an outcome that serves the individual as well as the community, producing collective efficacy. The commitment in such a process is one of seeking the balancing of burdens and rewards through a process such as that of gift exchange (Graeber, 2001; Restakis, 2010).

Many of us are unaware of the power of gift giving in a meaningful sense, we think that we give, we receive, then move on. Mauss (quoted by Graeber, 2001) explored the power in our act of giving and receiving. Whether we are aware of or highlight that power in giving and receiving, Graeber (2001) suggested that Mauss believed that there is more meaning in the process of that exchange, even if it is subconscious. He said that although there is no direct requirement, we feel the obligation to return that gift in a different way. This is partly because of the bond created by the transfer of possession of what was owned by the giver and we therefore feel the need to respond. The concept of giving without an agenda and the concept of reciprocation may differ in different societies in, for example, its reasons and in its focus on the essential aspect of maintaining alliances through this practice. Some have argued that Mauss' idea of the need for reciprocation may dilute the concept of a free gift given willingly with no obligation to reciprocate. Laidlaw (2000) suggested that a free or pure gift should be the focus of giving rather than an exchange of gifts, particularly through donations and sacrifices, and that focusing on the need for exchange destroys the symbolic nature of the intention. By creating a situation where reciprocation is expected, Laidlaw (2000) continued to say, we may create a situation where a debt arises, which needs to be paid off. But this does not mean that no form of reciprocation - intellectual or otherwise - should be acknowledged, which is where Laidlaw's pure gift concept may not hold up. Mauss (1925) argued that, for early societies, gift exchange was important as it involved a simultaneous expression of a religious, legal, moral or economic nature. This form of exchange often

occurred between whole groups through their leaders and would include goods such as wealth and property as well as courtesies such as military assistance. Mauss added that the gift was never free, that reciprocation was expected. In such exchanges, a degree of reciprocation was useful in continuing communication in an amicable way.

3.4 Developing human capability

Countries and communities have different development priorities and to compare them against each other, one would need to determine what the meaning of development is to each of them. It would be necessary to establish whether development is about national wealth or about the well-being of the nation and to determine the manner in which development is measured. Bronfenbrenner (2004) said that the key to human development is the interaction between ourselves and the environment that we live in, the family, home, community and society. He believed that in early life as well as throughout the course of life, complex processes takes place continuously. He observed that human beings create the environments that shape their own development and that human beings can also develop those environments to optimise their practical abilities. What makes human beings human, therefore, is both the potential to shape their world in physical, social, technological and cultural ways and the possibility that these actions will nurture positive development (Bronfenbrenner, 2004). The production and consumption of the resources available in the environment in which communities live will affect the type of life they lead. Supporting development in communities will therefore need to focus on the aspect of 'human development' that empowers them to develop abilities for self-reliance and creativity in life choices.

Human Development

Developing human beings is mainly concerned with expanding people's choices, so that they become aware of a wider world and the possibilities for what they can do and can be. It means there are opportunities available to enable

choices in one direction over another. Issues such as poor health, poor sanitation and lack of education indicate fewer choices, and development should focus on supporting access to those needs much more than on increasing one element such as economic wealth only. This is a departure from the belief that developing and increasing the wealth of a community has an impact on the development of individual lives. Sen (1985, 1999) argued that if individuals are able to access resources such as education, health and a good standard of living, then development has occurred or is occurring.

The basic goal of human development is to create conditions in which people can live meaningful lives. A meaningful life requires people to be healthy, to be able to develop their talents, to participate in society and to be free to achieve their goals. Haq (1995) described human development as that which enlarges people's choices and improves their lives and Sen (1999) added that it is an approach that deals with the basic idea of increasing the richness of human life rather than the wealth of the economy. Human beings therefore become the real wealth of an economy and developing and expanding their opportunities and capabilities enables them to live creatively and productively. These capacities manifest in the skills, talents, competences, proficiencies and potential of humans in producing income and improving their own welfare.

Investing in people empowers them and enables them to grow and develop as humans. The idea of human development is supported by the concepts of equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment;

- a. Equity - fairness to all and equal access to opportunities available, irrespective of gender, race, income or caste.
- b. Sustainability - ability to have continuous opportunities and to earn a sustainable living while using resources carefully in order to preserve them for future generations.
- c. Productivity - enriching productivity by increasing capacities through increasing knowledge, accessible social programmes and health facilities.

- d. Empowerment - enabling power to make choices and thereby generating well being. This type of power comes from increasing freedom and capability. (Alkire and *UNDP*, 2010)

The approach to achieving human development has evolved over the years from the income approach, which stated that the level of income reflected the level of freedom an individual enjoys, to the welfare approach that linked human development to government expenditure on welfare. The idea was that the level of expenditure reflected the level of human development, therefore a higher level of government expenditure on welfare meant a higher level of human development. Then there was the minimum needs approach proposed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which covered the basic needs of health, education, food, water supply, sanitation, and housing. This approach believed that the higher the provision on basic needs, the higher would be the level of human development (Allen and Thomas, 2000). The needs approach linked with the capability approach promoted by Sen and Nussbaum focuses on what people are able to do. The key to increasing human capabilities is a focus on providing for needs and supporting access to resources. The capability approach suggests that the freedom to achieve well-being should be understood in terms of real opportunities to 'be' and 'do' what is of value to individuals (Nussbaum, 2011).

Capability approach

The capability approach emerged as a framework about well-being, development and justice. It is sometimes referred to as 'capabilities approach' to emphasise the plural elements of people's quality of life. There are traces of this approach in thinkers such as Aristotle and Adam Smith, and in more recent times it has been associated with thinkers such as Sen and Nussbaum. This approach suggests that freedom to achieve well-being depends on what people are able to do or to be, which translates to choices on their lifestyle. People need to know what these choices are and how to claim them as rights. It is necessary to create an awareness of such rights through educating and

equipping communities to ensure that these rights are respected. Therefore, the nature of education, its contents and how it is processed are important considerations. The contribution of education and learning to creating capabilities needs to go beyond creating employment skills for a livelihood and income generation to creating capable beings. Supporting the development of capabilities should involve empowering individuals and communities and encouraging skills such as critical thinking (Nussbaum, 2011).

Nussbaum (2011) looks at capabilities as the availability of genuine opportunities where questions such as ‘what are people able to do?’ are considered. This emphasises the shift in the capability question from resources (GDP and income) to abilities and skills, which create freedom and opportunity. Nussbaum (2011) approaches capabilities from a social justice angle, using the basic entitlements from a general list of capabilities. The list includes life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotion, practical reason, affiliation, other species, play and control over one’s environment (p. 33-34). She observes how this general list of capabilities would be seen as obtuse or even imperialistic if applied with disregard to the diversity of the world’s people. But she argues that cultures often borrow from one another and adopt ideas from elsewhere. Some of the borrowed cultures may already be familiar, having already been practiced under different names or approaches in the other, but the basics of human rights were present. Using the capability approach requires taking into consideration the difference in cultures. Supporting freedom for individuals and communities to make their choices should take precedence and must be respected when framing concepts. Nussbaum (2011) acknowledges Sen’s point that simply looking at capability as a matter of lack of opportunities and providing a remedy consisting of hand-outs cannot be a suitable solution. It would be more appropriate to address the issues that cause these situations.

To Nussbaum (2011), education is important in creating opportunities and therefore capabilities. She says ‘a true education for human development should be much more than basic literacy and numeracy’ (p. 155). Many nations are focusing on a narrow set of marketable skills with perceived potential for generating short-term profits. Wider skills, such as critical thinking, however,

provide 'the ability to imagine and to understand another person's situation from within, and a grasp of the world's history and current global economic order are essential' (p. 155).

The capabilities approach is becoming an important way of addressing social justice issues. The approach can contribute to national and international debates 'to be pondered upon, digested and compared and if it stands the test, it can be adopted into practice' (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 187). It is important to enhance capabilities in order to meet the challenges of an evolving environment. The capabilities approach to development looks at a person's ability to evolve while developing their ability to use their skills and knowledge effectively and to strengthen their life skills (Nussbaum, 2011). Taking into account the acquisition and use of knowledge through critical reflection, problem solving and decision making enhances self-management skills. The results of such a process are being aware of one's self-esteem and self-confidence and being in charge of one's own future, and then acting to bring about change. The ability to learn day to day social skills such as communication, assertiveness or empathy enables us to learn to live together and begin to look beyond the individual to think about developing the wider community. This creates the need for enhanced capabilities and development interventions that aim to develop those capabilities, and thus the capabilities approach described below.

3.5 Capacity development - capability approach

Supporting communities in development efforts should take into account their capabilities and supporting the development of their capacity should become central to a development initiative. Capacity building or capacity development focuses on identifying the obstacles that inhibit individuals, organisations or societies from reaching their development desires. The key focus should be to strengthen the skills, competencies and abilities of communities that are excluded, to alleviate suffering. Enabling communities to develop and improve their well-being means increasing capabilities by focusing on access to resources. The terms 'capacity development' and 'capacity building' are

sometimes used interchangeably with the assumption that they mean the same thing. Capacity 'building' may imply that there were no capacities in existence before the interventions, and therefore the need to build capacities. Capacity 'development', on the other hand may indicate that there are some capacities already existing, which require to be developed. This research uses the term 'capacity development' as it recognises that a certain level of capacity is likely to exist. The term capacity building is used when quoting directly from specific text or organisations.

Components of capacity development

There are various ways to look at capacity development. Schon (1983) and Senge (1990) suggested that capacity development should comprise of intervention at the individual or organisation level, where reflective practice and continuous learning and quality improvement are key. There are various ways to describe capacity development, and what follows are a few of the key ones. The UNDP see's capacity development as the process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time (A UNDP *Primer*, 2009). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) looks at capacity development as the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole create, strengthen, adapt and maintain capacity over time (OECD/DAC, 2006). To the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), capacity development is the activities, approaches, strategies, and methodologies which help organizations, groups and individuals to improve their performance, generate development benefits and achieve their objectives (CIDA, 2000).

From the definitions above, one can observe an emphasis on own development, use of resources and strengthening of existing capabilities. This shows a desire to enable individuals, organisations or communities to develop the capability to be self-reliant and to be authors of their own development. Horton et al. (2003) identified the common features of capacity development definitions as -

an ongoing process, the aim to increase the ability to carry out functions and achieve objectives, the aims to increase the ability to learn and solve problems, the aims to create the ability to deal with the issues of today and remains relevant in the future (Horton et al., 2003). These are huge goals to achieve within one complex process such as an international community development, and ensuring that those whom the development is aimed at benefit from such a process can be a challenge.

The Capacity Development Process

Capacity development has evolved from a focus on enhancing technological and self-help capacities to a powerful force in international development that promotes empowerment and participation. Capacity development is often thought of as the training of individuals, with capacity conceived as a means to achieve individual or organisation skills or knowledge. Much of the traditional approach to capacity development focuses on providing material resources, technical skills and capability to make appropriate decisions and to implement them. This translates into specific training programmes to provide technical support in designing and implementing programmes (Nevers, Leautier and Oto, 2005). When organisations are in the process of planning an initiative, they use an approach that includes identifying needs, designing a response plan, implementing that plan and then evaluating their performance. The UNDP uses a capacity development framework that is a 5-step process;

- engaging with the stake holders - encouraging participation from those involved as this will get them to share ownership of the process and allow for more effective decision making as well as creating transparency;
- assessing capability needs and assets - to identify what areas require training and prioritising. Without this assessment, UNDP reckons that there would be a restriction to training alone without any project long-term viability plan;

- formulating a plan - through institutional arrangements to formulate policies and procedures, build strong leadership, invest in establishing education systems and opportunities and implement accountability measures;
 - implement a capacity development response - involving a continuous reassessment and including evaluation indicators to measure effectiveness; and
 - evaluation - this should promote accountability and measurements based on change in performance;
- (A UNDP Primer, 2009)

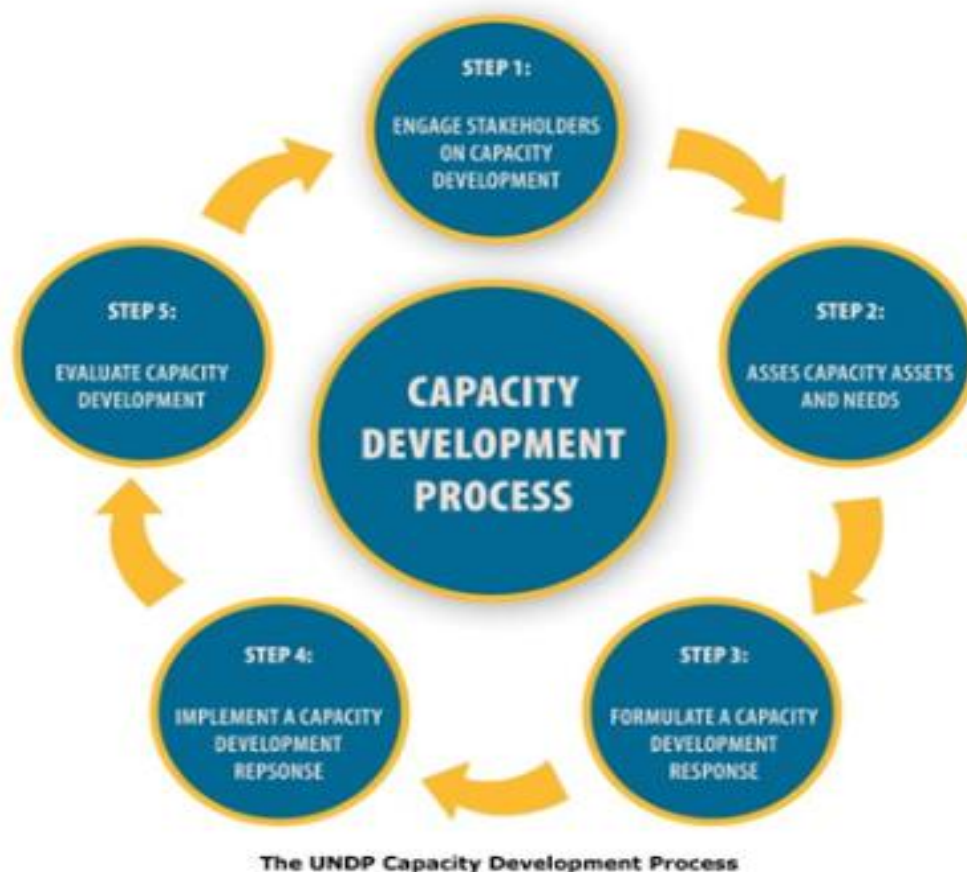


Figure 3.2 - UNDP Capacity development process

The UNDP uses this approach, which is focused at institutional level, based on their belief in the centrality of institutions in human development (UNDP,

2009). The UNDP framework is commonly used by many development agencies, which often use it as it is or adapt it to suit specific programmes. Other agencies have designed their own capacity development frameworks. The examples given below from different key players in development, were chosen as they illustrate the point about process from different development agencies.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an economic development programme of the African Union (AU), a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal. NEPAD aims to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa necessitated by the need to address the challenges facing Africa. The key objectives are to eradicate poverty, place African countries on a path of sustainable growth and development, halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and accelerate the empowerment of women. NEPAD considers capacity development as a key focus and uses a 'capacity development strategic framework' (CDSF), comprising a cycle with 5 stages;

- Engage stakeholders - identify the challenges and broad direction required to enhance capacity;
- Identify assets, constrains and opportunities - available assets, background, constrains, seek reasonable consensus;
- Craft vision, results and actions - specific visions, focused goals and results aligned with capacity improvements;
- Act, learn and adopt;
- Evaluate, upscale and convey message.

(NEPAD, 2010)

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is the Australian government agency for overseas aid with the objective of assisting developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. It was integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in October 2013. AusAID believes capacity development is about change that enables individuals, organisations and social systems to improve their competencies and capabilities to carry out functions and effectively manage the development processes over time. AusAID believes capacity building initiatives need to be

considered from a systems perspective, taking into consideration the dynamics and inter-relationships amongst issues and actors in the different environments. The model used by AusAID reflects the degree of reliance on and involvement of the adviser, and the degree of 'ownership' or responsibility from the other actors. The capacity building needs of the target group are identified and the strategies agreed on. The process stages are:

- Preparation and planning
- Agree definitions of capacity building stages
- Identify and document functions of the work group
- Assess current stage of capacity for each function
- Set target levels of capacity
- Identify strategies to build capacity
- Review capacity building progress and redevelop the plan

(AusAid/Dfat, 2013)

The Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) is a leading education and research institute for developing knowledge and capacity in water and sanitation for low- and middle-income countries. WEDC sees the importance of contributing to resources that deliver quality, targeted and efficient capacity building across diverse communities. In one of their projects, WATSAN, the development of a framework for capacity building provided a strategy to improve the ability of NGOs to help meet the challenging targets for coverage of water supply and sanitation services. The framework used was based on underlying principles of flexibility, using an evidence base and ownership, centred on a series of annual regional evaluations (WEDC, 2010).

These few examples show a commitment to values - the beliefs, cultures, attitudes, incentives and motivations of the people in the system. The structure and operations were set up in a way that focuses on skills that produce capabilities and competencies. They were created in a cyclical process that can be summarised in four main areas as shown in the diagram below - stakeholder engagement to assess needs, formulating and developing a response, implementing the response and, finally, evaluation. This summary

and the core questions that emerge from the four key areas will be used in the process of analysis in chapter seven.



Figure 3.3 - Summary of frameworks

Capacity development focuses on creating an environment that allows local people to develop their communities and is concerned with strengthening capital - physical and institutional, as well as human capital (Morgan, 1998). Capacity building is largely portrayed as technical and is conservative in nature, using the approach of ‘transferring’ knowledge and manipulating the beneficiaries to conform to certain ideologies (Samuel, 2000). Some capacity development projects do not incorporate the advances made regarding the psychology of learning and knowledge construction. The need to stay current and use advanced approaches ensures that projects are taking into consideration methods that can benefit communities and shows commitment to progress. Enhancing participation and increasing skills do not necessarily translate into social changes. The main issue is the nature of that

participation, the type of skills or knowledge being promoted and the targeting of the interventions. In order to build long-term capacities at all levels of society, Samuel (2000) and Morgan (1998) suggested that there is a need for a degree of commitment and ownership to provide an environment that enables strengthening of self-awareness and critical thinking.

Transformation through social change is influenced to a degree by people-centred approaches, such as those developed by Freire in the 1970s, giving rise to knowledge sharing through dialogue and learner-centred approaches. Other approaches, such as experiential learning, have shown the importance of processes such as reflecting and conceptualising previous experiences to inform further action (Kolb, 1984). The value of recognising local knowledge and the role it may play in constructing new information and methods is significant. Nussbaum (2000) and Sen (1997), see capacity as much more than a programme or a means to an end. They are concerned about inequalities in society and how to address them. Human beings differ in their personality and characteristics as well as the external environment and social conditions around them. These differences affect the way in which their resources and wealth are applied into capabilities. Exercising choice and being in control of factors influencing the surrounding circumstances are key to achieving the necessary quality of life (Morgan, 1998; Plummer, 2000 and Horton et.al, 2003).

Summary

It is possible that the ability for a community to design its own development contributes a great deal to the success of that process. Being able to sustain a way of living through that process becomes important for the development process as well as for understanding the realities that affect its success. This chapter explored the manner in which the SLA takes into account the existing capitals within communities and works with that to support the development of capabilities to cope with shocks and stress of changes. Different cultures may need to determine their own way of describing what is acceptable in terms of ability and progress for their own community. But, for the most part

playing 'catch-up' with the developed 'western' world seems to be the game being played. Having infrastructure, technology and financial methods that are created, defined and produced by these parts of the world has become the standard. Being aware of the realities on the ground is important, and it needs to encourage community participation to ensure that there is freedom to determine what development takes place. Supporting equality, justice and access to rights through a learning process is real development rather than having structures that are similar to another part of the world that may not mean very much to the local community. Development through building capabilities suggests the importance of a just society where equality of resources, accessibility of these resources and freedom to choose one's own lifestyle are necessary.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter looks at the aspects of theory that frame this research. It begins with a review of the perspective informing the selected methodology to provide a context for the process and to ground it in some form of logic. Critical theory is reviewed and its emancipatory values are explored. The role of dialogue in a participatory experience is important and is explored through the Freirean approach, to establish its usefulness in promoting critical consciousness. Due to the importance of capturing relevant views of development actors, engaging effectively with participants is key to this research process, and to the development initiatives themselves. This is reviewed through the participation part of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach. The research design is then presented, with the justification for the selected instruments, including the values and challenges which they bring to this research. Ketso, a creative participatory tool, is used in this research and its method is discussed. The chapter ends with a consideration of the importance of rigour in the research and a discussion of the ethical considerations relating to this process.

4.1 Theoretical concepts

It is necessary to appreciate that one cannot assume that there are predetermined social facts that can be collected and analysed; rather, the world exists in a fluid state of interaction that has to be interpreted in order to be understood even partially. Taking into consideration the fluidity of a process of exploration, a research study such as this would benefit from an interpretivist approach to analysing information to disclose meaning and the way in which people interpret and make sense of their experiences. This is particularly useful when taking on the tradition of accepting more than one reality and more than a single structured way of assessing realities, as

observed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Interpretivist views are often associated with particular beliefs about reality and the nature of knowing. They assume that reality is constructed through meanings and understandings that are developed socially and experientially. Mertens (2005) acknowledged this and said that 'reality is socially constructed', while Creswell (2003) observed that an interpretivist researcher tends to rely upon the participants' own views of the situation being studied. The interpretivist outlook supposes that findings or knowledge claims are created as a research process continues. Meanings can begin to emerge through dialogue, which includes a process of negotiating conflicting interpretations. Fostering a dialogue between researchers and respondents is therefore critical. It is through this dialectical process that a more informed and sophisticated understanding of the social world can be created. There is an understanding that truth is negotiated through dialogue and that interpretations are based in a particular moment and often located in a particular context or situation and time (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Interpretivists recognise that social actors construct a reality based on their own perceptions of reality. They recognise that individuals with their own varied backgrounds, assumptions and experiences contribute to the on-going construction of reality existing in their broader social context through social interaction. Because these human perspectives and experiences are subjective, social reality may change and can have multiple perspectives (Hennink, Hutter and Bailey, 2011).

Taking on an interpretivist approach, the aim in this research is to uncover insider perspectives on or the real meanings of, the social circumstances of participants. There is an assumption that the researcher is entering the process with some prior knowledge about the topic, but that that knowledge may be insufficient to develop into a complete research design. This is discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) where they emphasise the nature, complexity and unpredictable nature of perceived reality. The research process, particularly the data collection, therefore enables the researcher and participants to interact and construct the perceived reality in a collaborative manner, Hudson and Ozanne (1988) recognise this as consistent with the interpretivist belief in the human ability to adapt and stated that no one can gain prior knowledge of

time, and context, bound social realities. Dialogue is therefore a critical element of an interpretivist approach, where adequate discussions between the researchers and participants are necessary in order to construct a meaningful reality in collaboration. The fluid nature of the interpretivist outlook means that what we know is always negotiated within cultures, social settings, and relationship with other people.

Reality, or what is perceived as such, tend to be taken for granted, as it has been crystallised over time, having been created and shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender-based forces. There are many people, including researchers, who function under the assumption that for all practical purposes these structures are real. These unchallenged realities and assumptions can hinder progress in different ways. Critical theorists seek to challenge such assumptions. Critical theory commits to doing research based on, and is designed to contribute to, a clearer understanding of the world beyond the basic, one that is focused on overcoming particular kinds of social division. There may be a tendency to see methods of data collection in critical theory as implying particular forms of social relations that can themselves be judged as more or less equitable. In general, this has tended to lead to the use of qualitative methods, and sometimes, particularly with an interpretivist perspective, can take a form of action research or participatory inquiry. This perspective forms the basis of the framework used in this research, in that it uses a critical theory approach supported by adequate discussions facilitated through a Freirean dialogue approach and uses participatory action inquiry to emphasise the value of all actor relations.

4.1.1 Critical theory

When engaging communities in the development of the world around them, it becomes necessary to actively involve them and to see the world in the way that they see it. There is a need to focus on real problems from the perspective of those who are affected and to review the facts in order to establish whether there are any conflicting interests that could expose power relationships that might exist. These are the main concepts that underpin

critical theories. Critical theories have practical goals of identifying and overcoming circumstances that limit human freedom (Gibson, 1986) and as Horkheimer (1982, 1993) said, a critical theory aims to assess the gap between ideas and reality. Here, I look further into critical theory and how it is related to this study.

Critical theory is attractive for this research because it aims to dig beneath the surface of social life to uncover assumptions about our world and seeks to find ways to improve it. Marcuse (1973) said that critical theory is a critical evaluation of facts by passing beyond their given form. A specific purpose of critical theory is to seek human emancipation, as observed by Horkheimer (1982) who believed critical theories seek to liberate human beings from the circumstances enslaving them. A critical theory provides a basis for social enquiry aimed at increasing different forms of freedoms, and there are many critical theories that have developed from various social movements seeking to emancipate humans from the many dimensions of domination (Hoffman, 1987; Scholte, 2000). Reflection is an important aspect of critical theory, and Putnam and Conant (1994, p. 174) suggested the need for social activities to 'involve a moment of inquiry' and therefore the need for a moment of self-reflection about the assumptions presented. It is this type of reflection that calls for a practical form of critical perspective. This perspective is a form of cooperative practice, and the researcher carries out this step with the participants whom they intend to involve.

As critical theory seeks to confront social, historical and ideological forces and aims to uncover certain biases and construction of reality, it will be a useful basis from which to explore the nature of capacity building initiatives and relations, especially that of their power dynamic. Understanding the way by which one is disadvantaged enables one to take action to explore reproduced myths and challenge the opposing forces. A critical theory is critical in the sense that it brings to our consciousness, an oppression of which we may or may not have been aware of. It calls for us to criticise, to resist and to change an existing system of domination and of being disadvantaged. Critical theory focuses on the influences of the social world, including hierarchies of knowledge and power in the development of practice, and critically reflects on

how knowledge is generated (Gibson, 1986). Approaching this research with that perspective enabled the process to be one that generated meaningful information. The value was the potential to get a local community to think critically in a way that is transformative, to challenge the established ways of knowing and to seek to understand the influences and structures of authorities and leaderships.

As identified by Immanuel Kant, individuals and communities need to have confidence in making their own choices, to use the knowledge they have to transform their own lives and to become enlightened. This research explored how that process takes place and the role that critical thinking plays in the questioning of beliefs and assumptions, as well as probing what is known and how it is known. It looks at how knowledge and assumptions are challenged in order to support decision making and self-reliance.

Some concepts that underpin the development of critical theory include emancipatory objectives. Emancipation seeks to go beyond describing or explaining problems to provide tools for resolving those problems through enabling people to gain more control over their lives (Gibson, 1986). The process develops through enabling consciousness, where-by individuals or groups identify the social, economic or political contradictions that may exist and then seek to take action against those issues (Blackledge and Hunt, 1993). This study therefore is located within the aspect of critical theory where it focuses on actively involving people in the construction of facts and the concepts through which they see the world.

Emancipation

There are various actors in the process of international development, aiming to intervene in order to alleviate poverty. But who defines poverty or development, what are the priorities of the local people in the development process and do the local people feel empowered enough to engage with the powers within international development? To respond to such questions would require an approach that is exploratory in nature with a focus on encouraging

self-reflection aimed at emancipating. According to Creswell (2003), the emancipatory approach is one that recognises and seeks to correct issues around self-reliance, empowerment and power imbalances. This process of emancipation, he said, is one that is transformative in a way that enables oppressed people to work towards freeing themselves from a position of dominant hegemony (Creswell, 2003).

The emancipatory focus aims to solve the problems of the real world and challenge traditional power relations. Mertens (2005) says 'all knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society and an important purpose of knowledge is to help people improve society' (Mertens, 2005, p.139). An emancipatory approach therefore provides a useful way in which this research can examine underlying issues as, according to Mertens (2005), it extends thinking on democracy and responsiveness. Creswell (2003) suggests that this way of exploring encourages those involved to go beyond the mere transference of knowledge and skills to focus instead on participation, dialogue, critical thinking and consciousness-raising.

By approaching the research in this way, I hoped to explore how stakeholders involved in international community development can work together to identify and question distorted assumptions that may have inadvertently been present in their minds and which may limit progress. Mezirow (1991, p. 118) described distorted assumptions as those 'that limit insight and openness to other ways of seeing themselves and other people'. He said such distortions of information and assumptions may result in a sense of powerlessness in various individuals, groups and communities as they perceive themselves to have lost the ability to make choices and are increasingly subjected to the external prescriptions of others. This way of thinking may have a disempowering effect and may prevent individuals and communities from seeking the changes that they need to improve their communities and their lives.

Knowledge, an important part of a development process, is not neutral, but is influenced by human interest and reflects the power and social relationships within society. According to Lather (1991) and Mertens (2005), knowledge has an important purpose of helping people improve society. The authors show how

the process of emancipation is a transformative one where there is an attempt to be free from a dominant hegemony. So how do development agencies ensure that the development process is free from their dominant influence and allow the communities some level of independence in deciding the direction of the development? Many development frameworks used in capacity development initiatives look ideal, as they appear to address key areas of the process. A closer look at development frameworks, however, reveals that the process is usually designed and managed by the development agency, rather than being a shared responsibility among all the actors in the process. Thus the question that this research was interested in exploring was the elements of the freedom which the local community is afforded in such a process in order to build the type of community they want.

Exploring issues of self-reliance in capacity development initiatives in this study will raise questions such as whose development it is, development as defined by whom, what the community's capabilities are and how deficient or underdeveloped capability is assessed. Exploring these issues does not in any way undermine the processes and frameworks observed. It is necessary in order to appreciate the approach and motivation of the 'capacity developer', and, to understand the context they are operating from and the basis of the outcomes that they are expecting. Lather (1991) suggested that there is a need to explore the contextual location in which meanings are produced and she acknowledged that the production of meaning may be multiple and fragmented as audiences are rarely homogenous. She continued to say that the emancipatory outlook is based on approaches that create space for those involved to promote transformation through their own understanding of the world. As Freire (1972) suggested, the struggle for emancipation and transformation needs to be in the control of those who suffer the injustice and/or inequality so that they can resolve the issues that set them apart and which are part of their understanding of the world around them. Lather (1991) agreed with this and added that the role of intellectuals with liberatory intent is to make space for those involved to act and speak as they choose. The real development process is asking questions about how a community really wants to develop and what their priorities are and, supporting them in the process of

developing their capacities as part of a learning process. A process of asking questions in this way can take place effectively through dialogue.

4.1.2 Freirean approach

The Freirian approach is also referred to as the dialogue and problem-posing approach, the learner-centred approach, the liberatory approach or the participatory approach (Shor and Freire, 1987; Hope and Timmel, 1984 and Anorve, 1989). The approach encourages the flow of discussion on themes important to the participants, themes which are drawn from real-life experiences, making the process deeply contextual. A distinctive feature of the Freirian approach - dialogue - is described as a relationship between two people in which each party challenges the other in a situation of genuine two-way communication. Dialogue means that the relationship between leader and members is horizontal and learning occurs interchangeably between the two. The main goal of such an encounter is to discover reality together, to unearth false myths. This joint enquiry by means of dialogue into the experiences of our lives is also an exchange of information; as a result of this process, problems and themes can come to the surface. In the Freirian approach, action is seen as consisting of thinking and doing, beginning to take freedom through action, after reflecting. Freedom in this case means becoming more human and working towards a society where one person is not the object of another. This type of freedom also recognises the attempt to transcend one's own boundaries, boundaries which can create certain restricted situations.

Freire (1990) said systems of learning presented in a manner where the requirement is only to receive, memorize, and repeat, only prepare the learner to complete the process for a specific task. This approach leads to entrenching society in a system prescribed and probably controlled by another, and Freire sees this as dominating through the learning system. He says those in power purposefully and intentionally perpetuate this way of learning in order to control the consciousness of those they have power over (Freire, 1990). Freire called for us to be decisive and more questioning, which he referred to as being critically conscious, a state of in-depth understanding

about the world and the resulting freedom from domination. This requires an ability to first perceive social, political, and economic injustices and then to take action against these elements. Critical consciousness is a social concept and is grounded in critical theory, focusing on achieving a deep understanding of the world around us. Attempting to construct meaning and looking at action within the wider society demonstrates an effort to become conscious of the world around us. Freire differentiates critical consciousness from simple problem-solving. He says the process involves digging into reality and applying an in-depth interpretation of problems, avoiding distortion and preconceived notions when analysing issues. This process requires us to review positions we have accepted passively but to do so through sound argument based on the practice of dialogue.

Other contributors to the concept of critical consciousness such as Kincheloe (2008) explore issues of meaning and emancipation while focusing on the construction of the self. Critical consciousness is about engaging with questions of purpose, human dignity, freedom, authority and social responsibility (Kincheloe, 2008; Thomas and Kincheloe, 2006). When there is denial of opportunities to engage in dialogue, it can be seen as, by extension, as denial of opportunities for growth and progress.

Self-reliance through critical awareness

Critical consciousness requires examination of standpoints, identity and location. Social identities are influenced by historical, social-cultural and political factors (Kincheloe, 2008). The manner in which we position ourselves within the various identity groups affects the way we perceive ourselves and others. Some identities provide us with an advantage, while others can be oppressing. For example, a male individual would be privileged due to his gender, but can at the same time be oppressed by his race. Therefore, in such an example, perception of reality will be different based on gender or race. In these cases, the social-cultural perception causes each group to have a different narrative about their reality. People begin to form ideas, beliefs and values based on what they hear in the news, or what others tell them. There is

a lack of interest in digging deeper to understand the meaning of what we read or what is said to us. We fail to see the dominating nature of this way of life; we are oblivious. We watch silently as the equality gap widens and those with less (material wealth, intellect or our individual definition of less versus more) spiral deeper into poverty. Liberating our societies from such a position does not come by chance, but through resisting the processes that are equally beneficial to all. This begins with the realisation that action needs to be taken, by reflecting and being critically conscious of our circumstances. Seeing situations and circumstances as a limitation, rather than a closed world without an exit, is the beginning, a beginning from which those in a disadvantaged state can start to think about making changes for themselves, can keep themselves informed about what is happening in the world. Awareness of one's own prejudices and, blind spots and the belief in one's ability to change one's world should contribute to positive self-efficacy and eventually to becoming self-reliant.

4.1.3 Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Looking back to Lewin's (1944) view of PAR, we see how he believed people would be more interested in their work if they were involved in decision-making about how their environment was run. Lewin referred to 'action research' as a way to address issues of segregation and discrimination, assisting people to resolve issues and initiate change, while at the same time studying the impact of those changes (Stringer and Genat, 2004; McNiff and Whitehead, 2006). Freire (1990) also played a key role in the development of PAR stating that critical reflection is crucial for personal and social change, although his main concern was about empowerment and issues of literacy and land reforms within communities. PAR, developed in the post-war years particularly as a way to intervene within groups that were aiming at self transformation, has been used in many fields such as resource mapping (Fox et al., 2005) and leadership for sustainability (Marshall et al., 2011). These and other PAR applications have a common commitment - problem solving, while adapting to local needs. There is a commitment to focusing on dialogue, reflection and

action as a way of overcoming domination and subordination, and it is therefore closely linked to emancipatory action. Chambers (1989, 1997), in his work on participatory rural appraisal, contributed widely to the ideas of participatory action and focused on the community as the centre for the change required. A central theme in most PAR actions is the focus on social change and a relationship with the people whose lives will be affected (McIntyre, 2002).

Participatory action research is often considered a subset of action research, a systematic collection and analysis of data for the purpose of taking action and making change by generating practical knowledge (Gillis and Jackson, 2002).

PAR, as the name suggests, focuses on action within research. Participants are a key aspect of the process, as the change that is sought is that which supports them to inquire and to create the conditions for the change that they want. PAR integrates society through participation, engages with experiences through action and ensures the process is sound through the research process. Chambers (2008) suggested that the process is oriented towards knowledge-making and social change, and others such as Whyte (1991), Heron (1996) and Chevalier and Buckles (2008) added that it is a process where the focus is on 'research' and 'action' being done 'with' people and not 'on' or 'for' them. PAR-oriented inquiries attempt to make sense of the world through an effort to transform it, rather than studying and observing views on realities and behaviours. PAR tries to democratise knowledge-making and grounds it in real and meaningful community needs. It attempts to make genuine efforts, to go beyond effects of forces such as markets and industry and looks at community life.

An important aspect of community growth is that it should pay attention to practical problems in society where an expression of humanity is of interest. Knowing more about life conditions is useful for defending one's interests, where knowledge is not monopolised and attention is paid to knowledge production so as to tilt the scale towards justice for those underprivileged. This is one of the ways that Fals Borda (2006) described PAR. A participatory process can be a democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of the worthiness of human purpose. It is a view that seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, and in

participation with others in the pursuit of practical solutions (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). Chatterton et al. (2007) believed it is about a joint effort to produce knowledge with critical interpretations and a critical outlook on the world. It is focused on a shared commitment to challenge conventional knowledge production; who decides what questions to ask, how to ask those questions or how to theorise about the world? Working towards social justice requires there to be a target relating to a specific need of a specific group, community or society in order to be effective in the process of change (McIntyre, 2002). This process is supportive of the exploratory nature of this study where collaboration is important and working together with participants is useful as part of an interactive cyclical process of inquiry, action and reflection. The collective efforts and actions of the participants generate knowledge and liberate them to have greater awareness of their situation in order to take action.

Researching with PAR

Research using PAR methods differs from the conventional approaches to research in the way it focuses on knowledge, knowable truths and how knowledge is generated. Conventional research suggests that data should be collected using objective methods, leave minimal disruption and without contaminating a site or results. PAR operates in a 'messy' way with questions being generated as part of the data collection activity. In such a situation, the researcher needs to be practical, passionate and immersed in the process in order to have significant responses from those involved. The importance of being able to identify the origins of a problem and how the community can then solve its own problems was emphasised by Selener (2010). He suggested that this approach has an ability to create awareness about an individual's own resources that can be mobilised towards self-reliant development. Approaching research in this way may enable researchers to see deeper into the social reality of participants and may allow participants to become more committed in the process.

PAR methods offer ways to knowledge development in a collaborative, self-reflective manner. Common to most of these is the researchers' engagement with the process so that they can attain first-hand experience about the social situation as it unfolds (Gillis and Jackson, 2002). In interviews, data is collected by engaging in an inquiry about human experiences where participants discuss their experiences, ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words (Kvale, 1996). In PAR, the researcher might explore some general guidelines but extends respect for the participant and their chosen way of framing and structuring the responses (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). In focus groups, there is a process of social orientation through this form of group setting and a shared interest in those participating. Small numbers of up to eight are useful to facilitate effective communication, which in turn generates useful data. The researcher takes on the role of supporter and director to ensure the discussion stays on course (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). In PAR, all participants' viewpoints are recognised and valued, and leaving the choice of topic of discussion to the participants is necessary in order to generate useful information which is significant to them (McTaggart, 1997).

PAR is conducted in various ways, for example academic researchers and community members gather the data together through using conventional methods such as interview and surveys. The 'action' aspect is seen as helping the community to discover its assets as well as strengthen its capacity, support innovation and affect actions (Fals-Borda, 1991; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). In many cases, the purpose of PAR is to bring improvement through action in technical and practical terms, as Robson (2002) says, and he identifies three ways where that can be useful in improvements; in improvement of practice, improvement of understanding of practice and improvement of the situation in which the practice takes place. In recent times, there has been increased interest in research that involves active engagement with local knowledge and skills and how communities can be encouraged to use existing knowledge and skills to respond to local situations (Ennals, 2004 and Pine, 2009). This aligns with PAR aims of seeking to understand and improve the world by changing it through collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by researcher and participants, and enhancing the collective understanding of given situations

has potential to empower and lead people to have increased control over their lives (Minkler and Wallerstern, 2003).

This research focused on encouraging participants to critically evaluate and reflect on situations and to express their views on issues affecting them. This research was PAR because of the way it was used; it was used to act as a process of creating alternative possibility for critical thinking. Where PAR is usually seen as practical action, in this research, it is seen as intellectual and critical engagement, using the participants' application of knowledge. The use of Ketso enabled that process, where the participants' voice was given an opportunity and critical reflection was encouraged. In this way of using PAR, my role as a researcher was to facilitate and provide some form of leadership in order to generate and maintain the momentum required for such an approach to be successful, as suggested by Castro et al. (2004).

The data collection process for this study found Ketso tool suitable as a way of combining the key elements of PAR, with a focus on the importance of dialogue in a Freirean approach, in order to encourage thinking in a way that could also become a call to action. The creative and engaging approach of the Ketso tool to enable participants, particularly those in the community, to immerse themselves fully in the process was attractive. The Ketso creative tool was used in focus group discussion in community groups in this research.

Ketso Creative Tool

Ketso is a tool used to capture and display ideas from participants. It was developed in the mid 1990s and is designed to get people involved in decisions about their community. Ketso was invented by Tippett (The Ketso story, 2010), who was driven by the need to engage people in thinking about what was really important for them and to encourage solutions from a sense of identity and value rather than those imposed on the community. Tippett conducted research that explored new ways of combining participatory processes with ecological planning. She found that the hands-on tools that she developed as part of her action research and used in enabling community members to

engage effectively with the planning process were important in enabling community members to engage effectively with the planning process (Tippett, Handley and Ravetz, 2007; The Ketso story, 2010). Ketso, which means 'action' in the Sesotho language, where the first prototype was invented by Tippett, was designed to help people plan better using ideas from several sources. Based on theories of creative thinking, the design of Ketso drew on the work of de Bono (1973 and 1992) who believed in thinking in a way that changes concepts and perceptions. He described it as starting the thinking process with assumptions, certain concepts and boundaries, and seeking to change those pieces. This is lateral thinking, where the external world is organised into pieces that can then be processed in a creative manner using reasoning (de Bono, 1973). The graphic representation of the ideas and concepts in Ketso were designed in a mind mapping approach. Buzan's (2005, 2006) mind mapping and visual approaches were useful aspects in the design of Ketso, in helping to visually structure information, synthesise it and generate ideas while using Ketso. Howard Gardner's concept of multiple intelligence and ways of identifying intellectual ability and how people learn also influenced the design of Ketso, to allow for the interplay of written words, speech and the use of images. In addition, Kolb's (1984) concept of reflective learning was a practical influence as it sees effective learning as progress through a cycle of four stages - experience, reflection, contextualisation and testing.

The Ketso design is based on the concept of a growing tree with a stem or trunk, branches and leaves. The leaves are the pieces to write on, which are made of re-usable colour coded shapes on which ideas can be written and then displayed on a felt workspace. The centre piece represents the main focus of the discussion and the themes (branches) emerge from the centre piece. Ideas relating to these themes, written on the leaves, are then clustered around the appropriate branch. The ideas are written in different colours that relate to different questions - for example what works, what are the challenges and what are the ideas that can be used to move forward. The ideas (on the leaf-shaped pieces) can be moved around from one theme (branch) to another if the participants find it necessary. Participants can also interconnect ideas across themes using different markers referred to as 'icons', if they find that the ideas can be related to more than one theme. This way, the participants

are able to see where most ideas are gathered as well as where there are gaps, and this has the potential to stimulate a discussion as to why that may be the case. The participants can then use the 'icons' to mark what are likely to be the priority areas or areas of concern. The participants observe their ideas taking shape, which encourages dialogue and cooperation. This can then move on to a discussion about a possible plan of action (How does Ketso work, 2010). Engaging participants in interacting in a non-threatening way and in an open dialogue are important aspects of this exploratory research. Building on the emancipatory aspects of critical theory, Freire's dialogue approach and participatory action research allows the use of Ketso to be effective within the aims of supporting people to be aware of, and act on their capabilities. Below is a picture of Ketso being used in a focus group meeting during this research.



Figure 4.1 - Ketso tool in use during this research

PAR research difficulties

Respect for the autonomy and freedom of participants and groups in PAR is no different to other forms of research. Free ongoing consent is sought and the welfare of participants is considered carefully so as not to expose them to an unfavourable balance of benefits and risks in the research process. Within PAR, those involved are not considered as subjects; they are key partners in the inquiry and therefore the terms of the process need to be clear and the objectives marked out openly. Protecting themselves and each other against possible risks is important and the possibility of jeopardising relations between themselves, other partners and the wider community needs consideration. This should not however, prevent pursuit of battles against dominating interests. The empowering nature of PAR recognises that being heard and being expressive are likely to be more important than confidentiality. Those who wish to be heard and identified for their contribution need to be acknowledged.

Challenges

PAR is oriented towards engagement in order to solve problems and, therefore, interconnections and self awareness are important. It is necessary to address issues of the complexities of power through democratic dialogue. Small-scale participation may run the risk of failing to develop strategies for social transformation across many levels (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). The approach can also fall prey to powerful stakeholders and serve as an undermining way to bring global change to local settings and bypass genuine interests, said Chambers (1984). Data gathering and analysis is often done by the researcher and rarely involves the participants; my role as a researcher called for careful skills. It was necessary to ensure there was a balance between the importance of meeting the participants' need and meeting my research needs for developing ideas, as suggested by Cahill (2007). Power imbalances and the establishing of relationships can be challenging. There may be misunderstanding regarding the participants' perception of the process and the social issues to be addressed. In conducting this research I took Wadsworth's (1998) advice to take care in explaining the overall purpose, to avoid asking

unsuitable questions that may create tension and to watch for the direction that the discussions took.

4.2 Research design

A research study such as this requires in-depth understanding of issues and therefore the choice of design through which to conduct the data collection can make a difference to the type of information acquired. In order to get a perspective on the perceptions and feelings of all those involved, a qualitative approach was identified as likely to have the most practical potential.

4.2.1 Qualitative rationale

Fryer (1991) noted that qualitative researchers aim to understand the meaning of certain happenings in their customary social contexts. The information generated by a qualitative approach utilises a holistic system to understand and explain the research findings, rather than a system of numerical values (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). This study aimed to explore, decode, understand and interpret activity related to development initiatives and therefore needed to use a method that was open to change and the refining of ideas. Interacting with the participants in their own environment and using data collection instruments that enable the flow of information and an opportunity for free expression was required. A qualitative focus on the participants' own environment is useful in examining lived situations and in observing the participants in their natural setting. Meanings are important in this research, as well as the need to understand how participants interpret situations and what behaviours and responses they attach to certain actions. This way of researching was useful as it seeks to understand the inside knowledge of people and their outlook on life (Creswell, 2003; Simons, 2009). The opportunity to unpack the complex process that goes on between input and output within structures was useful to my aim of exploring how things happen and how they develop.

A qualitative approach was therefore particularly attractive as it provides rich and well-grounded discussions and explanations and can uncover unforeseen findings (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative instruments evoke a more realistic feeling of the research setting that cannot be obtained from statistical analysis and numerical data.

Qualitative research is sometimes criticised for lacking scientific rigour and for not being generalisable. Some say that it is simply a collection of anecdotes and personal impressions with strong researcher bias, which makes it difficult to reproduce if another researcher undertakes a similar study (Patton, 2000). However, qualitative studies are useful in enabling an in-depth examination of situations, to examine complex and value-laden questions and to illuminate issues that might need further investigation. It was important to ensure that this study addressed these basic criticisms, and there are some procedures available that are useful in establishing rigour, which will be discussed in later sections of this chapter. The reason for using a qualitative approach for this study was its attention to detail and ability to capture both verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Discovering meaning was useful as well as the opportunity for participants to discuss their perspective and communicate feelings. The study aimed to uncover the reasons, attitudes and motivations rather than just detailing the what, where and how of the process. In order to gain that level of insight into such a process, a qualitative approach and careful selection of methods was needed.

4.2.2 Data collection instruments

Focus groups and unstructured interviews were selected as effective ways of interacting with the actors in this study. A selection of documents used by various actors and organisations in international community development were also reviewed.

Focus Groups

Researching human interactions is complex and requires a reasonable understanding of the intricacies within their lives. It is necessary to attempt to uncover the layers of information held among people in a community in an approach that allows them to discuss openly issues affecting their group. Focus group discussions can provide invaluable insights and, when used properly, produce solid data. The structured nature of focus groups and the guided discussions allow facilitation to be effective for the purpose of collecting data (Patton, 2000). Through skilful probing, participants can be motivated to respond and new ideas can be pursued as they emerge. Such an exchange of ideas can be stimulating to participants in a way that does not happen in individual interviews (Puchta and Potter 2004). Focus group discussions gather opinions and gauge perceptions where each person is encouraged to participate (Patton, 2000). They therefore provide a collective activity and interaction among participants in a way that will benefit the exploratory nature of this study. In particular, the research was interested in observing how the groups interacted and responded to issues. This was important as it enabled the observation of how the groups perceived the well-being of their community by the way they generated debate and collectively interpreted meaning. Therefore, the success of my focus groups discussions depended on a clearly designed method, careful recruitment, an engaging process of moderation and a focused data analysis process. It was necessary to focus on clear questions for discussion and avoid forced-choice themes, as these are likely to produce data that is not reliable (Kitzinger, 1994, 1995). The aim was to obtain several perspectives and gain insight into shared or different issues that impacted or influenced capacity development. Kitzinger (1994, 1995) recognised the benefit of using focus groups in this way due to the element of interaction where participants are able to highlight their views of the world and display their beliefs about the situation. This supports them in re-considering their own perspective of specific experiences.

The nature of the questioning and the need to think about the liberatory nature of the issues being addressed required that the type of interaction be carefully considered. It is necessary to interact with focus group participants in

a way that enables them to be open, honest and without fear of expressing their true opinions. It is not always easy to overcome fear of judgement from others, lack of confidence in one's ability to express oneself and other fears associated with group interactions. In order to minimise these challenges, Ketso was selected as an appropriate tool to use to stimulate dialogue among focus groups participants. As seen earlier, using Ketso enables participants to engage creatively, particularly those who might not be comfortable in expressing their opinions in group situations. Ketso is also useful for those who might have confidentiality concerns about expressing certain opinions; the process of reflecting then writing gives them a chance to think about their choice of words or ways to communicate their ideas. The Ketso creative thinking tool was ideal due to its focus on inclusion and the effective way in which participants were able to express their opinions in the way that was most comfortable for them, including over the choice of language. In this study, most groups engaged in the Ketso process of thinking then writing as it is suggested, while two groups preferred to combine both discussion and writing. In the end, the participants in all the groups said they did not feel dominated, influenced or coerced to agree with other participants and they were free to put across their true opinions.

Sampling and selecting in focus groups

Groups and participants were selected on the basis of the information they were likely to provide rather than through random selection. In the selection, the issues considered were the location of the group, the group members and who they represented within their community, the projects they were involved in and the relationship they had with supporting organisations such as international development agencies or local NGOs. The search for a data rich group was not easy as there was as expected, a certain amount of gate keeping, given the nature of the discussion that I had indicated was to be undertaken. The selected location was the urban settlements of Kibera and Mukuru in the city of Nairobi, Kenya. I selected Kenya as a research location because it is my home country and I am aware of the development challenges faced by communities. The locations of Kibera and Mukuru were identified as suitable for this research because of the number of international development

initiatives carried out in the areas. Several groups were targeted because of their potential to enhance the value of the study by providing common patterns or key differences that may emerge, and ten groups participated in this study.

When recruiting participants for my focus groups, I ensured there was ample time between making the initial contact with the groups and the meeting day. This was useful in ensuring they had time to consider the request and what their involvement would mean. It was also useful in getting participants who were ready to be involved rather than those who would come to a meeting and not say anything because they had not had enough time to consider how the international development initiatives had impacted them. Getting an appropriate mix of participants took time, as it was important to ensure the participants were those who would effectively represent their project. I had anticipated some challenges such as the 'wrong' or 'unsuitable' people attending, fewer than expected participants coming to the meeting, biased groups, unresponsive groups, and unprepared participants. It is not always possible to control such situations, but luckily these situations did not become a problem for this research as the prior preparation proved useful. Leadership pressure was also an anticipated challenge where local political leaders would request to be involved. Their involvement was likely to change the dynamics of the group and there would be difficulties in expressing honest opinions in the presence of such participants. This situation with a political leader asking to be involved happened only once and it was dealt with by offering an individual interview instead.

Challenges of focus groups

Recruitment of focus group participants is often difficult and careful preliminary work such as was carried out in this research is useful and helps to minimise misinterpretations of the focus or intention of the meetings (Billson and Mancini, 2007). Part of the preparations included ensuring the environment was conducive and one in which the participants could feel free to express genuine opinions. Participants were encouraged to use English, Swahili or their local languages. The option to use the local languages was useful in avoiding embarrassing situations for participants who did not want to expose

their lack of adequate knowledge of English or Swahili, which are common languages spoken in Kenya. A potential drawback associated with using focus groups is the possibility of losing control of the group and the discussion. This was overcome by having a small group of participants and by trying to keep the participants focused on the issues being discussed as suggested by Patton (2000). Assembling a representative sample of participants can be a limitation and those who are not very articulate or confident may be discouraged from participating. Using the Ketso creative tool was useful in enabling all participants to engage in overcoming such fears.

The use of focus groups is faced with a number of criticisms, one being that it is difficult to summarise and generalise on the basis of small numbers of groups. They are also often accused of being prone to researcher bias and having a tendency towards confirming the researcher's pre-conceived hypothesis. The in-depth and rich data can also be seen as prone to potentially numerous and varied interpretations (Cornford and Smithson, 1996). Some of these criticisms were addressed by being systematic in my approach and documenting information carefully. It was also an important consideration of the richness of the information that can be gathered from a focus group discussion that far out-weighs some of the criticisms.

Unstructured interviews

In order to explore processes and perceptions, it is necessary to promote conversations that allow reflections and enable both the researcher and participant to discuss and question the status quo to challenge assumptions. This means using conversation for interchange of views and Kvale (1996) recognises this approach as interviews. Interviews, says Kvale and Brinkmann (2001, p.1), 'attempt to understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world'. This means going beyond just collecting data and is more about involvement, allowing the participants to diverge into other issues that they may feel are pertinent to their situations. Interviews can take different formats, such as structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Unstructured

interviews are used in this study, and this is where the questions are not strictly predetermined, but rather rely on some guiding points and the interaction between the researcher and participant (Minichiello et al. 1990). Punch (1998) described unstructured interviews as a way of understanding people's complex behaviour without limiting the field of inquiry by imposing a priori categorization. This conversational approach generates questions from the discussion and might generate data with different structures and patterns. The intention is to expose the researcher to unanticipated themes and develop a better understanding of the reality of the participants (Patton, 2002). The conversational, informal, flexible and free flowing nature of unstructured interviews was appropriate for this study. Topics rather than questions were pre-set to allow the free flow of discussion, but also to give some boundaries. This way, there was an opportunity to probe and a flexibility that was not necessarily directed, enabling the process to pursue the understanding of the complex behaviour of the people being interviewed without invading their space (Gray, 2004).

Sampling and selection in unstructured interviews

The unstructured interviews were conducted with representatives of development agencies. A wish list of ideal organisations to be contacted was drawn up at the early stages of the process. This list consisted of organisations that were considered useful for their data rich potential and those that would represent a selected category or group. In this way, I enhanced the value of the study by capturing common patterns or key differences that were likely to emerge from the diversity. The potential organisations were divided into - international agencies, intermediary agencies and local agencies - in order to gather data from different levels of development intervention. Questions considered in the selection process were what the role of the organisation was, what their geographical areas of focus was and, specifically, if they had a capacity development plan within their agenda. It was expected that the process of capacity development would vary depending on the type of organisation and the issues they focused on. The size of the organisation and the mandate it had would also play a role in the way each organisation

conducted its business. A certain amount of gate keeping was to be expected because of the nature of the discussion I was pursuing.

Challenges of unstructured interviews

An important consideration for unstructured interviews is the need to be aware of possible concerns about expressing personal opinions of a critical nature and how this could affect participant's work and associations. The guiding topics were therefore developed with that in mind, with questions designed to be direct enough to get a genuine response and not just one that the participant might perceive as suitable for that discussion. A key challenge for the researcher is the degree and type of control over the direction and pace of the conversation. Also, when a new topic is introduced by the interviewee, it becomes difficult to decide whether to pursue the emerging idea, or to maintain continuity and stay with the discussion planned, thus potentially losing any useful information that might be emerging (Patton, 2002). It requires skill to manage such interviews; for example, in this study, I took note of points of interest and suggested that we could return to those issues later in the conversation. This also required sensitivity to be able to recognise when a participant was raising a new topic as a way of moving the conversation to another issue. In the process of the interviews, I paid attention to how the participants were responding.

To get the participants to interact and engage, I discussed some of my own experiences in the hope that this would show an openness that could be reciprocated and create an interactive atmosphere, as Lather (1991) suggests. The interview questions were asked in a manner that required the participant to draw on a past experience. They were asked to tell, describe or show what their experiences had been. This way, they could provide their perspective on the issues; at the same time the approach offered a flexibility to change direction to pursue emerging issues. There was the possibility of uncovering feelings and bringing up memories of events, thereby revealing more than the participant was aware of or had intended to say. Careful observation on my part as a researcher was necessary so that I would recognise the signs indicating that participants were becoming uncomfortable and therefore the

need to stop or change the discussion. Simons (2009) demonstrates this by giving examples of people reading their transcripts after an interview, and how they showed different levels of surprise, some negative and others positive, at what they had said or how they had felt about an issue during an interview.

The discussions in the interviews pursued issues of personal opinions about what changes might be desirable, and this could be considered sensitive information. There were questions that could have come across as seeking to criticise the programme, or to find fault by looking for information from various sources. In order to overcome this, I took time to communicate effectively and convincingly to all involved about the purpose of the research and to be careful during the interview process. Simons (2009) said that there is no single correct way to conduct an unstructured interview but suggested establishing a good rapport and being an active listener - to hear the meaning of what is being said. Being proactive in the interview was useful in engaging the participants and simple nods, smiles or gestures were useful in encouraging participants to continue (Simons, 2009). The interviews in this research first asked questions about what was known or what was good, and then asked about what could be improved. The participants would then reflect on their experiences and values in reference to those questions, and each of them was encouraged to speak openly, frankly and to give as much detail as possible. Yin (2003) suggests this approach and indicates the usefulness of asking unbiased open questions which serve the purpose of the inquiry but allow the participant the flexibility to speak openly and in-depth. This way, the participant becomes more than just a respondent. A drawback to this way of interviewing is that the discussion often moves to irrelevant issues, which would make it difficult to code and analyse the data. This can be taken care of by regularly referring to the interview guide to ensure that the key areas are covered and to keep the discussion within set parameters.

The interviews were audio recorded unless the participants objected, in which case notes were taken. I was aware that interviewees could be reluctant to give personal views, particularly when being recorded, and I offered to keep the recording off for part of the interview if they preferred it that way. I also indicated that I would anonymise any information given unless they stated that

they would be happy to be identified and recognised as having participated in the study. The information was then transcribed, a time consuming activity but a good opportunity to engage with the data again and possibly begin to construct categories.

In order to maintain anonymity as had been promised to participants, specific identity was allocated to each of them, where focus groups are identified as 'FG' and then a letter allocated to each separate group, for example 'FG-S'. For individual interviews, the direct contact participants were identified with letter 'D' and a letter added to specify the individual, for example 'D-S' and for the indirect contact participants, they were identified as 'D2' and also separated by a letter for example 'D2-R'. The list of participants, showing their gender and role in the organisation is shown on the next page. In focus groups, some of the participants were member without specific roles in their organisation and they are identified as 'members' and those with specific roles in their organisation, it is indicated in the table.

Table of participants

Participants	Anonymous ID allocated	Gender	Role in organisation
Focus groups			
	FG-S	3 female 2 male	All members
	FG-Am	3 female 2 male	All members 1 male - secretary
	FG-K	4 male	1 group leader 3 member
	FG-Ak	4 male	All members
	FG-P	5 female	Chairperson Secretary 3 members
	FG-M	2 female 4 male	1 Female secretary 5 members
	FG-T	2 female 3 male	members 1 male - chairperson/leader 1 male - associate
	FG-G	6 female	1 female - coordinator 1 female - secretary 4 members
	FG-D	3 female 2 male	All members
	FG-pilot group	female female female male male	NGO Worker Community support worker Community member NGO Worker Community member
Individual interviews			
Direct			
	D-B	female	NGO Coordinator
	D-A	female	NGO Projects Manager
	D-O	male	NGO Managing director
	D- M	female	Ex- development agency worker
	D- C	female	Community worker
	D-F	male	Community convener
	D-R	male	Researcher
Indirect			
	D2-R	male	Int'l agency Department Head
	D2-J	male	Project manager
	D2-E	female	Training associate
	D2-P	male	Head of section
	D2-S	male	Programs coordinator
	D2-Si	male	Int'l agency Senior Advisor

Table 4.1 Table of participants

Documents review

Documents were another key source of information for this study. These were internal documents that recorded components of the development process and reports. They were in hard copy or electronic and included reports, performance and evaluation ratings, proposals, minutes of meetings and guidance notes. The documents review process was intended to support the information gathered about an organisation's background, as well as their development processes. Documents were a good source of information that was not directly obvious and they also provided a behind-the-scenes look at programmes. There was also the chance that documents could be biased; Yin (2003) warned of the danger of taking document evidence as unmitigated truth. He suggested that a researcher should be aware that documents are written to specific audiences for specific purposes other than the purpose of the subject being researched. Careful selection of documents was necessary and by being constantly aware of the study's objectives, I hoped to be less likely to be misled by the documents and become more critical in interpreting them.

The document review process included:

- assessing the types of documents that were available in order to decide which ones would be suitable for this study;
- finding out which documents were accessible and what process would be required to access those documents;
- once the documents were secured, reading through them to find out which ones were relevant to answer the question in the study;
- Selecting which documents would be reviewed and finding out the background of those documents; and
- summarising the information in the documents in a standardised structure which included - the type of document, the key information in the document and how it related to the research study.

The documents that were finally selected for use in this research were a combination of those that I identified as being able to provide further clarification or add some details where necessary. Another set of documents was recommended by participants where they felt that a document would provide a more comprehensive response to the discussion. The details of documents are shown on the table below, showing whether they were recommended by a participant or if I sourced them myself.

Table of documents

Document title	Recommended by
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) (2000), <i>Capacity Development: why, what and how</i> . Retrieved from http://portals.wi.wur.nl/files/docs/SPICAD/20Why%20what%20and%20how%20of%20capacity%20development%20-%20CIDA.pdf .	Self
Commission of the European Communities. (2000). <i>A memorandum on lifelong learning</i> . Brussels: European Commission. Retrieve from http://tvu.acs.si/dokumenti/LLLmemorandum_Oct2000.pdf	Self
DFID (2013). <i>Building scientific capacity for development: Government and UK Collaborative on Development Sciences Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2012-13</i> . London, DFID	D2-Si
(DFID) Department for International Development (2008) <i>Communication Matters: Our Communications Strategy</i> . London: DFID.	D2-Si
(DFID) Operational Plan 2011-2015 DFID Kenya. (2012). Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67399/kenya-2011.pdf	D2-Si
DFID (Department for International Development). (2000) <i>Sustainable livelihoods guidance sheets</i> . Retrieved from the livelihoods learning platform www.livelihoods.org 1 and http://www.eldis.org/vfile/upload/1/document/0901/section2.pdf	D2-Si
Drinkwater, M & Rusinow, T. 1999. <i>Application of CARE's livelihood approach</i> . Paper presented at the National Resource Advisors' Conference (NRAC) 1999. Retrieved from http://www.livelihoods.org/info/nrac/care.pdf	D-R
East African Community. (2013). Retrieved from http://www.eac.int/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=53	Self

Frankenberger, T & Drinkwater, M. 1999. Household livelihood security: A holistic approach for addressing poverty and vulnerability. CARE.	D-R
Green, D. (2008) <i>From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World</i> . Oxford: Oxfam.	D-R
International Commission on the Development of Education., & Faure, E. (1972). <i>Learning to be: The world of education today and tomorrow</i> . Paris: Unesco. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/15_60.pdf	Self
International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century., Delors, J., & Unesco. (1996). <i>Learning, the treasure within: Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century</i> . Paris: Unesco Pub. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/15_62.pdf	Self
Kenya vision 2030. (2011) Retrieved from Vision 2030. Flagship Projects. Establish of Konza Technology City http://www.vision2030.go.ke/index.php/projects/details/Economic/227	Self
Malik, K., & United Nations Development Programme,. (2013). <i>Human development report 2013: The rise of the South : human progress in a diverse world</i> . Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2013_en_complete.pdf	D2-R
NEPAD (2009) AU - NEPAD Capacity Development - The AU/NEPAD Capacity Development Strategic Framework (CDSF). Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/development/governance-development/43508787.pdf	D2-R
OECD/DAC Report, (2006). <i>Capacity development: Key to development results guidelines</i> . Retrieved from www.oecd.org/dac/capacitydevelopment	Self
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2009). <i>Aid effectiveness: A progress report on implementing the Paris Declaration</i> . Paris: OECD.	D-Si
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2008). <i>Accra Agenda for Action</i> . Paris: OECD.	D-Si
Scoones, I., & Institute of Development Studies (Brighton, England). (1998). <i>Sustainable rural livelihoods: A framework for analysis</i> . Brighton, Eng.: Institute of Development Studies.	D-R
Stewart, F. (2007) <i>Addressing Discrimination and Inequality among Groups</i> . 2020 Focus Brief on the World's Poor and Hungry People. Washington, DC: IFPRI.	Self
Stewart, F. (2008) ' <i>Horizontal Inequality: Two Types of Trap</i> '. Presidential Address to the HDCA, New Delhi, 18 September.	Self
UNDP (2012) <i>Capacity development approach</i> ., Retrieved from http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/capacitybuilding/approach/ Retrieved on [24 th October, 2012]	D-M

United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (UNIDO/UNCTA) (2011). <i>Economic development in Africa: report 2011: Fostering industrial development in Africa in the new global environment</i> . New York; United Nations. Retrieved from http://unctad.org/en/docs/aldcafrica2011_en.pdf	D-M
United Nations Development Programme.(UNDP) (various years) <i>Human Development Report</i> '. New York: Oxford University Press.	Self
UNDP. (2009).Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer. Retrieved from http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/capacity-development-a-undp-primer/CDG_PrimerReport_final_web.pdf	D-R
Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (2014) <i>Beyond 2015</i> . Retrieved from http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml	Self
UNESCO, Dakar Framework for Action, (2000) Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf	D2-Si
UNDP Human Development Report (HDR) various years (1990-2011) UNDP HDR (2011). Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/en/nhdr/networks/replies/HDR2011.ConsolidatedReply_EN.pdf	D2-R
Vogel, I. and DFID. (2012) Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development.	D2-R
Wignaraja, K and UNDP. (2008).Capacity Development Practice note. Retrieved from http://www.unpcdc.org/media/8651/pn_capacity_development.pdf	D2-R
World Bank (2003) World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People. Washington, DC: World Bank.	D2-P
World Bank (2005) World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development. Washington, DC: World Bank.	Self
World Bank. (1989). <i>Sub-Saharan Africa: From crisis to sustainable growth : a long-term perspective study</i> . Washington, D.C: World Bank. Retrieved from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/1999/12/02/000178830_98101901364149/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf	Self
World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Report) (1987) <i>Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.	Self

Table 4.2 Table of documents

4.2.3 Pilot study

The purpose of conducting a pilot study was to try out the instruments to establish where the main research project could fall short or where the proposed methods would be inappropriate or too complicated. This has been suggested as a critical element of good study design as it may assist in testing and further development of the research instruments (Lancaster, Dodd and Williamson, 2004). For the unstructured interview process, a development organisation was selected on the basis of the types of projects it was involved in and being close to the reality of the actual organisations targeted, as suggested by Glesne (2006). The pilot study for the focus group discussions was made up of five participants representing the local community and development workers targeted. The pilot studies proved to be vital in eliciting information about the process that could have been largely unspoken and undocumented and the experience was particularly helpful in revealing the ad hoc contribution of a participant. The pilot study also enabled the identification of the basic categories of information to address and it confirmed that the study was feasible and was seen as highly interesting and useful by the pilot study participants. Analysing the discussions from both the interview and focus group pilot studies led to the sharpening of the research objectives and provided unique opportunities to review the guiding questions. The process also helped to identify some gaps in the research plans in terms of approaching potential participants, selecting the interview environment, engaging in deep conversation, and seizing opportunities for probing and following-up emerging topics from a discussion.

4.2.4 Quality and rigour

Data collected through a qualitative method can face a lot of criticism. There are questions of credibility and the extent to which the findings are relevant to a context other than the one in which it was conducted. Questions about the personal values of the researcher and how those values may have been allowed to influence the research are raised. Qualitative research is often used because

of the rich data it can provide, and Weick and Sutcliffe (2007) observe that the richness of that data may lie in the eye of the beholder. The methods we choose may not always be the best or claim to cover all aspects of an enquiry, but we make the most of what is available. To mitigate some of the concerns, this research used multiple methods and multiple sources in a triangulation approach in order to observe areas of similarities or differences and to ensure rigour.

Reliability, Validity and Triangulation

Reliability is a key component in qualitative research; Silverman (2005) suggests that a reader will depend on the researcher's depiction of what was going on. Silverman (2005) acknowledges that no research can be free of the underlying assumptions that guide it, and a researcher's aim will be to present data accurately. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) see reliability as consistency that enables other researchers to come to similar insights if they conduct research following the same methods. To achieve reliability, I have ensured careful reporting of the methods used and was thorough in the analysis process by, for example, double coding segments of data, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The documentation has been carried out carefully and clearly to enhance transparency and the data has been organised carefully to facilitate retrieval later where required, as suggested by Yin (2003).

Ensuring validity means staying focused on examining what was set to be achieved and the process used to observe reality. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) discuss the importance of validity from external and internal points of reference. They describe external validity as the study results being generalisable or transferable. Internal validity is the rigour with which the study is conducted, for example the design of the study and the care taken in conducting assessments and the decision process used to decide what to assess and what not to assess. Pike (1967) coined the words emic to describe issues inside the system and etic to describe issues outside the system and used both to explain the concepts of the internal and external validity of qualitative research. This study has taken into consideration issues from both inside and

outside the project that are likely to affect decisions or outcomes. Some qualitative researchers such as Wolcott (1994) are not concerned about validity and prefer to aim for understanding of the discussions, while others like Richardson (1994, cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) suggest it is not so much about getting it right but more about looking at the different contours and the different overlapping issues operating at different levels. I approached the study with careful consideration of elements such as my role in the process and whether what I do would disrupt what exists. The decision to use unstructured interviews and focus groups using the Ketso creative tool enabled the participants to carry on with the discussion almost independently with little interference. With less obstruction, they were able to discuss issues freely and offer their own perspective.

Triangulation is another method that I used to pursue rigour. Triangulation, which is often referred to as a way of adopting different angles from which to look at a situation, is commonly used as a strategy (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Stake, 1995, 2003; Yin 2003). Triangulation offered the opportunity to use several methods to explore the issues and increased the depth and accuracy of the information gathered. By using unstructured interviews, focus groups and the review of documents, the research was able to explore the issues from different angles. Cohen and Manion (2000) say that triangulation is used to explain the complexity of human behaviour from more than one standpoint while Denzin and Lincoln (1994) say that triangulation gives a more balanced picture of a situation, which is useful in crosschecking through multiple sources.

4.2.5 Analysis process

Analysing qualitative data is sometimes viewed as a difficult process. Most concerns are around the intensity of the data collected and the amount of information obtained. Information overload can be a problem especially in multi-site studies. I adopted what Yin (2003) suggests as likely to be more relevant, which is to demonstrate converging or diverging evidence from the various sources of data. The analysis was a continuous process, beginning as

the data was collected and transcribed. This way, major emerging themes were identified as the process continued, and it was useful to observe how these emerging issues related to different settings. The initial stage, which I refer to as the primary analysis, consisted of examining and highlighting key points as I encountered them in the process of transcribing. Comments were made in the margins of the transcripts, noting the important points, the common points, the contrasts, and the inconsistencies. Some of the issues raised at this point were later set aside as they were mainly speculative, but it was useful in allowing the data to begin to take shape. At this point, the activities were chaotic and uncoordinated, but the method was useful for laying down ideas as I came across them as well as to record the initial impressions.

After the chaos, it was necessary to organise the data in order to understand it, and Silverman (2006) suggests a useful method of identifying major categories, and then seeing how the issues or themes fitted in to them. There were challenges in attempting to fit information into certain categories, and it took some time to come up with an appropriate arrangement. This meant reading and re-reading the transcripts as well as notes and then experimenting with different ideas. Data collected in the focus groups using Ketso was transcribed in templates on Microsoft Word and Excel programmes, provided through the Ketso company resources. Ketso data is already broadly grounded around a particular theme selected and agreed upon by the participants, which makes the process manageable. Ketso graphs were also generated to show which themes generated more discussion and the topics that were common among the groups (see appendix).

Use of technology

Qualitative data analysis software was used to help organise the data. This was useful in classifying and arranging the information in a way that meant it could be linked, shaped and searched for when needed. As I already had some rough manual analysis conducted at the primary stages, I had some initial thoughts about key areas that were likely to form themes. NVivo software was selected

as it enables documents and material to be imported with ease from different sources, organises data in an efficient way and is quicker to code than a manual process. NVivo was also useful in coding and linking particular areas of one document to another and helpful in interrogating and identifying issues and themes that may have been overlooked in the manual analysis. It was inevitable that I would use both manual and technological methods to analyse the data, where the technology helped speed up the process of producing the information in an organised way; I then returned to manual methods to review what had been produced and to make sense of it in order to build a final picture.

4.2.6 Ethical Considerations

In using qualitative research, I examined and explored how people operated in their own environments. Being sensitive to the need for confidentiality and to building the relationships of trust required for interacting in this way was important. As a researcher, it was my responsibility to ensure participants were well informed of the purpose of the research study they were involved in. We discussed any concerns they had with regard to risks to their work and to their relations with stakeholders, and I reassured them that the information would be made anonymous. All prospective participants were informed of the details of the research and were given the 'Plain Language Statement' (PLS) and an offer to answer any further question they had. They were then asked to sign the consent form, which was to indicate that they had agreed to be part of the research study. Participants were offered anonymity where required. The individuals interviewed could easily be identified by their job titles or roles even where I did not use their real name. In cases where the participant requested anonymity, I did not describe their job role or work location and avoided using statements that could identify them. This was also applied to members of the focus groups and, where they did not want to be audio recorded or photographed, I ensured that I handled the process in a way that respected those wishes. Where photographs were taken, faces were blurred for confidentiality. Sensitive material and confidential information gathered from documents was not disclosed.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the research methods used in this research study. The chapter identified the theoretical perspective underpinning the study and discussed critical theory, Freirian approach and PAR as guides to the process. The rationale for using a qualitative method and the specific instruments selected and used were also discussed. The value of using the selected methods, particularly to explore issues of critical thinking and critical reflection as a route to self-reflection was considered. I explored the advantages and limitations of the chosen methods, and the way in which some of the limitations were addressed in the process of this study. The importance of rigour, the analysis process and ethical considerations has also been discussed.

Chapter 5: Complexity of lives

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of themes discussed by participants in this research. It begins with background information of the community development locations, as this is seen as relevant to provide context. A brief introduction of the groups and individual participants is provided before proceeding to the summary of themes. Analysis is purposely not presented at this stage, so that the information can be soaked up and appreciated as it is and without the pressure to engage in a debate with any analysis. The process of identifying themes is explained and visually presented, and the themes identified form the basis of the findings discussed in the chapters that follow.

5.1 Location background

The background of the research locations is given here and is considered useful to give the reader a chance to appreciate the circumstances and environment that set the scene for community development in these areas. Two urban settlements - Mukuru and Kibera, both in the city of Nairobi, in Kenya were selected because of the number of development interventions that have taken place in the area over the last 50 years.



Figure 5.1 Map of Kenya
Source - bbc.co.uk/world/Africa

Kibera came into existence during the establishment of the City of Nairobi in 1899. It was intended as a home for male temporary migrant workers and was set up by the colonial administration. In the early 1900s, it became a settlement area, initially for retired Sudanese soldiers who served in the King's African Rifles (KAF), and was allocated to them by the British Government. They called it 'Kibra' (which later turned into 'Kibera'), meaning forest (Gatabaki-Kamau and Karirah-Gitau 2004; White, 1990; Parsons, 1997). Kibera, being in close proximity to the city centre was attractive to many temporary local settlers who arrived in the city in search for work. As the area grew the temporary nature of its existence and the increasing numbers of those searching for work caused some residents to turn to crime. The government, both the colonial and later the Kenyan, were concerned about the rise in crime and the fact that the area was in close proximity to the city centre as well as some affluent neighbourhoods.

Several attempts over the years to re-organise or demolish the area have been made, but with little success. In the early days, the government was reluctant to provide services, in the hope that this would discourage settlers by making it uninhabitable (Parsons, 1997). Some reasons given for the unsuccessful re-settlement, or re-organisations were that the settlement options offered were not close to employment opportunities, the cost of moving or acquiring new homes was prohibitive and community links at the current settlement were strong. The government has also been known to change its mind about projects, particularly in housing, and this caused the residents to become less trusting of the government. In order to support themselves, Kibera residents established informal economic activities to provide services and goods at a low cost as well as to offer local employment (Muraya, 2006). International development organisations then stepped in to provide for the wider community needs such as health care and sanitation, with NGOs becoming the main agents for development in the area (Lamba, 1994). Kibera is approximately three miles west of the city centre and is one mile away from the up-market Royal Nairobi Golf Club. The homes are made of wood, metal sheets and mud. It has been argued that Kibera is the largest 'slum' in Africa with over 1 million residents, but this population size is contested in various reports that indicate varying numbers. For instance, a UN Habitat report stated there are close to one million residents, while a 'Map Kibera project' came up with approximately 250,000 residents (Marras, 2010). The difficulty in estimating Kibera's population is partly due to there being no agreement on which specific areas are part of Kibera and also due to the high mobility in the area.

The Mukuru settlement is approximately three miles to the south of the city. The development of this community is more recent than that of Kibera as it became a settlement site about 35 years ago. People began to build temporary shelters in the area because it is close to the industrial district where many residents work as casual labourers. Many residents of the settlement have low incomes, which are often inadequate to take care of the needs of their families, and therefore operate small-scale businesses to supplement their income. Health and education facilities are not easily accessible partly due to cost, and consequently, poor health and unskilled labour are common. The population of the Mukuru community is estimated at between 250,000 and

700,000 (Kenyan Population and Housing Census results, Practical Action, 2009). The Mukuru community suffers from inadequate access to safe water, little or no sanitation, the poor structural quality of housing, and overcrowding (Mutisya and Yarime, 2011).

5.2 Pilot studies

A pilot study was conducted for the focus groups and another for the individual interviews. For the focus group, this was an opportunity to observe the response to the use of the Ketso creative tool. The following suggestions were made:

- Be clear in the instructions about the use of Ketso from the start of the process. Where possible, give the instructions in small amounts related to the different sections of the process.
- Be flexible in allowing participants to choose whether to write or to discuss their ideas. Also encourage participants to use the language they are comfortable with, as this would enable them to better express themselves.
- Do not lay out the Ketso kit before the meeting began as this would worry participants if they saw the kit before they had a chance to understand what it was. It was suggested that I would talk about Ketso first and explain that it was simple to use before I demonstrated it.

For the individual interviews, the pilot study was an opportunity to test the planned interview process and the following suggestions were made:

- Be more directing even with unstructured questions, and ensure that the participant were clear about the aim of the discussion from the beginning.
- Give interviewees the guiding questions so that they had a clear idea of the issues that needed to be discussed.
- The guiding questions did not need to be changed, but to keep an eye on important issues to ensure that they are covered.

5.3 The Data summary

5.3.1 Focus groups - community

As mentioned earlier, the focus groups were selected from Kibera and Mukuru settlements where individuals who were members of groups were contacted. The participating groups were selected based on relevant and broad characteristics such as operating a development project and working with a development agency. This purposive approach was useful in ensuring that a relevant sample that would be able to respond to the questions in the study was selected. Using formal and informal inquiry strategies, information about other possible respondents bearing similar characteristics was obtained. This made it possible to obtain a longer list of possible participants to select from. The data was collected using the Ketso tool, and photographs of the completed Ketso workspace were taken once the discussion was concluded. The information on the leaves was then transferred on to a Microsoft Word document as well as in an Excel spreadsheet resource where graphs could be generated showing the type and number of ideas per themes and group.

The focus group method of collecting data using Ketso in this research showed that it was useful because of its potential to provide a level of security to the individuals in the group allowing members to express feelings and experiences that they would not otherwise share. The participants get an opportunity to feel 'listened to' which may result in a more honest and meaningful exchange of information. With the focus groups discussions, there was a chance to delve deeper into issues and illuminate key points to be explored particularly given the complex settings which those communities were in. I structured the discussions to be open in a way that would allow participants to freely express their ideas without feeling restricted to an agenda, but be able to address issues based on the way they see things. In this approach, I began by explaining the broad aim of the study and what I hoped to achieve in the focus group meeting. To ensure the discussion stayed on course, I listened carefully to the direction the discussion was going in and stepped in on some instances to keep it on track. To start the discussion, I asked broad questions that would elicit

flexibility in responses, for example ‘one of the things that we are especially interested in is how you manage your projects, what can you tell me about that?’ As suggested by Morgan (1997), I let the conversation flow naturally but made sure that the key issues had a chance to be discussed.

The following is a brief description of each of the focus groups as a way of introducing them. To ensure anonymity of the discussion and statements made, any information that can be linked to individuals has not been used, and, where pictures are shown, the faces have been blurred. The groups gave consent for their photographs to be used, but their group or individual names, locations or projects have not been used but have been coded instead. I have also included short notes on what I observed during the meetings; although this was not a planned part of the data collection process, I felt the need to record and report here some of what I reflected on that would be of value to the study.

Brief introduction to groups

FG- S

This group was made up mostly of young people and was created specifically to engage young people in the development process. Most members had a basic level of education and did not have regular jobs. The small-scale businesses they might run would not support them sufficiently. Some had young families as well as extended family members who depended on them such as younger siblings or parents. In the group activities, they appeared focused and committed and clearly knew what they wanted and interacted well with each other. They were resourceful, as observed from some of the ideas they suggested, but still presented an element of expectation of an outside source to get them out of their situation. When asked what they felt their role in developing their community was, they indicated that they were ready and waiting to get support from agencies and mentioned some local NGOs they were expecting help from.

FG - Am

FG-Am was another group made up mostly of young people, but situated in a different location than the previous one. The members of this group also mentioned that most of them had just a basic level of education and were involved in small-scale businesses to supplement the income from the jobs they had. The group was made up of three women and two men, appeared well organised was quick to pick up instructions and to focus on the issue it was dealing with and the participants interacted with each other comfortably. There were no obvious domineering individuals among these participants, and they all exuded confidence and were able to express themselves. They were aware of their abilities, but felt limited by resources. There was still an element of dependence where the group felt that someone else should take care of the community problems.



Figure 5.2 Interacting with Ketso

FG- K

FG- K was a community-based organisation (CBO) which focused on waste management within their community. They were mostly older men, and no women participated in the focus group meeting. They said they were a relatively newly formed group when we met and were in the process of learning how to run their group. They did not appear to want to discuss what income generating work they did, and this was not pursued. When asked to use Ketso to present their ideas, they were initially reluctant and preferred to have a discussion with one person writing the information on Ketso. The participants had their seats pulled away from the table and some had their arms crossed. The conversation seemed to be directed by one person while other members of the group would look across to this one person before speaking, as if seeking approval from the individual. The preference to discuss instead of writing on the Ketso leaves, in my opinion, was either in order to have control of what was said or there may have been literacy concerns among the participants. Some did not say anything during the meeting. There was also a tendency to complain about the specifics of what the NGOs had done that was considered wrong. My concern was that it may not have been clear what this meeting was about or that there was a prior discussion and agreement to censor what was being said.

FG -Ak

FG-Ak participants were young men only, although the group members include all genders and ages. They explained this as being because of the availability of other members to attend our meeting. They also said that about half of their members were employed, which was another reason why only some of them had been able to attend the meeting. There was a reluctance to write down ideas on the Ketso kit, similar to the FG-K group, and they also sat away from the table and one person spoke most of the time. The group started off a little withdrawn and guarded about their responses at first, but they opened up as we proceeded and were happy to write their ideas on Ketso eventually. They were clear about their challenges and had some ideas about how they would attempt to overcome those.



Figure 5.3 Less interaction with Ketso

FG- P

Members of this group were women only who were HIV positive, the group had been formed as a way of supporting each other through difficulties resulting from their HIV status. The women had families that they are taking care of and some of them have lost their partners/husbands to HIV/AIDS. Their outlook to life is that as long as they are alive and strong, they will continue to work in whichever way they can and to support those who they are able to support. They run a small business selling items they make, which include beaded necklaces, bracelets, earrings as well as baskets and the kikoy traditional cloth. They said they had not received any financial support from NGOs or other agencies in a formal manner, although local NGOs are aware of their existence and have directed individual supporters to them. The women were very proactive and did not wait for external help, but were consistently working and looking for ways to support themselves. This group was different

from the others as it was the only group not to have received formal support from agencies. They were keen to move forward and did not allow the numerous occurrences of illness to hinder them. When asked what future plans they had, they were not focused on suggestion that would require an outsider to intervene.



Figure 5.4 Women engaging with Ketso

FG- M

The members of this group were from various sections of the Kibera settlement and encourage each other to be involved in multiple projects. They hoped that by being involved with others in this way, they could share knowledge and learn from other projects and groups. Members of the group were mostly employed and others run small-scale businesses in their local areas. They had a professional approach to the meeting, listened keenly to information about Ketso, asked relevant questions and then carried on with the task of writing their ideas on Ketso. When identifying key issues, they focused on themes and ideas they felt they were able to influence without having to wait for an outsider to find solutions for them. They recognised the need to solve their own problems.

FG - T

This group has been in existence for longer than most groups in the Kibera area. Their membership is large and is made up of people of all ages and all genders. Most of the members have lived in the Kibera settlement areas for a very long time and they understand the workings of the community quite well. Most members are either employed full time, were contractors or run small-scale businesses. They receive huge amounts of support from NGOs. Their projects were often considered successful and were usually used as examples for new or struggling groups. The group had a clear structure, with clear roles for leadership and workable organisation strategies which, they said, comes from years of experience. One of the men attending the focus group was the leader of the overall group whom they referred to as 'chairman'. At the start of the meeting, when Ketso was introduced as a process where participants could write ideas on the Ketso leaves, the chairman was not keen on that process and preferred a discussion instead. My view on that was he may have preferred a position where he could manage what was said, or hoped that with a discussion, participants would not have confidence to say negative things. The two women present were younger and at that point did not say anything. It was agreed that we would work in both ways, discussing as well as writing the ideas without having to discuss them first for those who preferred that way. The two women preferred to write their ideas while the other participants discussed and wrote the key points of the discussion on Ketso.

There were two women and three men participating in this focus group meeting. The women appeared rather meek and mostly spoke to each other, but the men were loud and wanted to have a say in everything. The women showed they could silently hold their position as demonstrated by their stand on wanting to write their ideas on the Ketso workspace, rather than having an open discussion as was initially suggested. This was also observed again at the end of the meeting when we were having refreshments and one of the men asked one of the women to get him a cup of tea. The woman, in a very quiet way, said she was not going to do that, and no amount of persuading was able

to change her mind. This was an interesting observation to see the way in which she held her ground without making a fuss.



Figure 5.5 Ideas presented without fear

FG-G

This is a women-only support group that evolved from what is commonly known as 'chama'. A 'chama' is a form of membership group that meets on a regular basis to contribute an agreed amount of money that is then given to a different member in turn at the regular meetings. These types of groups are common in Kenya and now have evolved to other forms such as investments groups or development-focused organisations. The FG-G group operated as a development support group for the members as well as for the local community. Due to a previous encounter with 'researchers/journalists', where their information was used in a way they were not happy with, they preferred that no audio or video recording took place, and they did not want to use Ketso. Note taking was acceptable. The participants were very aware of their circumstances and were contributing to the discussion from experiences of having lived in their environment. They knew what usually happened within their community and wanted to see genuine change particularly for their

children. They interacted well and had respect for each other's roles within the group leadership.

FG-D

The FG-D community group had been in existence for several years and most of the members had lived in the Mukuru settlement area for many years. It was initially formed about 10 years ago, but disintegrated due to management, leadership and commitment challenges. They were at that point attempting to revive the group activities as they believed they needed to participate in the development of their community. It was difficult to use the Ketso kit with this group, as they were in the process of formulating the structure of the new group and had not had a chance to discuss what was useful for the group as a whole. They were, however, prepared to go ahead with the meeting and use it as an opportunity to discuss important development issues for their group. They appeared to have genuine concerns about their community, but, at the same time, were concerned about facing the same challenges the group had encountered years back. Some members talked about the possibility of joining already existing and successful groups rather than forming a new one. There seemed to be a number of issues to overcome before they could get ahead with development. Their position of having lived in the areas for a long time might give them an advantage in that they were familiar with local ways and therefore able to work better.

Key themes

The discussions below are presented on the basis of the identified themes from the focus groups, which are collated to form the list in table 5.1 and summarised further in figure 5.9. Some themes on the Ketso workspace may have used different names or titles for similar ideas written on the leaves (see below for example of leaf). In such a case, a common theme was selected and used to represent that idea. The quotations are taken directly from the Ketso leaves and, where the quotes are not in English, a translation is provided in brackets.

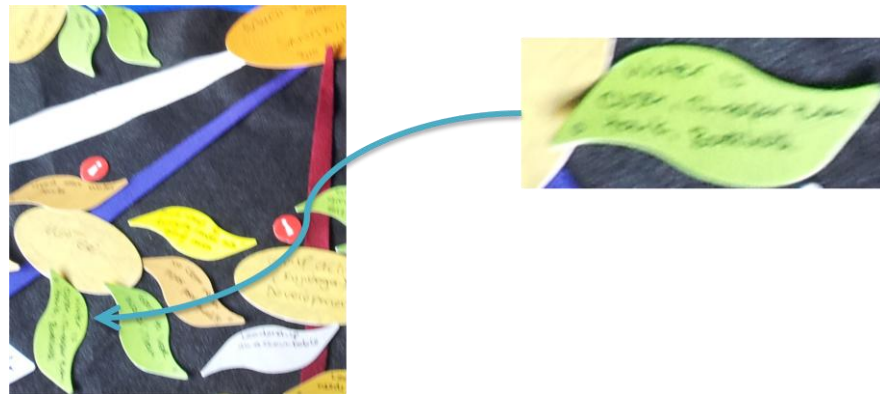


Figure 5.6 Example of Ketso leaf

Engagement and agency relations

Engaging and relationship between the agencies and communities was discussed in all the groups. There were different perspectives discussed as shown by what was said;

- Project decisions not made in collaboration, where it was indicated that the group was not consulted adequately and there were possibilities that if the consultations did take place, it was likely to be with the group leadership who did not then pass on the information.
- Interaction was driven primarily by one side of the development process with NGOs deciding when and what to communicate. There were no opportunities for the community to present their views.
- NGOs were not completely open with the groups and they seem to want to control the engagement process.
- There were few instances when NGOs or agencies consulted the groups before beginning a project and even when this happened, the purpose or results were not made clear and was on the terms of the NGO.

Needs assessment

Effective engagement in assessing needs was not evident and this led to community groups not appreciating the efforts.

Self-dependence and role in local development

The groups discussed how their lack of ability to carry out the projects that were necessary hindered their progress in the direction that they wanted. This also caused their dependence on NGOs and other development agencies. They recognised the need to have the necessary skills and that they had an important role to play in developing their own community in the way that would benefit them.

Group commitment

In recognising the value of their role in contributing to development in their own community as seen above, the communities identified cohesion in the group activities as important. Participation of members and supporting each other were identified as useful to improve the chances of success as well as good leadership and careful management of the group to ensure all members and the wider community benefited.

Incomplete development projects

Projects begun by the agencies but that are not completed only seem to contribute to making the problem worse than it was before. For example, waste management projects left unfinished means there is a new problem of how to deal with the waste, making it more difficult to manage the process than it was before. The groups suggested that poor planning and understanding of the real issues could contribute to this situation.

Environment - clean water, hygiene, facilities

Keeping a clean environment was identified as a concern by all groups. As most of the groups in this study were involved in hygiene and sanitation projects,

water availability was a key component of the process. The availability or lack of water, the process of managing its distribution as well as the local authority involvement was a sore discussion topic and was raised in all the group discussions. This related to the hygiene of the surrounding areas as well as to the management of the facilities that were meant to support that process.

Training and empowering

Teach others especially younger generations about being aware of life's challenges and learning to be responsible for themselves was identified as important. In particular where it concerned diseases such as HIV/AIDS, to learn about the importance of ways to stay safe as well as not to victimise or segregate those with such illnesses. This way of teaching was seen as useful in order to break the recurring cycle of poverty and children following in their parents' footsteps.

The themes can be observed in graph format as shown by the examples below. Ketso provides a way to analyse the data and generate a graph that presents the information in various ways for example by number of ideas in a branch. This presents another way of assessing the information, which can then be taken apart and viewed in further detail where necessary. The graph examples below are taken from two focus groups from this study.

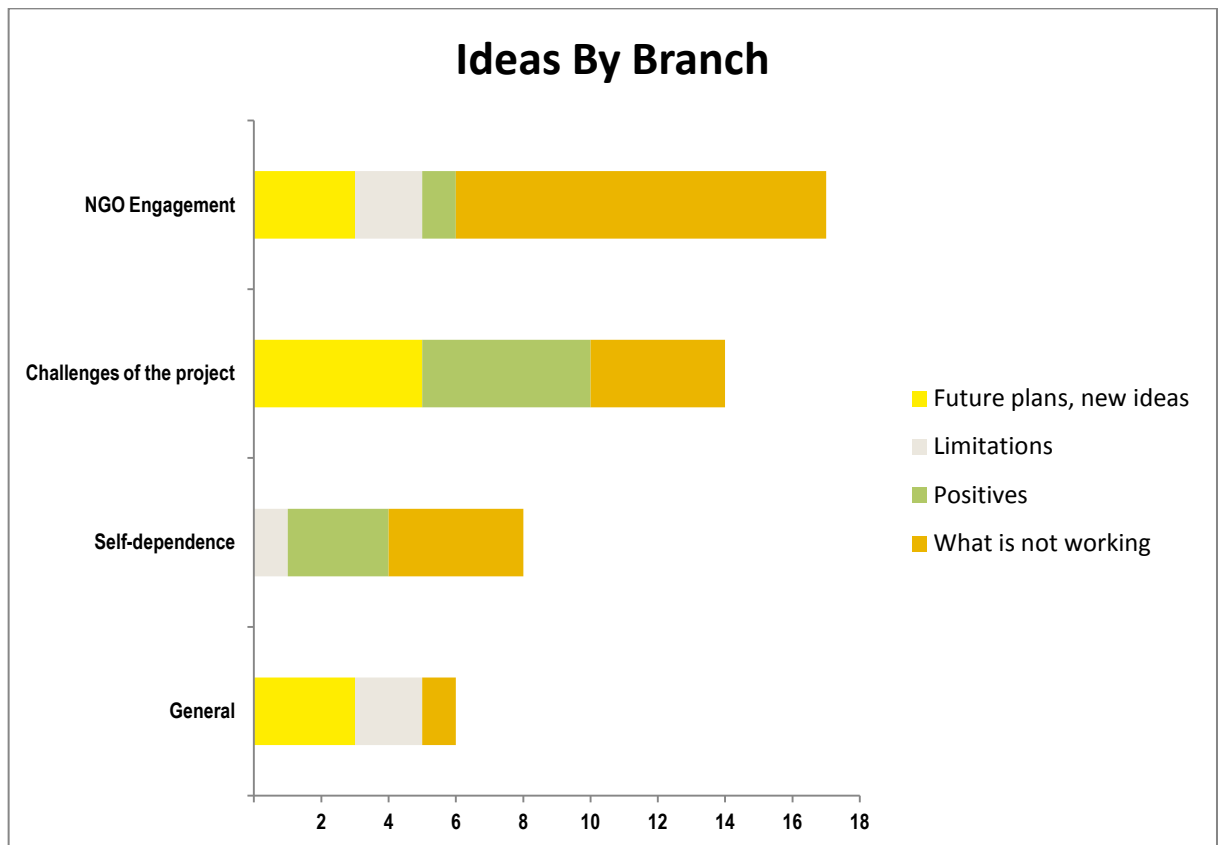


Figure 5.7 Example of Ketso graph -1

This graph shows the emphasis for this particular group as being on NGO engagement as an important aspect of the development process. Looking at this one aspect, the graph shows more comments on what is not working - represented by the brown coloured leaves - than on any of the other colours for example the positive aspects, represented by the green coloured leaves. From this graph, it can be observed that the groups identified more issues about what is not working with regards to their NGO relationships, which led to discussions on what the cause of this was likely to be. In terms of future ideas, represented by the colour yellow, there were ideas presented on how the group would like to proceed, which indicated that this group has been able to think of ideas that are useful for their community, evidenced by the type of ideas and plans presented. The size or number of ideas for each leaf colour was different for each theme, as would be expected, and this would present the researcher with an opportunity to pursue an issue further to try to understand why that would be the case, for example, the theme on 'self-dependence', did not have any leaves on future ideas, represented by the yellow colour, and this would have been pursued for further discussion.

Another focus group appeared to have a more balanced view on different aspects on their projects as seen from their graph below.

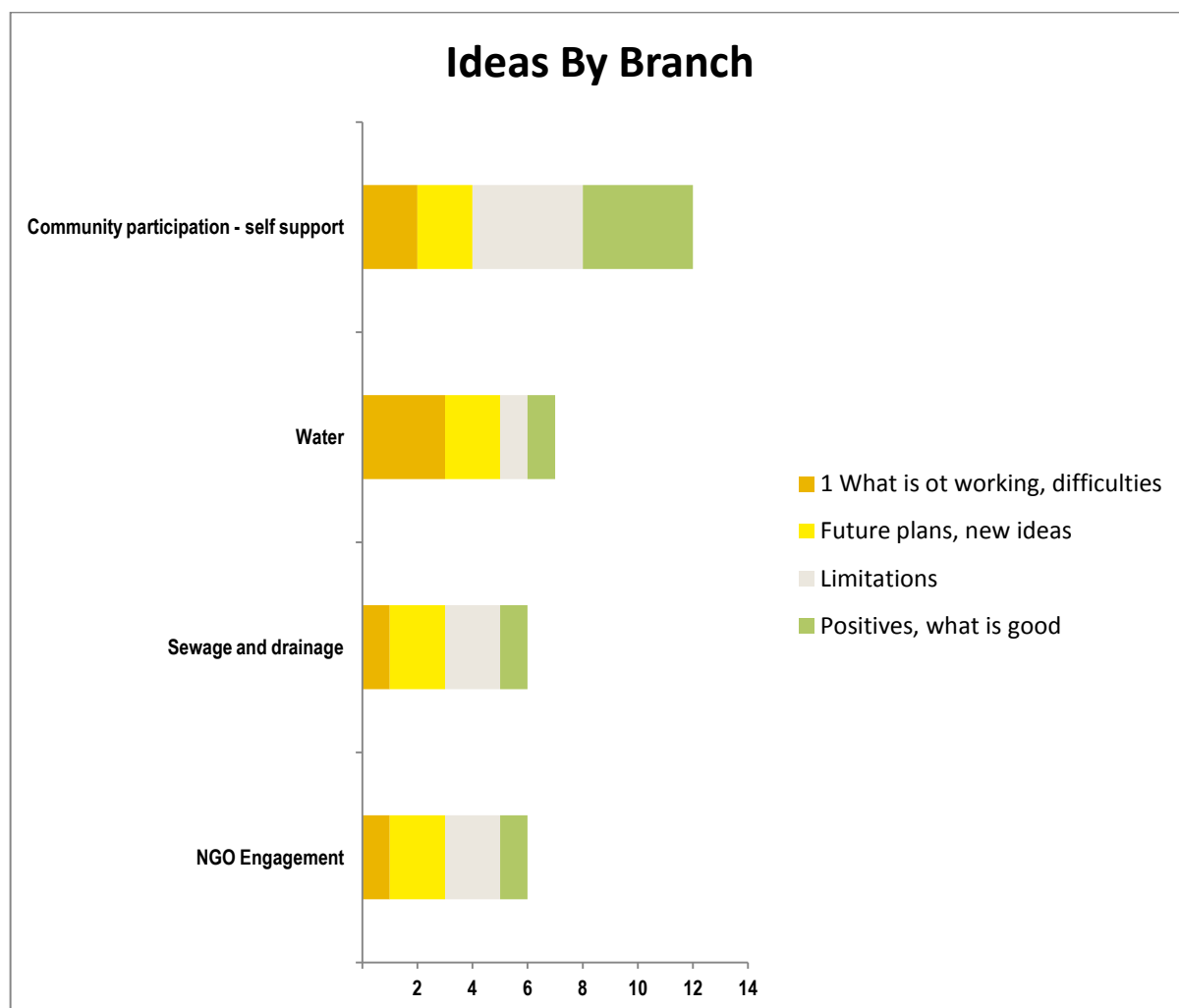


Figure 5.8 Example of Ketso graph -2

This group discussed the four elements in what appears from the graph as a balance of colours. For example the theme on community participation, the discussion on what is not working (brown) was almost at the same level as the discussion of what is positive (green). This was an interesting observation as this group is one that has been in existence for over 25 years and is more established and organised than some of the others. They also did not bring up NGO engagement as the key theme of their discussion, although they recognised the importance of it. What was of value to the group was the ‘self-support’ that comes about as a result of group commitment.

The two examples show how different each community group is, in terms of their expectations and their need, and therefore the importance of understanding what is a priority to each separate community.

5.3.2 Individual Unstructured Interviews - agencies

This section describes the individual interviews held with development agencies and NGOs. The information is presented in two parts; indirect contact and direct contact agencies. 'Indirect contact' agencies, for the purpose of this research, are those that work through intermediaries by, for example, providing the funding, and 'direct contact' agencies are the intermediaries working directly with communities. The aim of conducting unstructured interviews was to have conversations that allowed reflections and enabled both interviewees and myself to discuss key issues that were important for this research as well as those that would emerge out of our interaction. In the interview process, I went beyond just collecting data and allowed the participants to diverge into other issues they felt were pertinent to their situations. I was able to ask questions about what is known and then ask about what could be improved. Using this approach, I had the opportunity to probe emerging issues and allow flexibility in the discussion. As suggested by Yin (2003), asking open questions in this manner served the purpose of the enquiry as well as allowing participants the flexibility to speak openly and in-depth. This way, the participant became an informant rather than a respondent, who would offer information that I may not have considered. As all interviews were different, as is expected, I recognised the importance of establishing a good rapport, listening carefully to the issues emerging and being proactive in encouraging the participant to reflect on their practice. I used a set of guiding questions to ensure that the areas of importance were covered (see Appendix). The interview participants were selected from an initial wish list consisting of different types of international development agencies that support programmes in Africa and specifically in urban settlements in Nairobi. A brief introduction to the participants is given first, before the summary of the information is provided.

(i) Direct contact with community

Participants' introduction

An interview with a team member from a research institute was held. The institute the participant represents focuses on developing knowledge and capacity in water and sanitation for sustainable development. Based within a university, it deals with solutions for low and middle income countries using education as an important element of sustainable development. The organisation recognises knowledge as central to development progress, both existing knowledge and that generated through research. Our discussion focused on the nature of problems and the process of providing solutions. The next organisation was an NGO operating locally in Nairobi with the aim of providing opportunity for action, learning and innovation. The organisation partners with other NGOs, public and private sector agencies and local councils in order to give the projects they support a better chance to survive. I had three separate discussion sessions with different members of staff who worked on different aspects of community development. Another interview was with a community convener who had previously worked with international agencies as well as local NGOs. When he worked as an employee of the agencies, he felt unable to fully access and respond to community needs due to the constraining nature of his employment. He now works independently, but in collaboration with several other local NGOs. He was aware that the community is more open with him as he is not affiliated to a specific entity, which they would not be comfortable to discuss about openly. Another interview with an independent worker took place; this time, the individual was less experienced than the previous participant and I was interested in her views as a newcomer to the development process. She had recently completed her studies in community development and as part of her studies she worked with different actors in development within the urban settlements in Nairobi. She is now contracted on a regular basis to organisations to do various pieces of community work including data collection and needs assessment activities, coordinating community discussion forums and monitoring and evaluation processes.

Key themes

The discussions below are presented in quotations a similar way as those from the focus groups and also include brief explanations intertwined with the quotations. The themes used here are as shown in the list in table 5.1 as well as the summary in figure 5.9 The quotations are referenced using codes 'D' indicating those categorised as direct contact and 'D2' to indicate those in indirect contact.

Self reliance, capacities and long-term project viability

Because of the need to show tangible impact, and the difficulty of measuring other forms of impact, there is a focus on, for example, physical structures and less so, on activities such as supporting self-reliance, developing capacities or ensuring project long-term viability. In order to avoid the complete neglect of these activities, local agencies were encouraged to begin their own projects that were focused on enhancing their capacities. Programmes such as the 'community-led total sanitation' (CLTS) were given as examples to show how other communities have succeeded in self mobilising and taking responsibilities as well as conducting their own appraisal and analysis. This was one way of encouraging self-reliance indirectly as seen below.

Effective engagement with community

Local agencies believe they have an effective way of communicating and engaging with the community. They often use methods such as regular informal visits and door to door contact as well as formal research approaches. They decide who is to take part in that contact, how it should be done and the questions they are seeking answers to and believe that because they are in contact with the community in that way, engagement has taken place and they have acquired the information necessary for a project. Such a process can result in more challenges than solutions, as narrated by one of the participants below.

Tools and frameworks in community engagement

Tools and frameworks were used as a way to standardise processes and to ensure that details were not missed. Local NGOs identified tools or frameworks such as 'under the same sky' and 'most significant change' (MSC) (Davis and Dart, 2005), designed to focus on sustainable skills. The emphasis was on establishing the right product, partnerships, good practice and what would be useful to help the community to succeed.

Process of managing projects

Local agencies indicated that sometimes they are involved in the project in the initial stages to ensure it works as it was intended. When leaving the project, they need to consider the management of it carefully so that the community is encouraged to take up ownership of it and not feel that the agency is required to get involved after that. This, they hoped, would be a process that encouraged self-reliance in the community. Successful projects are used as reference points and examples for new community groups taking up a project.

Meaningful growth and community empowering

There have been changes in development direction in recent years, mainly because NGOs and development agencies are giving the communities more responsibility for their own project. Training on useful skills and encouraging accountability has given the groups confidence in their abilities to support themselves. However, some aspects are still controlled by the agencies and the community has yet to learn how to evaluate and plan effectively for themselves, as they are still dependent on others to get a project started or to instruct them on how to run the project on their own.

(ii) Indirect contact with community

Participants' introduction

One of the participants represented a government department which works to end extreme poverty as well as working towards creating jobs, unlocking potential and helping save lives where there is need. The organisation does not operate its own programmes within communities, but works with intermediaries such as local governments and local organisations. The next participating organisation was a private sector fund backed by organisations in development finance. Their aim is to work with private sector companies to support their innovative business ideas. As a private led establishment, it has taken an interest in getting organisations to show tangible results and is also keen to have credibility with the funding providers. The next participant represented an organisation that operates as a membership body supporting organisations working in international development. This organisation promotes, supports and represents international development through research, training and advocacy and aims to influence governments and policy makers. The organisation believes in effective social development through strong relationships with partners and beneficiaries and providing robust evidence of performance. Also interviewed were two participants representing an organisation that deals with managing funds on behalf of funding organisations. They are responsible for allocating funds and managing the process in order to arrive at the results stipulated by the funding organisation. And, finally, I interviewed a consultant who had previously worked with a number of development organisations including UN Habitat. He now works independently to provide consultancy services for development agencies as well as development advice for communities.

Key themes

Supporting capabilities

In the recent past, there has been a review of the approach in terms of capacity development and its impact. There is recognition of the value of

capacities and emphasis is placed on ensuring that there is clearer evidence of impact. Clear lines of deliverables which can be presented to tax payers are necessary. This means that, where the target is to develop capacities, it becomes challenging to integrate a process that is focused on creativity and critical thinking as that is difficult to quantify. Capacity and empowering is therefore relegated further down the list of priorities. Supporting capacity building and empowering a community takes a long time, and most international agencies are not able to allocate funds to projects that require such length of time.

Project long-term viability

Ensuring the funding structure is flexible enough to enable allocation of funds towards capacity building is often a concern. A strict allocation process and accountability may be required and therefore clear guidelines for the use of funds and ways to evidence impact are given. Due to the complexity of providing tangible results within a short project period and the demands for capability towards long-term viability in projects, it becomes difficult to find a suitable balance for everyone involved. Currently, there are few programmes allocating funds for capacities and long-term viability of projects. This affects the project longevity as there are no skills or funds to run the project in the long run.

Tangible results

As seen previously, results that can be seen and verified are required. Processes that are not measurable in a tangible way, such as capacity development and empowerment, take a long time to implement and are not easily measured. Proposals to support such a plan are quickly shelved until there is a clear way of showing the impact of non-tangible activities.

Impact and evaluation

The process of evaluation of impact is a complete set of activities on its own. It has its own set of tools and frameworks used across the development arena. Selection of the appropriate tools and framework or decisions to use manual

processes are important in supporting the type of evaluation and eventually the reports that emerge from that process. These sorts of tools can also be used to gather information to share among development actors who can refine and develop them further to improve effectiveness.

Effective working relationships/local knowledge

Some communities feel that agencies have a condescending attitude, where they approach them as the poor people who need an outsider to help them, without consulting them. It is important for a development agency to acknowledge the role of the community in the process. Development agencies may not always understand the local culture. They are therefore likely to propose projects that would not be of immediate use to the community.

The next table shows a summary of the discussion points above. These will be used to show how they link to each other in the process of selecting the themes.

Participants	Discussions/themes
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Needs assessment and follow-up • Self-dependence/ role in local development • Group participation and self support • Group commitment • Group commitment and management • Group activities • Incomplete development projects • Water scarcity • Hygiene and sanitation awareness • More facilities needed • Sewage and drainage • Teaching younger generation • Support towards enterprising and expanding business • Building support in rural areas • Community sensitizing • Training on project management
Interviews Direct contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering • Training skills • Frameworks and tools in community engagement • Self dependence and building capacities • Methods of engaging with community • Use of tools • Process of managing projects • Capabilities for self-reliance • meaningful growth • community empowering • disconnect
Interviews In-direct contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for capacity development • Whose capacity • Ways of supporting sustainability • Capacity development • Tangible results • Sustainable skills • Impact and evaluation • Resilience and project long-term viability • Capabilities and project long-term viability • Understanding local culture • Working relationships

Table 5.1 List of key discussion points

5.4 Themes selection and approach

Once the key themes were identified, it was necessary to establish if and how they link together and to see how those themes relate to the overarching questions of this study. This section shows the process of identifying and linking themes that lead to findings and eventually the conclusions.

5.4.1 Themes selection

The data was processed systematically through several reviews of the transcribed data in order to identify key themes. Key points were selected and codes identified, then reviewing, refining and identifying completed in a thematic analysis format. Boyatzis (1998) says thematic analysis is a way of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data in a way that organises and describes the data set in rich detail and that was useful for this study. In doing it this way, the process goes beyond some aspects of the research topic so that ideas and concepts embedded within the data collection activities are allowed to emerge in an in vivo approach. The list of key discussion points in Table 5.1 were summarised and merged together to create a shorter list of themes shown in figure 5.9 below.

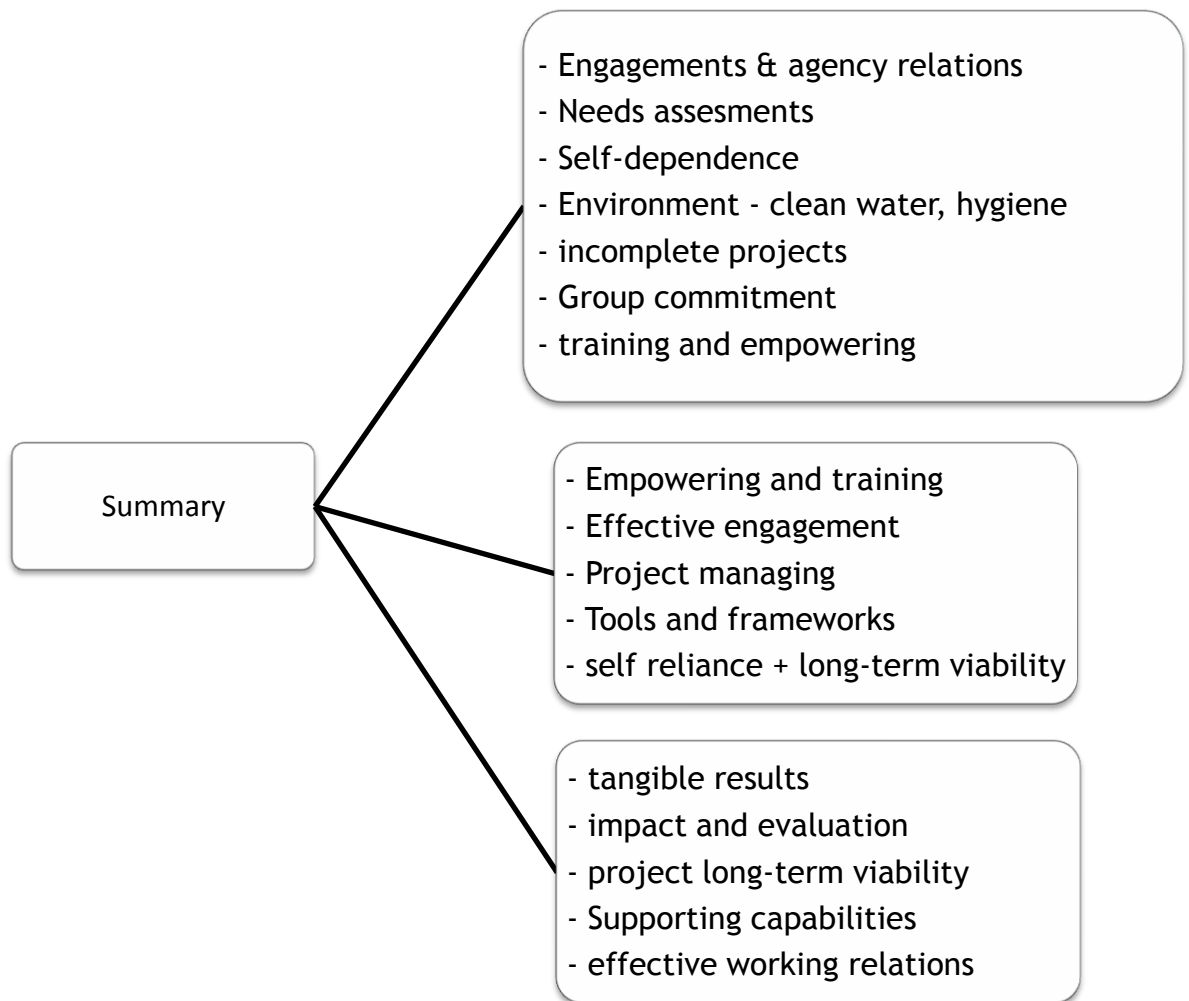


Figure 5.9 Summarised list of themes

Following suggestions made by Charmaz (2006), the ideas or concepts that could form themes were identified by asking myself questions such as, what was going on, what was being said, what were the participants taking for granted or assuming? This may seem passive on my part as a researcher because the theories, interview questions or topics related to this study are not introduced here in a priori approach of using pre-designed concepts. My active role as the researcher has been to identify meaningful patterns and select which would be of interest in relation to the research focus. In the process of analysis, we often state that we ‘give a voice’ to our participants. This ‘voice’ often constitutes information selected, edited and set out to reflect our own arguments, which might defeat the purpose of an exploratory pursuit. This process of giving a voice that reflects our own thinking is not

necessarily a negative aspect, but it is important that the decisions made on theme selection are clearly set out. For this study, the selection process was based on the issues that emerged and linking them to the broad areas of interest of this study. A response or statement was identified if it captured an important aspect within the data, or if it represented a selected pattern or meaning within the data. Themes selected here were not based on size or prevalence across the data, but rather the importance of how a theme captures the issues in the overall question. This process produced the diagram below.

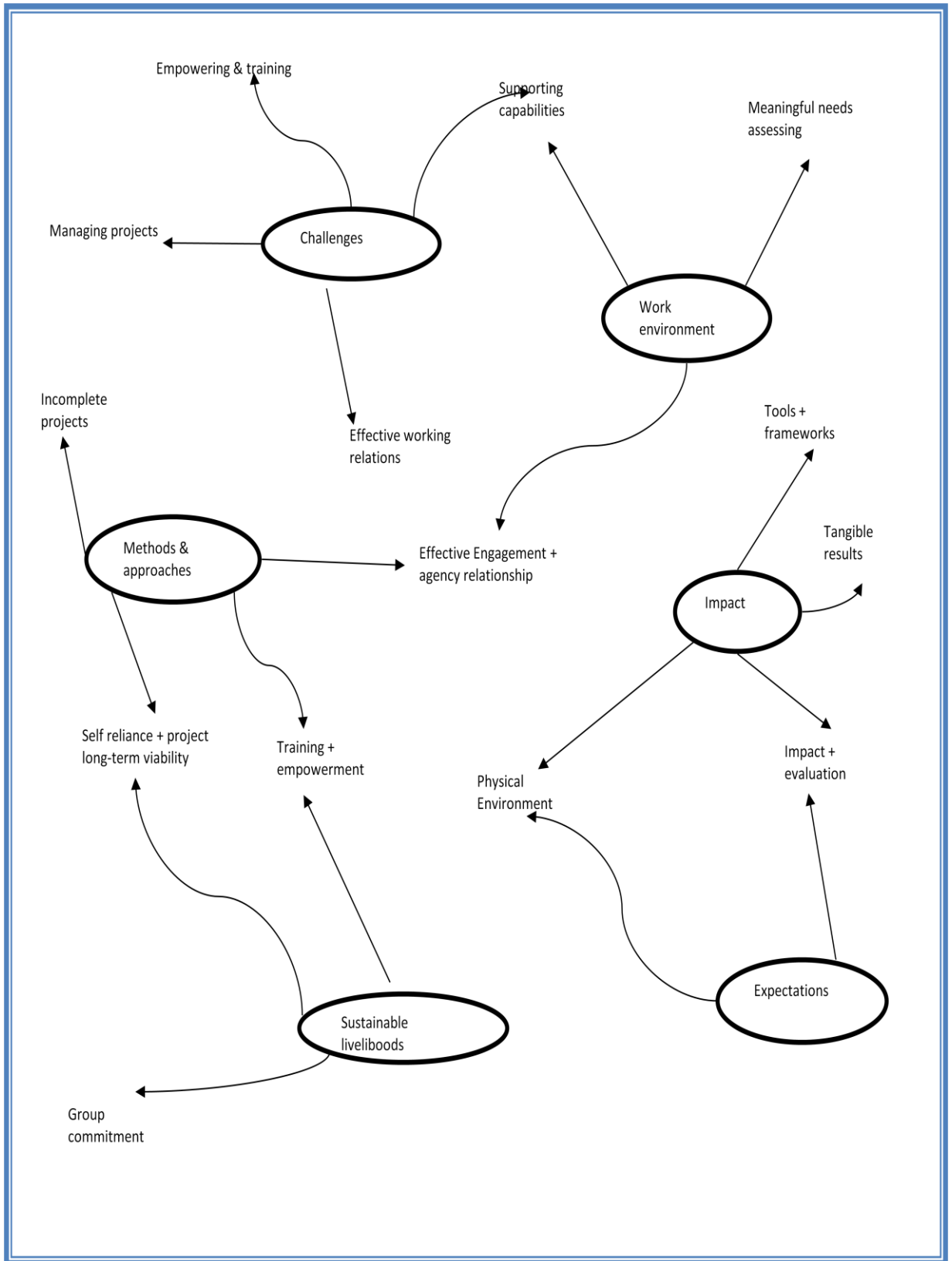


Figure 5.10 Primary themes linked

The connections as shown in the diagram above produced a myriad of possible links between the ideas and the themes. These were refined further to link them together where they were associated with similar perspectives and for clarity. The resulting diagram is shown below.

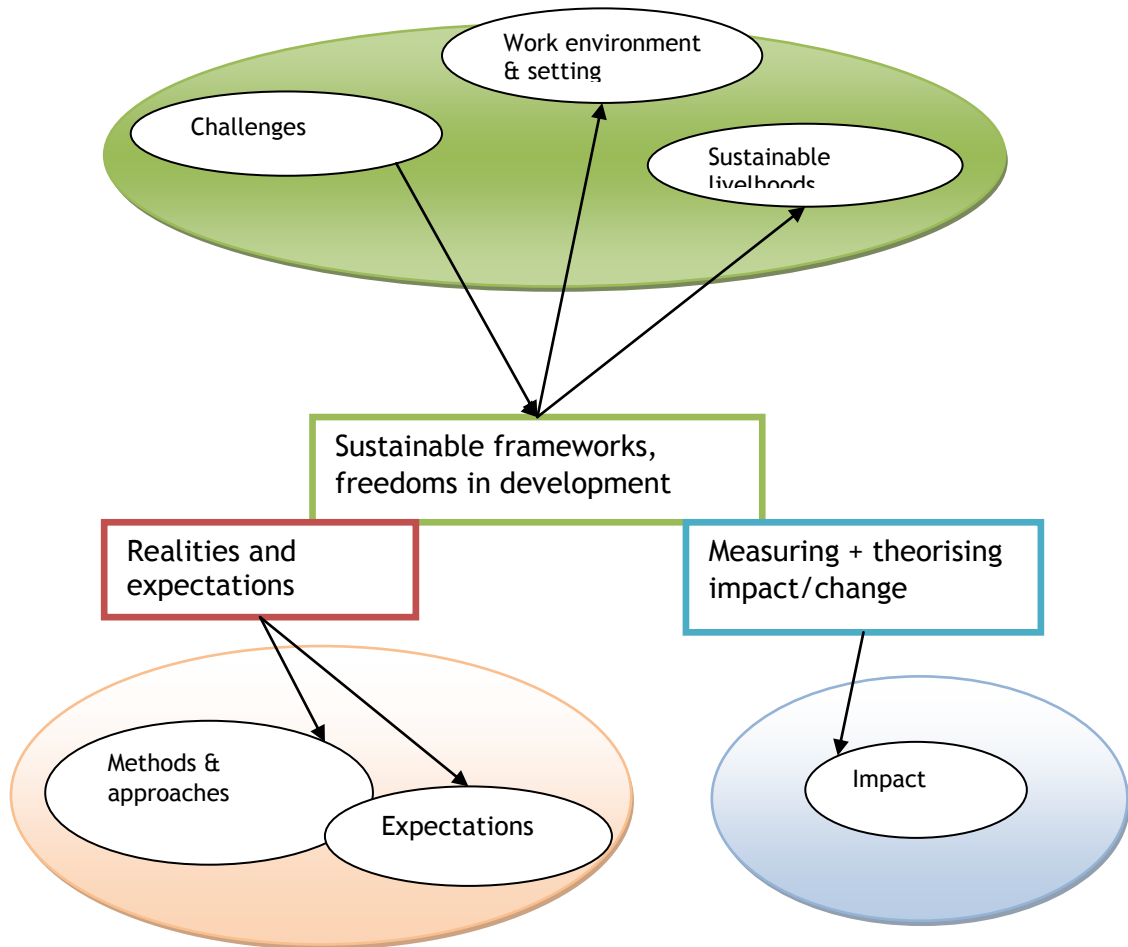


Figure 5.11 Key themes

The three sections identified above will form the basis of the analysis and discussion. The next section provides a brief overview of what those key themes address, looking at the different elements that form the analysis and discussion.

Sustainable livelihoods, freedom and capabilities

Sustainable livelihoods are about creating opportunities for people to diversify their livelihoods and develop conscious strategies to reduce risk, while focusing on improving well-being. Clear objectives, development priorities and putting people at the centre of development are necessary for sustainability. Livelihoods are about securing necessities such as shelter, food and water, and sustaining the livelihoods means going beyond aspects of income generation and looking at ways in which vulnerable people are excluded. This holistic and flexible approach is a useful process in supporting a sustainable livelihood. Selecting a suitable framework can benefit an intervention. This begins with a reflective process of obtaining evidence of a broad vision and identifying ideas on what needs to be achieved. The people-centred nature of the approach encourages engagement in line with participatory approaches and, in general, it provides opportunities for community-based learning where people can learn from each other as well as from outsiders (Butler and Mazur, 2007). Learning in this way is a useful process of encouraging people to reflect on what they know and to begin to think critically. Such a process can be useful in supporting development, if development is about meaningful change and improvement. But the question of what development is can be difficult to answer.

Chambers (1997) offers a response by stating simply that development is 'good change'. But who defines 'good' or 'change'? The different meanings and measures of development can contribute to a wide misunderstanding and can possibly undermine a development plan or initiative. Some measures of development look at the quantity of resources to determine the level of wealth and thus development. The share of these identified resources is not obvious; access to health or education and a general quality of life are not indicated by such measures of development. Equally important to note is that countries and regions are at different stages of growth and therefore their priorities for development are likely to be different. Their policies will be defined and driven by what development means to that local community. A measure of individual well-being - their health, education, life expectancy, and economic ability - has a role in contributing to community and individual well-being and eventually to development. The data in this research identifies several

findings, focusing on four main one - as perspectives on effective management, exclusions through denial of equality and justice, focusing on capabilities rather than skills and enhancing self and collective efficacies.

These key issues are central to progress that is focused on self-reliance and an ability to achieve a quality of life desired by individuals, and the role of development should be to remove the obstacles that affecting ability to develop one's own life (Nussbaum 2011). This has the potential to empower and support local communities to take control of their own lives, to establish their own development needs, to create and manage their own sustainable activities to develop their lives and encourage less dependency while working towards becoming self-reliant.

Realities and expectations - engaging and participating

Development interventions often work from the plans drawn up by the supporting agencies with ideas gleaned from engagement processes from the discussions with participants and review of documents. This process involves one party - usually the development agency - questioning another - usually the communities - using a pre-designed checklist. The reality of what development should be varies among the different development actors, which led Chambers to ask the question 'whose reality counts' (Chambers, 1997). He discussed the dominance of the perspectives of the institutions which, leads to unsatisfactory solutions and inappropriate interventions. He saw this as a way of imposing ideas of reality on others (Chambers, 1997). This misrepresentation of realities is reported and presented that way as it is what satisfies the operational and administrative demands of development agencies, said Chambers (1997). This denial of other people's realities goes on to create and impose over simplified and standardised solutions.

The role of power in this process is questionable and the relationship between those with perceived power and those without creates separation and distance within the relationship. The poor feel tied into a relationship of patronage and feel the need to report false accounts of activities or fictional realities.

Engaging participants in reflecting, exploring and questioning serves to support efforts of making meaning. Questions of meaning, emancipation, freedoms and authority stimulate conversation to shape self-awareness. This self-awareness is what Freire (1990) referred to as critical consciousness which means being present, being aware of your surroundings, of your own identity and basis of beliefs and attitudes. Being in such a state and then analysing the situation in a critical thinking manner should allow one to become aware of what matters and of what one's reality is. Collaboration and partnerships with actors who are critically aware becomes meaningful and solutions that integrate knowledge contributed by everyone are considered. This way, the solutions identified are likely to be those enabling a community to truly influence the process and get the change they desire. Engagement and participations are useful ways of building the community and supporting them to be open and expressive. It contributes to the enlightenment process of communities and an awareness of their circumstances. It also enables systematic learning in an open manner to challenge and scrutinize processes, to test practices and ideas and also to provide evidence.

Theorising change

The Paris declarations (OECD, 2005) on aid effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) (OECD/AAA, 2008) are based on principles born out of agencies' experiences of what works and what does not. Of the five principles of the Paris declaration that look at practical and action-oriented improvements to development, one of them is 'results'. The AAA, designed to strengthen the Paris declaration, reviewed the progress and suggested three areas of improvement, one of which was 'delivering results', real and measurable, which shows the importance of the aspect of results to the organisations involved. Agency reports such as OECD 2009 and World Bank 2005 show a continuous falling short of expectations in reporting results. Part of this is attributed of lack of agreement on the approach to development and therefore on the manner in which results could be measured. Reporting on results and impact could take different forms, such as financial transparency, clear decision making, open and honest dialogue or basic measures and

evaluations of activities of the intended use. Outcomes are now viewed as an effective way of reporting results, where agencies look for innovative inputs and the changes that can be said to have happened due to those inputs. This is often reported by agencies at a set time, usually at the end of a given period or process. This way of reporting at the end of a process has raised concerns about assessing project effectiveness at the end of the programme as changes happening during the course of the process may be missed or ignored.

Many organisations are constantly looking for different ways of ensuring aid effectiveness and currently the Theory of Change (ToC) is taking centre stage as a tool to support a result-oriented process. ToC attempts to apply a critical thinking approach and works as a set of ideas that describes the changes desired, how change will occur and the catalyst for that change. It considers what needs to happen for that change to occur, who is involved and the result or outcome expected (Funnell and Rogers, 2011). This may mean that there is an attempt to predict how and when the impact should take place. The change may not happen at the expected or predicted point, resulting in reports of poor performance. Projects focusing on development of capacities rarely demonstrate the expected process of change, as shown in a study by Taylor and Clarke (2008). Developing capacity requires in-depth reflection and reviewing of culture, values and ideas or desires, which can be long, complex and tedious processes. This cannot therefore be limited to immediate and short term goals. Our mindsets can be made to believe that processes can encourage an absolute truth to emerge, a certainty that we can measure in a quantitative manner. The complex and dynamic world we live in does not work in a way that supports certainty. Diversity and constant change are some basic elements that impact on development processes. If change is to be predicted through a process such as ToC, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of how that change is expected to happen. Ortiz and Macedo (2010) state that this means understanding the demands and needs of stakeholders, the conditions needed to support emerging changes and having a broader understanding of the cultural and social economic environment. ToC is an outcome based approach sometimes seen as a 'theory of change thinking', which is a process as well as a product. It is a continuous process of learning, discussion and analysis to produce thoughts that can contribute to the success

of a process such as a capacity development initiative. It is important, however, to be aware that it is not an absolute guarantee of the change expected or how it will occur. It may not eliminate uncertainty and could even be seen as an obstacle due to its multi-layered process, which may seem complex. It is, however a place to begin and its flexibility allow users to apply it at the level they can best benefit from.

Summary

In this chapter, the focus was to present the key themes from this research. The background of location and participants is given so that there is an appreciation of the type of people involved as their circumstances. The process of identifying and selecting the themes is explanation and also shown using diagrams, to demonstrate visually how the ideas and themes relate. The discussion and visual images then show how the ideas link and eventually form an overall pattern and the three key areas of discussion. Brief summaries of those three key areas are presented as an introduction to what is covered in the analysis and discussion chapters that follow.

Chapter 6: Sustainable livelihoods, freedoms and capabilities

Introduction

This chapter reviews the data gathered and, analyses and discusses the nature of a development process in relations to the key aspects of sustainable livelihoods, freedoms and capabilities. The chapter assesses the actors' perspectives on how these aspects of development contribute to meaningful change and the way in which engaging with stakeholders, denial of equality and justice as well as capabilities and efficacies can impact development initiatives. The perspective of the various sets of actors and in particular their role in the process of community development is analysed. Of particular interest in the need to focus on people and their needs, the importance of citizen participation and inclusive agendas that aim to support capabilities that enable access to wider choices and that work towards capabilities for self-reliance. Key themes identified in chapter five are discussed in the light of the findings identifies, establishing their importance in supporting ability for self-reliance through a critical thinking approach. The chapter focuses on key findings which are identifies as; perspectives on effective engagement, exclusions through denial of equality and justice, focusing on capabilities rather than skills and enhancing self and collective efficacies.

6.1 Perspectives on importance of engagement in development

The process of making decisions together as an important component in a development initiative was recognised by community groups as well as the agency organisations. The discussion on engagement was raised in all focus groups, discussing it as a useful contributor to a successful initiative. The discussion about ways in which such engagements took place or should take place was viewed in different ways as demonstrated in the responses from the participants in this study. This study found that participants in the community groups felt that relevant engagement did not take place or where there was an

attempt to engage, relevant community representatives were not involved. To the community, this indicated that they did not recognise that process as effective or one that supported collective decision making. On the other hand, the development agencies believed that they had used the right techniques and frameworks to engage with communities, particularly where they used frameworks designed as people centred. The specific descriptions identified and discussed here as key elements of engagement were agency relations, the value placed on communicating with the relevant people and inclusive and respectful working relationships.

a) Effective engagement and agency relations

Engaging in a way that is effective for the community was discussed by all the focus groups. Effectiveness meant that community members were informed of the process and relevant representatives selected in an open manner. Each of the groups identified this as an important element of a relationship because it demonstrated respect and a willingness to support genuine change. Of particular importance was the need to involving community members who are likely to benefit from the need being addressed and also to encourage dialogue among various actors in a development process. These were seen from comments written on the Ketso workspace during the focus group meetings, some of which are shown below.

- Sometimes we are not aware of an engagement process going on and we only hear about it when reports are written.
- Usually not engaged before the start of a project.
- NGOs engage with leaders mainly
- Leaders want to control the process so they do not communicate or inform

(FG-M)

- We are only told about the project at the last minute, when all decisions have been made.

- Better communication with NGOs informing as many people [as possible] about the process even if the discussion is only with leaders.

(FG-Am)

- No engagement
- We are not consulted
- We feel used by NGO's

(FG-K)

- Using engagement for personal gain (limits the effectiveness of an engaging process)
- Purpose of engagement not explained
- We are usefully not engaged in decision making.
- When discussions on needs are done, we need to be told about the purpose, like how the information is going to be used.

(FG-T)

When asked why they felt that the engagement had not been effective, the community participants in this study indicated that their view of an effective development intervention would be one that supports them to secure basic requirements such as shelter, food and water. The community was looking for ways in which they would be able to support themselves in sustainable ways and welcomed an initiative that would look beyond issues of immediate income generation. Development agencies, using a combination of key capitals to assess needs and engage with the community, hoped to build on existing local knowledge and ensure that the development projects become processes where people learn from each other as suggested by Neefjes (2000) and de Haan (2005). This would require dialogue to take place, in a way that would be clear and meaningful to those involved and in particular those who would benefit from the development initiatives. While discussing the aspect of engagement and dialogue, participants expressed opinions based on experiences of what took, as shown below;

- Funders to reach community level
- NGOs not open, they tend to use us
- NGO need not to misuse funds, discuss with us (FG-P)

- Some people are not interested in inclusive programmes
- We can't communicate
- The NGOs apply for funds from donors on projects that [they] feel are best, decided in their board rooms.

(FG-S)

- Lack of proper communication from NGOs
- Communication poor - no access
- Need direct engagement
- NGOs not clear, not open we are asked to sign blank papers
- Blocking of communication directly to donors
- Ineffective communication between NGO and donors.

(FG-Ak)

The comments above from the community participants, suggest that the projects were not necessarily decided on in a collective manner. The communities participated in the projects because they had been told that the projects would be of use to them, and not necessarily because they found the projects useful.

The agencies, however, saw this in a different light and believed they were effective in the way they engaged with, and involved the community in the process of a project development, as demonstrated by their responses when asked about the engagement process. They clearly stated that engagement took place and they were convinced it was effective as shown below.

We prefer to have a conversation with members of the community, as many of them as we can, so that we can get a good sense of what is happening and what ideas they have. This also helps more people to be aware of what projects we may be able to support them on.

(D-R)

We are able to engage with the community and (we) help where it is most needed because we are part of the community, we live within the community. People who approach us and work with us before they start, have their project going better than others because there is information.

(D-F)

...we use various techniques such as use door to door where we have some products targeting certain people we already have their contacts, and also use the focus group where you can have dialogues with community, for example you put up a facilities somewhere and get the people around to sit in and discuss issues collectively.

(D-B)

The engagement approach was clearly desired by actors in the development process where those involved were keen to see genuine progress, as suggested by their comments. In the conversations, the communities stated the need for clarity about the activities being carried out, and that this should take place through open engagement and effective communication. According to the communities, there was little evidence that the project focus was people-centred; at the very least, it was not the community that was central to that process. The community found such projects difficult to connect with and the projects would eventually die a natural death once a development agency leaves. This has been the case with a number of projects that have taken place in several parts of Kibera and Mukuru. A development project begins with gusto and enthusiasm, with ideals about the problems it will solve. But this is only from the perspective of those running the development intervention. Once the project is completed, and the agency leaves, the community does not know how to deal with the project, either because of the community's lack of

interest or, lack of capability or because the project does not meet an immediate need. These were reasons given for some of the projects that did not take off and there was emphasis on the need for communities to be considered a central part of the project planning. By not engaging the community effectively, particularly at the initial stages of assessment, difficulties at later stages of the process were likely. It is also possible that an understanding of the process of needs assessment as well as engagement was understood in different ways. The community clearly felt they were not adequately engaged, while the agencies stated that a process of assessment was central to the frameworks and was effectively used.

Looking at findings seen here, there is an indication that one set of actors believe they are engaging in a way that will produce a successful and long-term viable project, while the other set does not see evidence of this engagement. This is likely to create difficulties with the impact of the project and the likely contribution to short and long-term benefits. This lack of clarity or agreement on what an engagement process involves might be due to the way each party understands the process, which is likely to have been influenced by the nature of the development approach in the early days. As seen in the literature review in this research, early development initiatives were designed to show support for Africa after the ravages of colonialism by providing mainly financial support (Allen and Thomas, 2000). International agencies which provided the financial aid, such as the World Bank, dictated the terms and conditions of this aid and to some degree, the nature of the development to be undertaken. The approach to development from these institutions was centred on designs built from their perspective of how development should take place. In order to receive support, a community would be required to strictly adhere to the conditions set, and this became the usual way of working in the development arena. The approach has been criticised over the years, and there have been many attempts to find suitable ways to encourage meaningful development. This search produced frameworks and approaches that are centred on people and their needs. Processes such as the sustainable livelihood frameworks were seen to support development initiatives that would be long-term and effective (Neefjes, 2000). It meant that local communities had a chance to be involved in the agenda of developing their own neighbourhood and their own

community, and it also meant changing the way in which communities related to one another and to the development agencies. Assessments and reviews were at the centre of this approach, and participants expressed their views on the process as seen below.

Capacity for meeting the goals set is established at the onset and where there is a short fall, an agreement is reached as to how that capacity will be developed because we manage this process on behalf of the funding bodies.

(D-M)

We do engage with people in as far as how they would like the project to run - mostly about the day to day planning as we may be limited by the specific funding requirement. We do research in the community and also use statistics available to establish where a project, for example bio gas would most benefit a community.

(D-B)

These comments from the agencies suggest that they aim to carry out an assessment of needs. They have a planned design of how and what will be assessed as well as a set of desired outcomes established by the funding bodies. The assessment at this stage is to ensure that the fund is used in the manner that has been prescribed. In a project where an outcome is pre-determined the project process is already structured to achieve those outcomes and the process then becomes one where the community is required to tick boxes to agree on what has already been decided. Can this type of development last long enough to make a difference? The approach that has pre-determined outcomes, set in the absence of those the outcomes are aimed to support is likely to have undesired impact on the long-term viability of a project as well as efforts towards self-reliance.

b. Inclusive and respectful working relationships that support long-term viability of projects

Long-term viability of projects and those that are able to maintain positive outcomes and benefits to the community are necessary. In order to achieve this, it would be important for those involved in supporting a project to believe in the project benefits, and therefore the need to be involved throughout the planning and decision process of the project. The focus of development interventions is often to improve well-being, through a process of identifying drivers that enable sustainable livelihoods and those that can remove barriers that prevent progress. As the SLA sets clear objectives and aims to place people at the centre of the process, it is an attractive approach for most development actors.

Using a sustainable livelihood approach requires some basics to be put in place, such as clarity of structure and the need for a degree of understanding of the workings of the community. This encourages engagement in line with the participatory approach and, in general, it provides opportunities for community-based learning where people can learn from each other as well as from outsiders (Butler and Mazur, 2007). The authors show that the lack of clarity and lack of visibility of people have been central criticisms and that the assessment approach of focusing on the assets achieved can be seen as rather quantitative. The problems may arise from the process of measuring different assets, determining what they represent and getting genuine responses from communities. Agencies claim that the information from communities may not always be forth-coming for variety of reasons. These reasons include having many different elements representing a capital, issues of trust and what the community may view as the outsider's opportunity to gain from the assessment (Carney, 1998). This creates challenges for the process; if the assessment cannot produce information that can be relied upon, the interventions and programmes designed may have little effect. The concern, however, may well be the lack of either genuine engagement or clarity in the process, both of which are likely to skew the design of the projects.

As argued by MacLeod (2001), the opportunity for transformation through being pro-active is a cornerstone of sustainable livelihoods. Active and meaningful involvement in identifying, designing and implementing through dialogue is useful to the success of development initiatives. An inclusive attitude that can support activities of change would include having discussions, negotiations and interactions between actors. MacLeod (2001) suggests that the key to communities' ability to determine the effectiveness of the projects lies in their taking responsibility for their own development. The Kibera and Mukuru communities recognised this and they formed groups through which they supported each other towards the success of projects and ultimately the community. They invested time and shared knowledge, in a process that created further knowledge within the group. The groups recognised the value of commitment as an important element for success and encouraged each other to be actively engaged and to contribute. This was evident from the number of times the issue of commitment among group members was raised. Shared responsibility was valued by the agencies, as support from agencies was given to registered groups and not individuals. The workings of the groups was not so much a concern for the agencies as long as a group was formed to represent the local community and was able to show this through a formal registration document and regular reports of meetings.

c) The value of establishing communications and involving everyone

The SLA approach to development has commitments to being people centred. However, SLA frameworks are designed by agencies which determine what areas of support to focus on. Poverty reduction is an ideal desire, but the definition of poverty is as diverse as the people defining it. A method of identifying the poor or the nature of poverty is not always clearly stated in the practical approaches; instead, what we have either identifies geographical locations, or uses poverty lines based on levels of income. An effective way to understand poverty in terms of the people being supported would be by including a cross section of the community and not just working with the community leaders, as participants indicated. This would require establishing ways to open channels of communications with relevant members of the

community which would be useful in avoiding skewing results and affecting intended outcomes - as shown by the example below, narrated by a participant in this study.

We had a large housing project some years ago that was supposed to help the community in Kibera. After the research was done, it was decided that houses for part of the community would be built. A lot of money was spent on the project and the selected people moved in after the houses were completed. Unfortunately, within a few months, they had gone back to their old houses in Kibera. Some were renting out the new houses to people from other areas because they said they could live in Kibera and use the income from the new houses. When asked why this was happening, they said they were unable to pay the bills in the new houses, such as electricity and water, others said that their friends still lived in Kibera and they felt they did not belong in the new settlements. These issues would have been identified if the engagement had been done in the right way.

(D-M)

Communication with the intended beneficiary can be seen as a useful approach as it is participatory and involves the community. As it may not be practical to include every member of the community, it would require various tests to ensure wide representation including all genders, various community stakeholders and local institutions, in order to get a detailed picture of the communities' perception of poverty and community needs that require to be addressed. The ideal scenario - where the SLA begins with a blank sheet and works its way through the process in order to identify an ideal entry point - might not be necessarily accurate or realistic, but is a useful starting point. A study by Morse et al. (2001) of two Nigerian villages showed the difficulties of bringing all the assets together as required by the theoretical basis of the SLA. Their study observed the usefulness of an evidence-based holistic view of development; however, the nature of the interaction and assessment of needs should be more pragmatic.

The intentions of an SLA are clearly useful. In practice, it needs to be very specific to the needs of the people it is intended to help and this therefore makes the process of assessing outcomes more complex. Promoting sustainable livelihoods through strengthening people's capacity to provide for themselves is a recognised and desirable strategy for improving the quality of life. But from the evidence provided by the communities, the SLA approach remains a domain of the actors within the agencies. Despite the challenges, it forms a good place to begin a discussion of changes that can take place, and to address the difficulties such as exclusion and the need to see development as freedom.

6.2 Exclusions through denial of equality and justice

Inequality shaped by power imbalances can entrench itself in society where individuals or groups of people set themselves as more knowledgeable or powerful than others. They encourage others to look up to them as the representatives of their groups or communities and make decisions on their behalf. In that process, the self-appointed leaders are likely to acquire power that they can wield over the masses and skew people's way of thinking and thus their life chances. Free choice, voluntary interaction and rules of relationships do not reflect the power of those excluded from a negotiation process (Green, 2008). These causes uneven distribution of services, with those more powerful getting a bigger share, and are likely to promote unequal relationships that give some people more of a voice to exercise privileges and influence over others. As noted by Bebbington et al. (2008) and Bird et al. (2004), this affects the quality and access to services. When opportunities are denied, the inability to access adequate education means there is lack of the human capital that would provide the necessary capacity to formulate a voice to express opinions about their situation. The formation of organised groups through which such concerns can be raised is blocked, for example, through the denial of the right to vote for women (although in Kenya, women have had the right to vote since independence in 1963). There is also emphasis on some cultural perceptions that deter certain groups from action, for example in cultures where women are not encouraged to speak in the presence of men there by rendering them silent and unable to express their opinions. These

types of denials of freedom, in Sen's (1999) definition, get in the way of meaningful development where groups or individuals are unable to make choices about their own lives and their own development and become dependent on others to make those decisions for them.

To address the denials of such freedoms, the SLA ideals emerge as an attractive way to pursue practical and meaningful ways of development. The SLA process begins by assessing the development needs of vulnerable people and requires them to be able to identify and articulate their own development priorities. To be able to do that, they would need to have an awareness of what they lack, have opportunities to state their needs and freedom to fulfil those needs. The freedoms referred to here are those that enable individuals and communities fulfil a basic need, which in turn affords them the ability to access another level of development. Sen (1999) describes various instances of denial of freedoms; for example, famine denies opportunity to survive, lack of access to health facilities and clean environments deny the opportunity for good health; and lack of functional education denies the opportunity for gainful work opportunities. Having freedom to do things one sees as valuable is significant for the person's ability to have a good quality of life and to foster life outcomes that are effective to their well-being (Sen, 1999). This type of freedom becomes central to the process of development and the quality of life. The concept of freedom is difficult to pin down and is often contested. Where does one person's freedom begin or end, and when is it considered acceptable to intersect with another person's freedom? Fairness and justice become considerations in the process of identifying freedoms. We acknowledge justice by appreciating the cultures, customs, values and interests of others. We then use our critical reasoning to put aside our own values and prejudices and allow our minds to perceive other concepts and to appreciate other people's perceptions. This way of looking at life is likely to give an opportunity to social justice, which works alongside the fairness and impartiality ideals of equity, and has potential to impact communities through empowering and training.

Working in ways that do not reflect clear lines of co-operation can be seen to manifest exclusion by not involving those intended to benefit from the

intervention, and may lead to lack of equality and justice. In the context of development, equality is about seeking to treat people as equals; it is about being just in our approach to distribution of goods in order to offer equal life chances. Not being just can arise as a result of power imbalances, and the concept of equality presents an opportunity for human beings to demonstrate their shared common human dignity and treat each other with consideration (Williams, 1962). What qualifies as equity and therefore a just way to distribute goods and services is indeed a complex process. Genuine dialogue needs to be central to the process with a consideration for the important principles of equality of life chances, where the central principle is that there should be no differences in life chances based on factors beyond a person's control (Sandel, 2009). Supporting access to basic needs including food, shelter, health and education is necessary as a pre-requisite for people to begin to effectively contribute to society (Wiggins, 1998), and encourage the process of empowering communities and individuals to begin to aim for self-reliance.

a) Empowering and training

This study found that the communities identifies their lack of capabilities was likely to be a result of inability to access their rights through unequal and unjust systems, suggesting that this created difficulty in accessing wider choices. Making choices wider means there will be more opportunities available to enable the selection of one direction over another. Supporting access to basic needs and ensuring awareness of ways to access those opportunities is likely to impact lives in a community. Living a meaningful life is desirable; being able to develop abilities to achieve one's own goals and to be free to achieve a meaningful life, are the essence of human development according to Haq (1995). Human beings, therefore, become the real wealth of an economy and developing and expanding their opportunities and capabilities has potential to enable them to live creatively and productively. Investing in people empowers them and enables them to grow and develop as humans. These ideas were explored with the participants in this study and it was clear that the desire to grow and prosper was present. Discussions about the

importance of internally driven growth took place in all the focus groups, each group having its own perspective about how this could take place as shown by their statements below.

- Our skills are not enough to do the projects ourselves.
- We do not have enough knowledge in the community for us to support and grow the project.
- Need to sensitize the community and help them to be able to know what to do with the projects.

(FG-Am)

- They should let us decide what we want to do. But they say they have the knowledge about how to do the project, so we should just do ‘small things’
- Be able to plan for ourselves, not wait for anyone.

(FG-Ak)

- It would be good if we learnt how to plan our own ideas, not just wait to be told.

(FG-K)

- We don’t know what the plans are, they just tell us what to do.

(FG-S)

These comments indicate awareness in the community of the need to be able to find their own solutions and to develop the individual towards being resourceful and finding solutions that are suitable for them and their community. Development agendas acknowledge the value of human development and seek to integrate it as a central theme of the development initiative, as indicated by reviews such as the DFID (2008) working paper series on capacity development which works on supporting and strengthening an ‘enabling environment’ in which research can be accessed, tailored for

effective uptake and deployed by anyone in a position to shape development processes.

As human beings, we continue to develop throughout life. We face different and more complex interactions as we progress through life and learn as we become exposed to different realities and cultures. Creating an environment that builds on what people know - one that encourages the use of what people have learnt to shape their desired development - has potential to optimise abilities. This possibility of shaping one's own world can kindle a creative interest in each of us to pursue those activities that we hope can change our circumstances. A development intervention that aims to empower and develop abilities for creativity in life choices stands in good stead in relation to longevity in development. This was evident in some of the communities in this study. A group such as FG-T had been in operation for approximately 25 years and had successful projects, which were used as examples within the community. The group indicated that their success was, and still continues to be, due to several reasons the main one being having abilities within the group, to understand the needs of their community and how to meet those needs. The group is able to carry out its own assessments of needs and evaluate their projects' performance. They say this gives them an edge as they are able to articulate their position and engage effectively with agencies. Asked what they understood to be capabilities, they identified specific skills to run projects such as book keeping and project management but were quick to point out that more important capabilities were being able to think 'outside the box'. This way of thinking has been useful for the group in ensuring that they are able to identify their own shortfalls and then find ways to meet those short falls. Other groups have not been in operation for a long period of time and some members indicated they had been part of other groups that were in operation for a short while and then disintegrated. This difference in approach to group dynamics had an impact on collective efficacy and collective action which, when successful, encourages community members and agencies to see the benefit of developing capabilities for self-dependence through collective and eventually individual activities.

Development, therefore, is more about people's capabilities, about what they are able to do and to be as Nussbaum (2011) argues. When individuals and communities have capabilities, they have choices and opportunities and are able to use those capabilities to find solutions. Poor health, poor sanitation or lack of education, are some ways that indicate fewer choices and failure to access those resources affects the standard of living. If people are to live meaningful lives, development will need to aim at supporting conditions that enable freedoms that -can help people access their rights and achieve their goals. In such an approach, human beings become the real wealth and investing in people and their capabilities enables them to be creative and productive towards their own development. The participants in this study were aware of the importance of being empowered, and able to articulate their own needs. They were aware of the importance of their contributions in a development process and the need to become more effective in meeting their own needs. This would support goals of becoming self-reliant as well as capability to support the communities to take a role in local development. This was evident from statements such as

- Empowering the youth so they can be creators not seekers
(FG-S)
- Need to get capacity for improving group constitution so we know our rights
(FG-T)
- We get help sometimes, but we would like to learn how to write proposals ourselves so we can write what we really need
(FG-Am)

Genuine opportunity to 'do' things is Nussbaum's (2011) emphasis, which shifts the capability focus to skills that create freedom and opportunity. Nussbaum (2011) acknowledges the fact that cultures and communities borrow ideas and methods from each other, some of which they may already have been familiar with and likely to have been used under different names or approaches.

Supporting communities 'to do', according to Nussbaum (2011), needs to take into consideration what communities can do and to be sensitive to cultural differences. It is important to respect the value of freedom for individuals and communities and take the role of supporting them to make their own choices. We live in a world that is evolving very rapidly, and supporting capabilities that meet the challenges of such an environment can effectively address challenges of social justice and social change. For example, with the way technology is rapidly changing, within the space of a few years, a small village in a remote location in Kenya will be able to access information online, about how to improve their farming practices. Development initiatives need to take such information into consideration when formulating the interventions, rather than teach communities how to build - for example a bridge, support them with ways to learn and assimilate the changes that are happening globally and locally.

This requires a way of working that is based on learning from each other, a way in which learning is shared and reciprocated and becomes a way of life - a lifelong learning approach. This way, one can be able to see the world and the changes in the world, from another person's perspective and decide for themselves if that would be a suitable to adopt as their own way of progress and development. Being able to observe how the world is changing globally, then critically reflecting on the way in which those changes affect local situations can be useful in beginning to solve problems and to make one's own decisions. These skills are crucial in developing an ability to evolve in a chosen direction and, as a result, become aware of one's issues such as esteem and confidence. Using that knowledge about one's own abilities, it is possible to begin to take charge of one's own future. This shifts development focus away from the traditional approach to capacity development that focuses on providing material resources and technical skills to those which focus on capacities for decision-making and reflective practice that enhances continuous learning and meaningful improvement process. Schon (1983) and Senge (1990) agree with such an approach and suggest that capacity development should comprise of interventions that target the individual or organisation level to develop capabilities for creative and critical thinking, that lead to self-reliance.

6.3 Going beyond skills to capability for self-reliance

Capacity development practice can have different meanings, and as this study found, the participants had different perceptions of what it should look like in practice.

a) Perspective on ways to support capabilities

From the community focus groups discussions, the participants talked about capacity as an aspect of skills such as project management or book keeping as seen by the comments from five of the focus groups below.

- There are only a few things we can do, like book keeping or construction work. Most of the big ideas are decided by them (funders)

(FG-Am)

- We have learnt how to do book keeping and records about money which we use for the projects.

(FG-T)

- They have workshops where they teach us how to manage projects so that we know how to collect money and when to fix things if they are broken.

(FG-S)

- We have capacity to do build the bio-gas centre because we know how to do constructions and to build. They sometimes show us new ways of improving the constructions.

(FG-Ak)

The development agency groups had a particular way in which they approached the developing community capabilities. They had a clear appreciation of the difference between capabilities and skills, but chose to focus on skills as that

was what they felt was relevant to the mission at hand as seen by their comment below.

...we use the community in the construction so as to encourage ownership. We don't bring constructors from outside, the community artisans are engaged and trained about the construction... they are also taught on the business issues where the financial record keeping, projection and all that. To help them in managing the projects

(D-B)

The groups are using the skills that they have been taught and they have been given the opportunity to prove themselves and they have also seen that they are able to run the project successfully on their own. This used to be a problem in the past when they kept returning for help but we have been able to encourage them to think creatively. Not all groups have reached this level.

(D-F)

...there is always a problem between helping people to grow and doing the projects yourself. If your money is on capacity alone and the project people don't see and the immediate results, they want to see outputs and if it's just training somebody, means that there isn't something that the donors can see. What proof is there that it works, instead of showing just ten instead of 500 sanitation kiosks because we were showing people how to build them, we can't say we are just trying something to help in the long term...

(D-A)

... when you send a volunteer or use an NGO to go build wells, and all his life he has only worked in the UK and will return to the UK, those skills will go away with him. It may take maybe two months longer to build the well with the local people, then give people confidence and leave them, they are able to build wells and leaving them more creative and able to do other things as a result of that...

(D2-P)

The issues raised by the comments above do not really amount to capability that has potential for long-term change and progressive development as these are skills aimed at fulfilling a particular task. Capability that can impact change should go beyond skills, and aim for abilities that can affect the way people think and view their situations and how they can solve their own problems and be self-reliant.

b) Potential for self-reliance through critical thinking

One method that was suggested as having the potential for meaningful development and social change is education. Nyerere (1978) believed in the potential of education to liberate people from the limitations that hold them back. Nyerere saw the connection between education, particularly adult education, and social change, which would in turn support self-directed development activities. Nyerere's argument was that people need tools that help them decide the type of development that is suitable for themselves and their communities. The communities in this study reflected on some ideas about how they would want their projects to move forward, but clearly did not have the relevant tools to make that move

- Need to expand project
- Investments for the future e.g. Loans, LGA projects.
- Project needs to be sustainable

(FG-A)

- It is an income generating activity for us
- Empowering the youth to be creators and not seekers
- *Ningependa pia sisi kama group pia tujiunge tufanye* change in our community. (I would like that we as a group should organise ourselves to make changes in our community)

(FG-S)

- Self employment and create employment
- Will help generate income for sustaining family
- Income to help with school fees

(FG-G)

Clearly, opportunity for reflection in a critical manner among the community members is not evident. By working in ways that increased dependence on others, support for a community's ability to function in ways that encouraged self-reliance was not an obvious part of the development plan. By not approaching development as a process of developing capabilities to do and to be in the way that Nussbaum (2011) suggested, control of one's own life is transferred to someone else. This is where critical thinking becomes a key element in the process of development, to develop an individual's or community's ability to rely on themselves, to be able to reflect on their knowledge and to use that as a starting point in the process of their growth and development.

The findings show that the process of supporting critical reflection and the development of capabilities is not a common approach for development agencies. It can be argued that development agencies contribute to dependence because of the control they have on projects, by being selective in the type of project they support and by being specific about the implementation of those projects. Agencies defend their position and their approach by reporting on the use of frameworks such as SLF that show the role of the community as central. One can see value in using such frameworks, and, if they are designed and used well, they can be useful in addressing community needs. However, the reality of what happens, or at least what is perceived, is different. Because the agencies control most aspects of the process, the community does not have the freedom to express itself. The community is excluded from the decision process and its role is reduced to simply answering questions about issues that have already been decided upon. For example in the FG-T community group discussion, the participants stated that the choice to have a bio gas projects was not discussed, the groups were only approached to establish whether they were interested in being involved in the project. When I queried whether they were asked about the type of support they would require, they responded that they had not been asked, and that this was the nature of development processes in the community, where they have learnt to take what is on offer. This approach was confirmed by the discussion with the local participating NGO. When I asked the representative how they identified

the type of needs to support, she responded that they did their own research as well as using statistics from government sources to decide on the type of support to offer. The NGO representative also stated that when working with funding organisations, there are usually strict guidelines about the type of projects that the funding should go to, which have to be adhered to.

We receive or bid for funding that is specific to a particular area, for example sanitation and bio gas that we are working on currently. Such a fund would be restricted because we can only support projects that are to do with sanitation and bio gas. We cannot re-direct the funds to other projects

(D-B)

... funding policies are sometimes linked to the government of the day, and if that has to change within four or five years, that becomes the length of time a funding organisation is willing to wait for reports broadly speaking. In difficult times, it becomes even more narrow to focus on specific and urgent needs for example getting the number of mosquito bed nets out or the number of water wells dug or whatever and there is not so much an emphasis on empowering people out there.

(D2-J)

... over the last two years organisation have not focused specifically on building capacities but there is not much work which is just primarily aimed at capacity building and in part that is a reflection of the fact that there was no support for quite a lot of capacity building. But actually what we found was it was really hard to tell whether you really had the capacity impact ...

(D2-E)

...we would say to them, well okay can you show us what that additional capacity led to, what difference has it made. Initially we didn't get totally clear onto it for some of us and so as a result of that we switched. There have been a much great delivering results and helping organizations to be clear about the results and using what we call the theory of change underline their work.

(D2-R)

A development approach of this nature, even when it is dressed up in a 'people-centred' framework, is unlikely be meaningful if it does not make a difference to the community. Including the community and allowing them the freedom to state what works for them should be the real process of engagement that leads to meaningful development.

One might appreciate the reasons behind working in this way as agencies make decisions to work on certain areas of development, for example education or health. These decision are based on what the agencies determine are priorities, arising from reports about needs in the community or based on the agency's specific area of interest. The international agencies that take on the role of donor or funder often do not link directly with the communities they hope to support, but instead work with intermediaries. They give guidelines on the use of the funds and use an approach or framework such as the SLA. The ethos of an approach like SLA is attractive on paper, but the reality paints a different picture. The top-down structure beginning with strict guidelines from the donors or funders means that the community has little or no flexibility on the way the intervention is designed. Supporting capabilities that enable individuals and groups to reflect on their needs and to be able to work out their own solutions should be considered the real development. Encouraging communities to work in ways that support such approaches has the potential to increase self and collective efficacies.

6.4 Group working and enhancing self and collective-efficacy

The process of working in a group setting was found to be a key contributor to supporting community members in raising their collective-efficacy. Through that process, they were able to begin to believe in their own abilities and this has potential to build their self-efficacy. This group setting was used as a support structure in situations where participants were not confident enough about their abilities; they would be able to rely on other members of the group. This was evident in the findings where there was emphasis on the role of working together to strengthen their community group. Where groups were strong, the study found that they were able to achieve more work and to have a stronger voice in stating what they wanted for their community.

a) Importance of group working and commitment

The communities participating in this research recognised the power of working together. They formed groups with formal and legal structures and used this as a way to get more of the community involved. This is also part of the requirements of the development agencies as they prefer to work with groups rather than individuals. Group cohesion and commitment is therefore becomes important for their collective action and can lead to success. The participants in this study were aware of the importance of encouraging group members to be committed in order for the group to succeed. They were aware that group successes had potential to lead to belief in group abilities and can be useful in motivating members towards further action. These perceptions were mentioned in the focus group discussions as seen from some of the comments below.

- Lack of commitment of members stops us from growing
(FG-Ak)
- Members make other things a priority and not group activities, so we never finish projects properly
(FG-T)

- We try to encourage people to be involved in the groups meetings, otherwise the group will break like the others

(FG-P)

Working in groups that support individual capacity was seen as a useful way of relating within the community, as the participants found it encouraging due to the way it helps to identify capacity to take action, where they felt challenged by their lack of belief in their individual capabilities. The participants were aware that being able to believe in their capabilities was a way of working towards enabling them to organize and execute a course of action and to succeed. Believing in abilities in this way may affect the manner in which we think and respond, and Bandura (1977) identified this as self-efficacy, which begins to form early in life and continues to evolve throughout life. As people acquire new skills, experiences and understanding, they become socially persuaded to behave in certain ways that contribute to their believing they have the skills to succeed in a task. When working within a group, supporting one another to achieve a common goal can become a useful motivator. Sharing tasks and knowledge can influence our collective action, and this can have a positive influence on self-efficacy. Goddard et al., (2004) saw the potential of this as he and his colleagues argued that beliefs lead to actions, as the choices that individuals and groups make are influenced by the strength of their efficacy beliefs.

This confidence to make decisions collectively or individually is a useful approach to meaningful development but is not always easy to achieve. It requires learning to reflect on what is known, to question, evaluate, conceptualise and analyse a situation and then allow the outcome of those actions to guide the decision process - to think critically. This takes a process of trial and error, of failures and successes, and can take a long time to get to the point of enough confidence to make effective decisions. This is what many development agencies are not able to do; the structure and nature of the organisations do not provide the time required to wait for such a process to take root. It takes genuine interest in meaningful change from all the actors

involved and commitment to the requirements of such a process, as well as being prepared for results that often may not reflect the desired results in the short term, but has potential for real change in the long term. Unfortunately, the evidence from this research shows that such a commitment is lacking, and quick fixes are the solutions provided to problems identified. It is difficult to apportion blame to one side of the development actors or the other, where the agencies might claim that they have done what they can to help, without having an obligation to do so - although the question of obligation is debatable; at the same time, the communities might argue that since they do not have a solution to an identified problem, any solution offered to them is better than nothing. The solutions that are therefore provided can be aimed at solving any problem, much in a similar way as the Alice in Wonderland conversation between Alice and the Cat, which is often assumed to say, 'if you do not know where you're going, any road will get you there'. Alice, having asked the Cat to tell her which way she ought to go, and stating that she did not much care where she was to go, received a reply that she was sure to get somewhere if she kept walking long enough. This might seem to be the attitude of the community where they are not clear about where they ought to go in matters of development, and therefore any development solution is sure to get them somewhere if they keep working at it. This was also evident in the responses that participants gave when asked about specific statements about development that they made, they were not able to explain what those statements meant for them and stated that this was what was said to them.

b) Self-reliance and understanding meaning of own statements

The study found that the community were unable to explain or justify their choices and their statements, which could suggest low self- and collective-efficacy. Responses from participants in over 50% the community focus groups in this study said they took advice about their development needs from the experts and consultants, which suggests heavy reliance on agencies and other people's opinions.

A development intervention that aims for meaningful change should aim to support projects that focus on developing capabilities than encourage

confidence, which can potentially lead to self-reliance. This approach to development encourages critical thinking where communities and individuals learn to ask questions in order to inform their decisions and actions. Thinking in this way is also useful in ensuring that statements made in conversations can be explained or justified and the individuals are able to reflect on the meaning of statements and ideas they raise and discuss. This inability to explain own statements or ideas was observed in situations where focus group participants in this study were asked to explain what they meant or understood about statements they made, for example about how to make the projects profitable or to build capacity. They were not able to adequately explain their understanding of those statements, the reasons or thinking behind them or why such ideas were important or necessary, other than the fact that those ideas were suggested by the NGOs.

Operating in this way, without being able to explain your actions, can be limiting. The community groups participating in this research worked on the projects initiated by agencies. They were required to follow instructions laid out by the agencies and create a product as required; in a number of cases in this research, the product would be a bio gas centre. This meant the capabilities they required were specific to that project, rather than capacities to reflect and act on their needs and find solutions that would be suitable for them. This way of thinking in a limited capacity could be attributed to lack of confidence in their own knowledge and abilities on the part of the community.

The option to attempt to think through what one knows in order to use it to solve problems does not come easily. The easy option is to depend on someone else's opinion, judgement and advice, especially if there is an offer to help solve an identified problem. This, according to Immanuel Kant, is the lack of the courage to use one's own understanding to free oneself from dependence on others, and the inability to use one's own understanding without guidance from another. He referred to this as self-imposed immaturity (Kant, 1784). Such a lack of resolve to solve one's own problems cannot entirely be assumed is the result of being lazy as Kant states in his essay. It is necessary to acknowledge that other elements can contribute to being unable to take charge of one's own development. Injustice, inequality and the effects of

colonialism, for example, were elements identified in this research. The process of encouraging self-reliance then needs to begin with identifying where the communities are in terms of self-awareness of their abilities, and working through supporting actions of courage that can bring social change in small measures. Such acts can take place through encounters, such as in a learning environment where individuals and groups can begin to become aware of what they can do and what they can be as Nussbaum (2011) suggests.

This research found that participants in this research showed interest and determination in finding solutions for their own development needs, but were limited by their perceived self and collective efficacies. As shown in the statements below, communities believed that encouraging each other to participate would contribute to supporting them to raise individual and eventually collective action.

- Group support is important (FG-Am)
- Lack of members' commitment affects group performance (FG-S)
- Group members have other priorities which affect how the group works (FG-G)

These seemingly casual comments about the need for group commitment suggests that the groups are aware of the value of collective action and lead to the conclusion that there is need for development actors to work towards supporting communities to become more self-reliant. Acting together can be useful in encouraging people to think creatively, where such thinking can have the ability to free people from implanted cultures and ideas. Creative thinking can help people to re-think histories and review inherited concepts and ideas so as to work out new thoughts and enable people to re-style their lives. In this way, we are able to recognise the role of the 'expert' as that of providing

support, where they provide the instruments and tools for the analysis of knowledge and information but are not a problem solver, as argued by Foucault (1975). Working in this way can support finding meaning by critically reviewing knowledge already possessed and new knowledge acquired in order to learn to construct one's own understanding from that process, which becomes more meaningful. Learning is a process where knowledge is presented to us, then shaped through understanding, discussion and reflection, and being aware that a teaching and learning process can be used either to empower or to oppress the learner is important (Freire, 1990). Facione (2007) recognises that teaching people to make good decisions equips them to improve their own futures and become contributing members of society, rather than burdens on society. Practicing good judgement by learning to be reflective does not guarantee happiness or economic success, but it may offer a better chance at those things and avoid the consequences of the poor choices that drive us to become burdens to others.

Summary

Development interventions should focus on supporting communities to become self-reliance through learning to reflect in a critical manner. This chapter has reviewed the themes identified from the data in this research and discussed the findings that emerge from it. Four key findings are identified; first, the perspective of engagement in development where there were issues including the effectiveness of such a process were raise, as well as the nature of inclusiveness that can be observed from the working relationships. The value of establishing effective communication that includes all those involved is discussed as part of the engagement process. Secondly, the process of empowering communities was found as being more likely to be disempowering than empowering due to the way in which training was focused on skills instead of capabilities, which has potential to create exclusions and denials of justice and equality. This means that support that aims to empower, should look beyond skills and focus more on capabilities that enable communities and individuals 'to do' and 'to be', which was the third finding. This finding discussed the different views of capacity building as actors in this research

perceived them and what potential this is likely to have on critical thinking and self-reliance. The fourth finding discussed the role that self- and collective-efficacy has in encouraging self-reliance where the participants discussed the importance of group works and commitments as a valuable way of supporting their own growth. The discussions in this chapter are supported by the observations from the processes of mapping the steps of commonly used development frameworks against the reality of the practice, leading to the conclusion that inclusive collaborative efforts should be respect each person's knowledge and this is likely to be achieved through a process of exchange of information and knowledge, where we learn from each other where learning becomes a way of life, in a lifelong learning process as explained in the next chapter.

Chapter 7: Realities and expectations

Introduction

Development can mean different things to different people, and supporting communities or individuals to achieve the development that is meaningful to them can be a challenge. This would require those involved in a development initiative to engage and collaborate effectively with the communities in order to appreciate the actual needs that should be addressed. The importance of listening to communities is beginning to get attention and is taking root in development agendas. It is seen as a way to tackle assumptions about development ideas that come from the 'West' and that are imposed on communities. Towards this end, agencies select approaches that would be suitable in such a process and often rely on frameworks that have been tried and tested. These approaches or frameworks are selected, designed, implemented and evaluated by the development agencies. The role of the community in such processes is not always clear and if the aim of such an intervention is to be centred on the needs of the community, then clarity of the processes as well as meanings is of absolute importance. This study looked at the components of a meaningful development process, and noted two key issues connected to the finding in chapter six. One, different realities and expectations in a development process that cause misunderstandings in the process and two, lack of shared vision that impacts on effectiveness of the projects.

The chapter reviews the process of development, looking at the way in which realities can differ and what a meaningful process would entail. The key observations are examined by first looking at different meanings, and then by taking apart a standardised framework which was discussed in chapter three, which was summarised into four key stages from analysing nine commonly used development frameworks. I examined those key stages against the realities of the practice based on the data from this research, to review the expectations of outcomes from actors involved and to establish their impact, and found that they fall short of an effective impact. I review the impact of such a process on self-reliance before presenting an argument that lifelong learning, through a

process of exchange of knowledge, information and experiences, has potential to contribute to the reciprocation that leads to self-reliance. First, a review of the process of identifying reality and whose reality is being addressed is presented.

7.1 Whose reality is it?

For the last 20 years, Robert Chambers and others have been advocating a paradigm shift in development approaches. In a paper prepared for the summit on Global Change in 1994, Chambers talked about the way in which meetings and gatherings about development are organised by those who do not need the development or those who are not poor to discuss the issues of the poor. Those in need of development do not commission papers or conferences because they may not have the resources or power, and their priorities, if they had the resources, would be to meet their immediate need, not discuss it. Chambers' (1993) ideas call for development organisations to review their approach towards development so that it is meaningful to the community. This requires collaboration among all the actors involved and especially the community which can be encouraged to articulate its own needs. It is about the identification of genuine development needs by those who have the needs, not those who imagine they know what the needs are. Using neatly design frameworks, with questions that contain ambiguous phrases and terminologies such as participation, engagement or empowering, can only create further difficulty. A real engagement process should begin with a clean slate, where each party involved brings in their own ideas but also has a clear intention to listen to the needs of the community, and then work out a response based on what that development agency can offer. Frameworks can be useful, but they have their place somewhere along the process once the basics of the needs have been established. The frameworks need to be flexible as development is dynamic and non-linear and therefore requires adequate flexibility to adjust to the genuine needs of those it intends to help. This is the approach that Chambers (1997) advocated for when he questioned the perceptions of the realities being addressed or taken into account in a development process. This means the engagement process with the communities should be driven by the

issues that are raised within the community and not those pre-conceived by an outsider. A process that genuinely identifies the community's needs should be able to demonstrate elements that the community can identify its own needs. The participants in this study stated clearly that an engagement or consultative process was not evident to them, as shown by their statements below as well as in chapter five.

- There is lack of proper communication about what is happening.
(FG-Ak)
- ...at least we should be involved in decision making, so that they know what we want in common.
(FG-S)
- We are asked to be in a consultation meeting, but never told what it is for; we just answer the questions they ask. (FG-T)

These comments from the focus groups highlight the importance of engagement and consultation for the community. Clearly, they would like their opinion to be heard, to be valued and to be integrated in the process of development. Engaging everyone is useful, but in reality can be difficult in managing such a process. Identifying representatives to speak on behalf of the community seems to be the practical way to approach this, which is what the local NGOs suggested as their chosen way of engaging.

According to the agencies a consultation and engagement process took place, albeit with a selected group due to the practicality of such a process. The process of consulting with a selected group is a top-down structure, where the agency selects who to engage with. Because the agencies might not make that engagement process open to many people, the general community may believe that the process did not take place. The selected participants may not be representative of the real or genuine community; a more open and wider participation or selection of participants would be required for real

consultation to be happening. Of equal importance is the facilitators' attitude, which needs to have the right perception with regard to the goals of the process. The facilitators should approach the process in a Freirean dialogue approach to encourage more participation and reflection. Freire (1990) recognised that people can either be passive recipients of knowledge in whichever context it comes, or they can engage in that process to become active participants where they link knowledge to action and use it to change their society. If a facilitator's attitude is one where they recognise the existence and value of other people's knowledge, then they are able to recognise that people will bring their own knowledge into a process. Therefore, engaging them in different ways including through the written word, art, music and other forms of expression, has the potential to get participants to contribute more effectively. Freire's concept of dialogue also assumes equality among those involved. They all need to trust each other and have mutual respect in the process of dialogue and exchange of thoughts, so that they can then create new knowledge. A process such as this, says Freire (1990), is one that can develop critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action, through a process of critical thinking. An engagement process that does not take into consideration open dialogue, local knowledge and the promotion of equality cannot be real engagement, and will not therefore observe true realities. Real realities for the communities should therefore be provided by the communities themselves, not by another person who represents them or, acts on their behalf or by those who base their decisions on standardised formats.

Questions about the participatory process are raised, such as whose voice is heard or excluded, and to what extent the process facilitates or manipulates the agenda? Words, concepts or labels are presented in participatory processes. Using buzzwords such as 'engage', 'participate', 'empower' do not necessarily mean that the actions that take place match the intended meaning; they could conceal the dynamics of power taking place underneath what is happening on the surface. Using standardised methods in the form of frameworks within the process of development, means that the implementation process assumes that all groups are similar. There is a need to take into consideration that communities are not always homogenous and are

possibly shaped by the structures and cultures within which they belong. Taking into account the differences, agencies should be careful that they do not increase and entrench the privileges of power through the development process itself.

There are various functions in the process of development, such as writing funding proposals, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and preparing reports for stakeholders. Those who perform these tasks can hold a certain amount of power as they tell the story from their perspective. This is one of the challenges of development as the communities rarely tell the stories in their own words. Those who write and present reports may have their own agendas or biases, which may show up in the manner that the information is gathered, analysed and reported. Ensuring that the affected people are central to the process can support the identification of real realities. The ideas of putting people first and putting them at the centre of the process have been debated for a number of years and were heavily promoted in the 1990s by Chambers and others such as Cernea (1991) and Burkey (1993). Promoting a shift towards a people-centred capabilities approach that involves all actors and demonstrates growth is desirable. Many development agencies now use development frameworks that are centred on people's needs as assessed through an engagement process. This is good progress, and in theory, very attractive. However, taking a closer look at the reality of the practical aspects of such a process reveals low impact on aims of self-reliance as there is no adequate clarity and understanding as observed by reviewing the components of the development process.

7.2 Components of a meaningful process

A meaningful development process would require that those who it is intended for are involved through all the stages in order to, at the very least, encourage self-reliance and ownership. If the aim of a capacity development initiative is to transform, critical reflection in a Freirean dialogue manner should be at its core. Getting the communities to be committed and take an active role can have a positive impact, especially where collective action is given an

opportunity to thrive. This means aiming for actions that are about doing things 'with' people and not 'on', 'to', or 'for' them and orienting the process towards self-reliance, knowledge-making and social change. Such an initiative needs to be a democratic process concerned with developing practical ways of knowing in the pursuit of worthy human purpose, in the pursuit of practical solutions, as advocated by Fals Borda (2006). It becomes a joint effort in producing knowledge that can be used in making decisions, and is focused on a shared commitment to challenge conventional knowledge production. This can be achieved through various processes including asking critical questions about who the decision makers are and what authority they have to make such decisions (McIntyre, 2002; Chambers, 2008; Nussbaum, 2011). The data from this research revealed the challenges associated with supporting a meaningful process due to two key elements - different realities and expectations and lack of a shared vision among actors, as discussed below.

a) Different realities and expectations in a development process

Interconnections and complexities of power exist in nearly every environment and are important aspects that should be addressed through democratic dialogue. There is a need to be careful not to fall prey to powerful stakeholders, as this can serve as an undermining way of bringing global change to local settings and bypass the genuine interests of communities, as Chambers (1984) argued. Engaging with relevant actors in order to solve problems is a good aim, and there have been many debates about the way in which this should take place and in particular, how inclusive the process should be. Local NGOs, by virtue of being closer to the community, engage more than other agencies such as funding and donor organisations. It could be argued that this structure is appropriate as it may not be possible for each agency to engage directly with the community. This can pose a challenge because of the interconnections and layers of communication between donors and the intended community. The relationships among the agencies are structured in a top-down manner, with the donors at the top of that structure, the NGOs and governments as intermediaries and communities at the bottom. This structure is managed by those at the top, because they have the resources; therefore,

they make the decisions about how those resources should be dispersed. A top-down structure might demonstrate an element of power and control from the top. Documents from agencies and intermediaries reviewed for this research indicated that, such approaches are designed to involve the relevant actors and be inclusive, because there is a step within the framework that is designed for 'stakeholder engagement'. This 'engagement' is open to different interpretations and is likely to lead to lack of a shared vision of the expectations.

b) Lack of shared vision as evidenced from practice

As the process of development interventions has evolved over the years to focus more on promoting capabilities and empowerment, it has become necessary to use standardise formats or frameworks. Many agencies have designed their own frameworks or borrowed them from others, to be guidelines in the development process. A review of publicly available information on frameworks used by agencies was shown in chapter three of this study. This review showed a process of stages ranging from four to seven in number. They mostly begin with needs assessment and end with evaluation. The UNDP framework, which has five steps (A UNDP Primer, 2009), is used by many organisations, which use it as it is or adapt it to suit their needs. The frameworks reviewed in chapter three show that the steps are committed to the values of the people the organisation want to help and are designed to support communities achieve the development that they desire, because the process involves them. Taking the key aspects of the earlier reviewed programmes frameworks, I summarised them into four main areas, as shown in the diagram below - stakeholder engagement, formulating and developing a response, implementing the response and, finally, evaluation. From a theoretical planning perspective, the stages look ideal as they take into consideration the key aspects necessary for the success of the process. But taking apart and reviewing each stage reveals a different reality.

In order to appreciate the evidence presented in practical situation, it was necessary to map what was discussed by the participants against what frameworks aimed for and claimed to achieve. This section reviews the stages of a simplified framework, which was summarised into four stages from a review of nine different frameworks from various organisations, as explained in chapter three. The stages are shown in the diagram below and the key questions that emerge from them are shown.

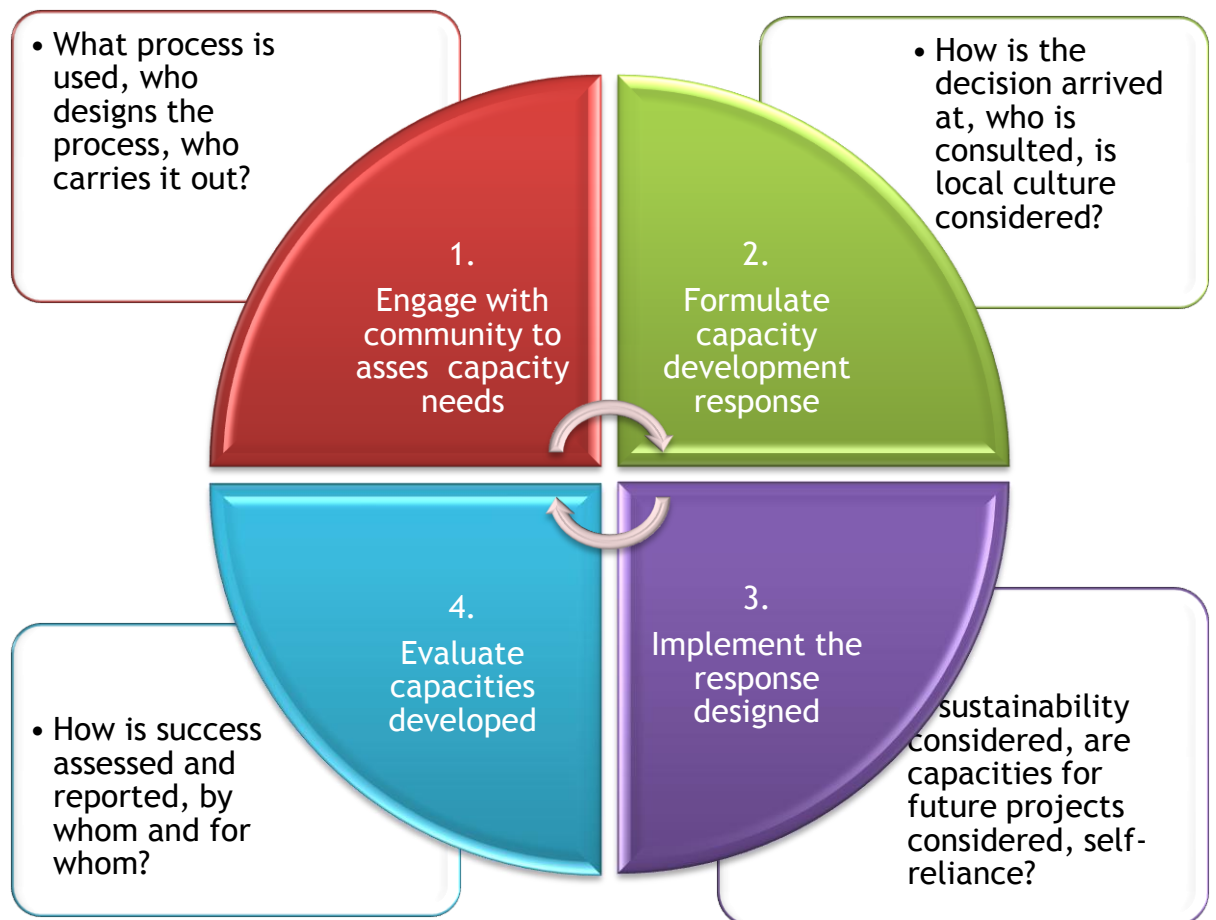


Figure 7.1 Summarised framework with questions

1. Engagement with stakeholders

The UNDP practice note (UNDP, 2008) states that effective capacity development requires building commitments among key stakeholders, starting with dialogue among people with common goals. That should be promoted right from the beginning to discuss development priorities and build consensus with input from all relevant actors and to encourage ownership of both process and content (UNDP, 2008). An example is given of such a process which involved a government ministry. A selection of stakeholders was made and specific areas of assessment identified. The responsibility of coordinating the process was placed on the government department who facilitated meetings and there were consultations along the way to ensure that the initiatives did not overlap (UNDP, 2009). Although this example is mainly focused on capacity development at the organisation level, it shows the manner in which the process was set and directed by the UNDP. The UNDP states that it recognises the complexity of developing capacity; it resists the use of blueprints and instead chooses to find what works well by asking questions such as capacity for whom and for what. Asking those questions often yields different responses based on local context and priorities. The UNDP says they open space for dialogue and feedback around areas of mutual interests believing that such a process can act as a catalyst for action. An assessment process can also be useful in understanding operational hurdles as can using a framework that can be adapted to suit different contexts. Carrying out this assessment helps to determine priorities and offers a way of gathering critical knowledge and information. In reviewing this particular practice note, it was not clear where other stakeholders' opinions were integrated.

Another example of an assessment process is from DFID Practice note (2010). This recognises the first step as an assessment of the situation, which includes a collaborative effort with partners. A suggested process includes assessing elements such as knowledge gaps, and a review of systems and resources at the organisational level. This analysis involves assessing needs, based on what the agency believes to be the ideals; the gaps identified are those that conform to an existing system used and designed by the agency. DFID also recommends a method or model that provides a checklist - the European

Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) models - which provides a comprehensive map of strengths and weaknesses (DFID, 2010).

These processes show a commitment to involving the stakeholders in identifying the needs that should be addressed. However, there is no clarity on how independent information will be gathered. The process of needs assessment narrated to me by the focus group participants stated that it was a process of answering questions from a facilitator or agency representative. The questions were often already set, and there were no questions about what the community wants. The questions asked were general in nature for example, about where they would like the project building to be located, or if they had members ready to work on the projects. The nature of these questions does not reflect a consultative approach, even in the eyes of the community. The agenda seems to be already set, and the process of assessment is already designed using, for example, the EFQM model, or the health check model. This does not demonstrate an open consultation on identifying needs; instead, what it shows is a 'tick box' process that confirms what an agency has already decided to do. It is possible then to argue that effective engagement has not convincingly taken place. Is this what the communities are referring to when they clearly say that they are not engaged in the development process? The issue of engagement came up in all community focus group discussions as shown by some of the statements below.

- There is no direct communication, we only answer questions or fill a form.

(FG-Ak)

- When we are asked about our needs, they suggest things and ask us to choose.

(FG-G)

- We are not asked what we think we need, we just answer questions.

(FG-D)

- Funders do not reach the community level, so we never have a chance to talk to them.

(FG-P)

- Leaders want to be in charge, so they talk to NGOs and do not tell the rest of the members

(FG-M)

If the needs assessment process is not right, then the other stages will be based on information that is not focused on meeting the needs of the community. Can such a situation be rectified at later stages?

2. Formulating capacity development response

The process for formulating a response assumes that the response will be based on the outcomes of an engagement process with stakeholders. In designing their response, the UNDP for example uses the assessment completed in the previous stage to combine actions of strengthening existing capacities and addressing identified gaps identified (UNDP 2008). The response stage begins by working on identified assets (in the process involving an SLA as discussed in chapter three) and then moving on to identified needs. It is believed that by showing the community that their assets and capabilities are recognised, the process is likely to be less threatening to them. The response is then designed, which would include indicators showing the expected outcome that demonstrates the changes that take place. Considerations of sustainability are important and involve addressing questions of exit strategies that are supposed to ensure that the projects have continuity. This would mean, for example, strengthening the local experts and consultants as well as working with local educational and training institutes (UNDP, 2008; AusAID, 2010). Similarly, the DFID response plan process includes structuring around desired outcomes and constructing a list of activities for delivery. There is emphasis on balancing results and processes, recognising the importance of learning, and adapting

and being aware of power relations. In a similar way as the UNDP, building on existing assets is important with the focus not on the weaknesses only, but also building on strengths. DFID emphasises the importance of an enabling environment that encourages good practice (DFID 2008, 2012).

In these examples of designing a response, there is very little mention of consultation with other actors and especially with the community that is to benefit from such an intervention. It may be safe to argue that those responsible for designing the response assume that the information gathered is sufficient to act upon. The interventions may not be able to take into consideration all the various aspects of culture and local knowledge that might contribute to the effectiveness of the designed response. In all the focus group discussions in this research, there was no mention of any project that was designed in consultation with community members. Once the assessment stage was completed, the agency representatives took the information away and returned with an implementation plan already designed. When asked what role the community plays in designing an implementation plan, one representative of a local NGO responded by saying,

With the many researches we do and also being within the community, we already know what the community needs, so for example with the bio-gas project, we just identify the location and the groups we shall work with, then we tell them what needs to be done

(D-A)

This response shows confidence in what the organisation believes it knows about the community, and for some organisations - particularly the example of the local NGO - this can be valid and there is value in approaching development in that manner. But a difficulty often arises with international organisations that commission their experts to work on designing a response based on the data collected from the first stage, in many cases collected by a different person. The experts have adequate and skills, but may not have knowledge about local habits or cultures. This may result in failed initiatives because of certain details missed out, as in the story told by the Italian missionary Ernesto Sirolli. Sirolli narrates the story in a TED podcast about a

mission trip to Africa to teach a village how to grow Italian tomatoes. The seeds were planted and the tomatoes grew, but the villagers seemed unimpressed and uninterested in growing tomatoes. The Italian missionaries could not understand the complacency of the villagers when the tomatoes grew so beautifully lush. The night before they were to harvest the tomatoes, some hippos came out of a nearby body of water and ate all the tomatoes and tomato plants. The Italians were shocked, but the local people were not; they knew the hippos would come and, when asked why they did not tell the missionaries, they responded that they were not asked, and the Italians seemed set on planting the tomatoes, so they let them (Sirolli, 2012). This illustration shows how it can be easy to miss a whole opportunity to truly help and make a difference.

3. Implementing the response

Implementation of projects is usually subject to the resources available. The resources are provided by the supporting organisation and come in different forms, such as finances, technical or physical support. In the process of implementation, the agencies aim to make the project relevant, to provide resources in an effective manner and make the process one that local people can have ownership of. UNDP recommends making an effort to use existing systems rather than create new ones, ensuring the local capacity is not undermined and ensuring the ultimate responsibility is in the hands of the local people (UNDP Practice note, 2009). DFID considers the tangible and intangible elements of the process, and pays attention to power relations and politics. They ensure there is room for negotiation and accommodation in the support process where external actors can support the process by identifying factors that stimulate or inhibit it. A balance of requirements is considered important, such as building ownership, respect and motivation (DFID, 2010). In the implementation stage, the programme managers and advisers are usually not actively involved, but instead play a critical role of nurturing, and ensuring that the implementation process stays on track.

This process highlights the parts played by the various actors. The advisers and experts being in the fringes of the process of implementation and cheering on the community to implement an intervention they had not designed, does not mean that the process is owned by the community. Notice that the experts, managers, advisers and consultants are expected to play a nurturing role; they are to ensure the process stays on track, and to ensure that what they designed, from their perception of what the development should be, is what is being implemented. One participant, who was a representative of a development agency, responding to the question of how the implementation process works said

...we designed a system where we gave them cash to buy the material for the building project. We basically hand over the decision making of the purchases to them, and when they succeed in this they will be encouraged to think about more complex decisions.

(B-R)

This implementation approach described by the participant might indicate inclusiveness, but that particular example only demonstrates the role of the community that involves implementing what has already been decided. Providing money to buy materials is hardly a process requiring critical thinking; it might appear to be involving the community at the very basic levels. But if it is considered as a starting point, with the hope that this will be an incremental process, beginning with basics, then there might be a point in taking that route. Overall, the project needs to meet the needs of the community, by listening to what the community needs, working 'with' them to establish what they can 'do' and supporting them to build capacity for designing their own implementation.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring focuses on the transformation of input to outputs while evaluation looks at how those outputs contributed to achieving outcomes, in this the case

capacities developed. Such a process that looks for an indication of positive results in capacity development can be difficult to capture, as is capturing the links between the point of intervention and the capacities developed from that intervention. Some organisations turn to elaborate evaluation frameworks that can help to work out such a link and the impact of the intervention. But such frameworks may not always provide a solution or take the place of dialogue and decision making. A framework can provide a useful approach to evaluation, but it needs to be able to capture the key issues and be manageable, starting with identifying core issues and paying attention to the process used. Because capacity development is not a stable target, flexibility in evaluating it is necessary in order to accommodate changes in people and context. The process and outcomes need to be considered carefully, avoiding complex systems and considering the use of simple methods such as end user surveys, case studies or self assessments where recipients are encouraged to conduct their own assessment. Evaluations can be a sensitive process, and the way it is carried out as well as who carries out the process can impact on the ultimate results. The person who controls the monitoring and evaluation process, who sets the parameters to measure and decide who is consulted with regards to reports, is the one who holds the power. Recognising the power held by each actor in the process of evaluation contributes to establishing how achievement is perceived. This means that what is seen in reports is what has been decided by those in charge of such processes.

According to the frameworks summarised here, evaluation takes place at the end of an initiative. But evaluations need to be a continuous process so that elements that need to be adjusted can be identified in time. A process that places this stage at the very end runs the risk of having a completed project, but may not meet the intended need, because there has been no mid-process evaluation. It is also critical to involve stakeholders in that process in order to further the objectives of participatory development. Stakeholders know what is happening, what the real results and impacts are, the actions required and ideas on corrective measures that could be taken. Identifying the right stakeholders and involving them in formulating questions for monitoring and evaluating can contribute to the effectiveness of that stage of the process.

Engaging at this level helps to build capacity for reflection, analysis and action and can lead towards the development and accountability of those involved.

The purpose of carrying out an evaluation would be to assess and improve performance. This is not always easy, as information gathered from different actors might be significantly different and possibly reflect the conflicting requirements of those different actors. Donors and funders need to account to the tax payers, NGOs need to report result and recipients need to see change and progress as well as review their own learning. Reconciling all these demands can be challenging and it is important to pay attention to the approach used, using either an inside-out or outside-in perspective. The inside-out approach suggests that the community can define and achieve its own goals and therefore evaluations should be based around self-assessment and learning, acknowledging that the community is in the best position to know its needs. On the other hand, the outsider-in approach is about the community's ability to satisfy its key stakeholders, which are judged from outside (Dwyer and Buckle 2009). This could imply that self-assessment is not adequate on its own and outsiders must be involved. Often the donors provide that assessment and in reality, they hold the power and financial resources to do that.

The four stages examined here, against information gathered from participants of this study, does not show clear evidence of the role of the community in the process of development and falls short of an effective impact. The frameworks show an intention to be centred on the needs of those being supported, but the control is in the hands of the agencies. This has an impact on the nature of the changes that occur or are expected to occur, and may require a review in order to establish how real change that impact communities to rely on themselves can be more effective.

7.3 Impact of frameworks and approaches on self-reliance

The effectiveness of a development intervention can be determined by the interaction designed. Common designs of interactions in development work are either top-down or bottom-up (David, 1993). The top-down structure is based

on the use of professional leadership provided by external resources to plan, implement and evaluate the initiative. Those who practise this approach believe that the process of change occurs through access to the services they offer and, in the process, the community changes its perceptions and behaviours and ultimately its standard of living is believed to improve (David, 1993). This approach dominated the way development programmes were structured in the early days of development history. Social unrest during the 1960s and 1970s caused renewed interest in various works such as that of Marx which led to a reviewing of the process and the birth of the bottom-up approach (Iatridis, 1994). The bottom-up model is about community participation, motivating local communities, expanding learning opportunities, improving local resource management and increasing communication and interchange (Midgley, 1993; David, 1993). The approach focuses on how communities can direct their own development process. Using the bottom-up approach improves opportunities to learn, and the sense of empowerment that comes with knowledge which is useful in accomplishing the goals of community development.

Strengthening a community's ability to solve its own problems and developing its capacity requires creating an enabling environment. Reviewing data from this research, there is not sufficient evidence to support an argument for the effectiveness of existing approaches in supporting self-reliance or of people-centred approach that responds to community needs. The activities of participation are often misinterpreted with the communities believing that they need to participate more in making decisions about their own development. On the other hand, development agencies believe they are effectively engaging and participating with the community through the process of asking them to respond to the questions they have already set, and involving them in the implementation of programmes the agencies have designed. Real participation requires all actors to begin the process together, to ask questions about what is needed and what will benefit the community and encourage changes towards action and social change. As suggested by Samuel (2000) and Morgan (1998), a degree of commitment to ownership and promoting an environment of self-awareness and critical reflection is necessary. Where transformation and social change are the goals, a people-centred approach in a

Freirean way can give rise to the sharing of knowledge through dialogue. Reflection and conceptualising previous learning can inform further action, and recognising the value of local knowledge can contribute to constructing new ways of doing things. Looking at capacity development this way addresses concerns such as inequalities and being able to exercise choice in matters that affect one's own community and can influence factors useful in achieving a quality of life (Plummer, 2000 and Horton, et. al 2003). This approach to development is becoming increasingly popular and is being tried out in several initiatives across different parts of the world, as shown in the examples below, provided from publicly available information.

Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is an approach for mobilising communities to act on changes within their community, focusing mainly on sanitation. The approach recognised that providing facilities such as toilets in an attempt to improve sanitation and hygiene does not guarantee their use. Kamal Kar and his partners observed how earlier methods led to uneven adoption and lack of long-term project viability, and resulted in creating a culture of dependence. They suggested that the local NGOs should stop the top-down approach to solving sanitation problems. They proposed a change in attitude and mobilising the community to analyse their situation and make decisions collectively. This focus on behavioural change would ensure genuine and sustainable change that would raise awareness of the long-term benefits of a clean environment (Kar and Chambers, 2008). Starting in Bangladesh, the approach spread quickly through Asia and Africa, receiving support from large organisations such as the Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) and WaterAid. A review of the CLTS process on a number of African countries including Kenya reported success in triggering change in attitude and behaviour towards development.

The lesson taken from CLTS is the focus on a local engagement and a local solutions approach. This approach to supporting the development of capacities to identify a community's own needs and to find its own solutions was demonstrated by one of the focus groups in this research. The women-only focus group, formed to support women challenged by their HIV status, is proactive in its approach to development. The group has regular meetings

where they discuss specific challenges they face as individuals and as a group. They then discuss ways to find solutions, without having to resort to asking or expecting help, although it is appreciated when that help comes. The women run a small shop where they sell items they make themselves, having identified the skills from assessing what each of them could do. This group has been able to support its members and their families; they are beginning to look for ways to reach out to others they can help. The women understand the importance of knowledge and the value of sharing it and, in the Kenyan election of 2013, they participated in educating others, particularly women, about the importance of voting for the right reasons and the right candidates. They used their hard-earned money to print t-shirts with messages on the importance of a peaceful election, a subject that was very important in the Kenya 2013 elections. The women focused on what they could do, and took any opportunity to learn. They appreciated the value of self-awareness and self-dependence.

Another example with a similar community-led initiative was reported by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). Under Community Led Local Development (CLLD), the organisation demonstrated the way in which collective responses can contribute to effective development. This approach consisted of mobilising actors who were the beneficiaries of the initiatives in the belief that their involvement will boost growth and a sense of ownership. The report evidenced the impact of a CLLD bottom-up approach that identified local needs and solutions. One example given is that of the 'women like us' social enterprise that works with women who need part-time work due to other family commitments such as taking care of children. Operating in two locations, the organisation identifies participants - both employees and potential employers - through the local community network. The results indicated that 97 per cent of the women contacted had found part-time work locally (European Funding Network, 2014).

These examples demonstrate the usefulness of focusing on people rather than physical material, through a process of reflecting on their own knowledge to address the needs of their community. This process also has the potential to trigger an awareness of their ability to take control of their situation and to trust the knowledge they already have and thus in the way that Bandura (1977)

says, to raise their self-efficacy and encourage collective action. Such a process takes time to master and can be supported through a process of learning, which has potential to turn development itself into a process (of learning) rather than a product.

7.4 Lifelong learning as central to development

In a world that is changing at a rather quick rate, it is no longer sufficient to operate with only initial or basic education. Continually acquiring skills is necessary in order to survive and overcome the challenges of such a changing world. Acquiring a culture of continuous learning can be useful in reducing poverty and encouraging sustainability in development. It is necessary to promote the development of knowledge and the competences that will enable people to adapt to society and actively participate in all spheres of social and economic life, taking more control of their future. UNESCO's publication of '*Learning to be*' (International Commission on the Development of Education, and Faure and UNESCO, 1972) argued that lifelong learning needed to be a central theme in education policies, with strategies that facilitate learning throughout life. As a way of explaining what lifelong learning is, the UNESCO Delors report of 1996 (International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, Delors and UNESCO, 1996) stated that lifelong learning implies the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values throughout life in a continuous learning process of knowing, doing, being and living together. The concept of learning throughout life embraces all forms of learning; as the European Commission (2000) says in its definition, it includes all purposeful learning activity, has to be undertaken throughout life and aims at improving knowledge, skills and competencies from a personal, civic, social as well as an employment perspective.

This reminds us that lifelong learning provides opportunities to advance our levels of knowledge at any point in our lives and is not associated with childhood or with formal education. Lifelong learning goes beyond basic education to include competitiveness and skills for some, while for others it might be seen from an economic perspective (Rogers, 2003). Lifelong learning

is seen as a way of building upon existing knowledge beyond organised instruction in classrooms, lectures, labs or seminars and becomes more than a special activity that happens from time to time in special places, but should be a constant feature of life. Our mindsets and beliefs in our abilities can get in the way of this type of learning, as indicated in the works of Dweck (1999) where she shows that people's levels of resilience in the face of difficulty or frustration reflect the beliefs and assumptions they have acquired about their own mentalities and abilities.

Lifelong learning has multiple participants and has different formats which are designed to suit the type of learners at a particular point, as they are mostly adults with different needs. These types of learners enter the learning process purposefully, have great motivation and tend to retain and make use of what they learn (Rogers, 2003). It is a process that can transform through experience and, critical reflection where the learner actively constructs new ideas or concepts (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). As shown in the data from this study, communities would benefit from a process that engaged them at that level. There were many comments made about the need to engage and collaborate effectively, and a process that brings them together in a lifelong learning format could be useful is supporting a sense of responsibility.

Lifelong learning is of value to the development process as the autonomy that comes with lifelong learning is useful in fostering a sense of responsibility and of being in charge of one's own process of acquiring knowledge (Jarvis, 1992; Rogers, 2003). When individuals become aware of the world around them, they can then reinforce their capacities to deal with the changes taking place. The concept of learning throughout life supports a learner's effort in becoming aware of their surroundings beyond their immediate contacts. They acquire the knowledge that they need and at the time they need it, because they understand that it does not need to be time-constrained (Rogers, 2003). They become aware that any opportunity can become a learning opportunity, and it does not have to be in a certain setting for it to qualify as a learning process. Becoming aware of the existence of such opportunities can enhance those experiences when people come into contact with such opportunities where they can learn to reflect on what they encounter and identify any lesson they

may have taken away from that experience. This can be useful in everyday living where people exercise thinking in a critical manner as a way of life, and has the potential to translate into a transformation of their outlook to life in general (Rogers, 2003; Brookfield, 2005).

Lifelong learning has the potential to become a way of life where one consciously becomes aware of what can be learnt and can then use that knowledge to find solutions for their needs. Because development should be a continuous process, interventions need to aim for lifelong learning as that process can support an awareness of social needs and ways to address them. Maclean and Ordonez (2007) recognise that providing opportunities for learning throughout life can result in greater social justice, equity and sustainable development. The authors suggest that constant learning will be necessary in order to keep up with the complexity of a constantly changing world. Learning to live in ways that are sustainable can be challenging and, particularly in development, it requires actors to make the effort that will support development of capacities. This requires a system that can work through a learning process to support especially marginalised groups to be aware of their rights. They can then find ways to build the confidence required to challenge authorities in order to access those rights, as suggested by (Campbell, Baikaloff and Power, 2006). The authors believe that an awareness of how things such as climate change or economic difficulties affect them gives communities a chance to make the necessary changes to avoid a never-ending cycle of poverty and stunted development.

Learning as a way of life, as the data in this research suggests, is not given adequate recognition in development work. Rather than allowing people to see themselves as victims who need to be helped, I would argue that it is more valuable to aim at changing the way of thinking to create a learning culture that enables people to participate in shaping their own environment. Those who would benefit from such a culture are usually excluded from the decisions that affect them and they are therefore not able to participate in shaping the direction of their own future and that of their community. Being able to make decisions can be liberating, in the sense that people are then able to take control of their own life by being aware of ways to help themselves. This

approach of helping people to help themselves can have long-term effects and is sustainable because individuals, groups and communities learn that they can rely on their own abilities to find solution. The lessons learnt can be used to work out solutions and this can be the beginning of a process of development that is self-reliant, where communities have confidence in articulating their needs, and finding their own solutions.

Learning by reciprocating

The exchange of information and knowledge in a process of learning from each other is essentially a process of reciprocating. In Graeber's (2001) view, reciprocity is about a relationship between people who respect each other and each other's values. This voluntary exchange and the social bond that indicates goodwill and is founded on trust, shows a willingness to engage in a meaningful way. Participants in this study were clearly stating that they needed to be heard, that they had something to say and to offer that was valuable to them and that needed to be taken into account. Graeber (2001) analysed Mauss' gift giving and exchange perspective and observed the value of meaning in that process, even at a subconscious level. He said a bond is created due to that process of transfer of what one person considers their own. This engagement raises the relationship between development actors, particularly between the communities and the development agencies, to a level of trust. At this level, the community has a chance to share their genuine concerns about what they hope to achieve as a community, and the development agencies have a chance to establish how to meaningfully impact a community. At this level of exchange, the development agencies demonstrate what has worked in their own environment and offer that as an example to the local communities. The local communities are then able to evaluate what has been offered to them and decide what works and what would be useful. The development agencies are also able to observe what works for that community and learn from that practice of give and take, and those involved use the opportunities available to learn from each other.

It therefore becomes a lifelong activity of learning which is not based on set activities at specific times in specific locations or institutions, but instead, becomes a way of life. That learning process requires those involved to reflect on what they see and encounter, and evaluate how that can become useful for them. This process of reflection has potential to turn individuals and communities into critical thinkers, or, as Barnett (1997) prefers, critical beings, who can reflect and act on their own development needs. Development then becomes a process of supporting individuals and communities to be critically reflective learners; it becomes a learning process that can lead to self-reliance.

Summary

We all have our different understanding of what reality is, constructed out of our background and experiences. The complex difficulty of defining one situation so that it represents every person's understanding of it is challenging. This chapter reflected on the importance of ensuring that the reality of the community is kept at the fore front of development initiatives, particularly in the process of development planning and implementation. Reviewing the components of a meaningful process by looking at a standard framework against the practical aspects as identified in this research, it was found that realities and expectations were different among actors and there was lack of a shared vision.

A decision to engage in a development initiative, one that has claims of 'engaging with communities' or 'putting communities at the centre' cannot afford to disregard real realities. Frameworks used in the process of such development initiatives need to be used as supportive instruments rather than the main focus of the process. A people-centred initiative that is top-down only serves to undermine the process, and a bottom-up approach, centred on real representatives of the community, should be used. The role of the agency cannot be disregarded; it is useful by way of providing support and guidance where required. In situations where development agencies have effectively engaged with communities through a process of reciprocity where an exchange

of information and knowledge takes place, trust is built and the potential to respond to real needs can exist. Developing in this way is progressive, and, in a world that is changing at a rapid rate, communities need to keep up with that pace by acquiring a culture of learning for life. Development should therefore aim at supporting communities to be lifelong learners so that they can have the tools and skills required to respond to the changes, rather than have an attitude of dependence.

Chapter 8: Effects of theorising change

Introduction

Change is one way of identifying whether goals have been achieved, but questions need to be asked about what or whose goals these are, as reflected upon in the last chapter. Evaluations are a central way to assess the impact of changes in many development initiatives. There is great emphasis on assessing impact on the part of development agencies, where reports are produced that go on to determine the direction of future interventions. This is a key part of development process and requires significant consideration. This chapter, using primarily documents selected as part of data collection for this study, analyses the process of evaluation, the tools used and the reports that emerge from that process. First, I review the significance of evaluations and how they impact on reports and then examine some practical tools and methods commonly used. The effect of theorising of an evaluation process is analysed to establish how it contributes to an effective process and whether a theory-driven evaluation can produce more dependable reports. On reflecting on the evaluation methods, I argue that change assessment, as in all the other capacity development processes, needs to be a collaborative effort. This collaborative effort should be one that respects the views of all actors and appreciates the value of using that opportunity to reflect critically on what has taken place as well as using that opportunity to learn from each other.

8.1 Significance of reporting

Evaluation is an important element of the development process because the results from that process impact on the direction of future initiatives. Large amounts of funding, time and effort are put into programmes and projects based on results of evaluation reports. This means that, where an initiative has

not been effectively assessed, decisions made based on those results are likely to be ineffective. Poorly evaluated projects are often allowed to replicate, negative effects are carried forward and a meaningful process does not take place. Impact evaluations produced by different agencies may have flaws and may not reflect accurate results due to inadequate resources or the conditions at the time of assessment. Evaluations are often designed to take place at the last stage of the process, as the focus of an intervention is often centred on the implementation stage. This means that any opportunities for improvement which could have been identified while the process was still going on might be missed if there is no regular evaluation and monitoring system in place. It is also not always possible to see the impact of changes such as capacity development in a short-term project, because such initiatives take a longer period of time to show results. This can be a challenge for projects that are specifically focused on capacity development as the development agencies may not be prepared to allocate the amount of time needed for capacity development to take root.

The need for explicit information on programme effectiveness is increasing as a result of many projects being reported as successful, yet evidence of that success is not clear from the perspective of the community, as seen in the previous chapter. Development agencies are taking a lot of interest in the quality and process of impact evaluation and continually working on methods that can add value. The importance of reports that can be relied on is emphasised so that they become more useful to the process of decision making and determining the direction of future interventions. The significance of results has been a point of discussion in high profile meetings such as the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Actions.

The Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Actions (AAA, 2008) discussed the importance of results, the ownership of strategies at various levels and the importance of working in collaboration to ensure that results by all actors are represented. The Paris declaration has five principles at its core; ownership, where strategies and objectives are set by developing countries, alignment with donor countries to support the objectives, harmonised procedures to avoid duplication, results reporting and the mutual

accountabilities of parties involved. In 2008, the AAA was set to review progress and strengthen the Paris declaration and it declared three areas of importance to take forward. The three were; ownership so that countries had more voice in their own development and increased their participation; inclusive partnerships, where donors and developing countries participated fully; and a focus on real, measurable impact on development (AAA, 2008). The reiterated emphasis on inclusiveness and real impact showed a commitment to supporting real change. In such cases, the results of both successes and failures need to be reported, so that they can all be used as lessons. Reports of real impact are useful for those who work in similar projects, in order to learn from others and avoid similar mistakes. Working in a way that supports collaborative action can enhance the experience of a community, as there are many activities and actors involved in one community.

Avoiding replication and working to complement each other can be useful, as in the case of the Kibera and Mukuru communities in this study where there were several agencies working on different projects. The agencies in these communities included, the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP), Water Aid, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), and Carolina for Kibera (CFK) who worked directly with the community on similar projects but with different groups. These organisations can benefit from benchmarking their performance against each other, learning from each other's experiences and complementing each other's efforts. Working in such collaborations has the potential to encourage transparency, as having reports and information available to others means it can be scrutinised and critiqued.

This type of transparency is likely to enhance the credibility and reputation of an organisation, but also requires other organisations to be committed to such actions of collective collaboration. Acting collectively has a number of benefits as identified by the report from the Centre for Global Development (CGD, 2006). The report shows how standards can be established, with regular reviews of the processes to identify priorities and useful methods of disseminating information that can be interpreted clearly by those who need it. The role of developing communities as equal partners in the process of producing results is necessary as it is the community who the change is

designed for and is impacted on by the initiatives. Designing methods and approaches that only suit one side of the process can mean it loses its purpose or meaning and can be a limited way of perceiving things. An important point to consider is who performs the evaluation process. The development intervention is often designed and implemented for the most part by agencies, and, if they perform the evaluation process as well, this might raise questions of objectivity.

Many difficulties of evaluation processes result from the varied meaning, requirements and understanding of evaluation. Due to the different types of information required by different bodies for different reasons to enable their decision-making, they may seek different types of evidence. Decisions on, for example, further funding, new projects, replication of initiatives, will require different types of knowledge. The design to carry out an evaluation at the end of the process may only show a final overall end result, and if it is reported as unsuccessful, it may be difficult to identify where the difficulty may have occurred. It would therefore be imperative to design the evaluation to be a continuous process, and use diverse sources of information to carry out the evaluation. This type of evaluation on impact should address questions of what change has taken place due to the initiative or, whether that change would have occurred if there had been no intervention. Evaluation needs to be viewed as a process that can, and should, impact wider circles of development, the results of which can be applied to other settings. One set of impact evaluations from one source can rarely be adequate to understand a process; evidence over time and building from different contexts is necessary. This becomes a process of learning and each evaluation becomes a lesson that can also be shared for the benefit of other actors in the process. This way of building on, and sharing of, information and knowledge helps to avoid replication.

Impact evaluations may not always provide adequate evidence to support the claims they make. Measuring changes that are claimed to have occurred in all instances cannot always be convincingly associated or linked to the intervention or programme. Measures that look at the 'before' and 'after' the intervention status and then consider the change that occurs between those

statuses as the impact, may be flawed because they are unlikely to consider contributing factors such as existing conditions. Other possible catalysts that are not associated with the intervention need to be taken into consideration. In order to get as close as possible to an accurate evaluation report, organisations use tools and methods that can help them identify where the change occurs and what catalyst acted to cause that change. Some tools discussed by participants are analysed below.

8.2 Practical tools of evaluation

Organisations tend to select a method for evaluation that suits their overall strategy. There are various approaches available to use, as seen in the examples below. The World Bank's guide to evaluating capacity development acknowledges a shortfall in the evaluation of impact on capacity development. This is as a result of the lack of a body of knowledge of the tools that can be used to record lessons learnt (World Bank, 2005). The World Bank's Capacity Development Results Framework (CDRF) provides a set of strategies to evaluate results and focus on the process of change. The guidance notes provided for that process are designed to support practitioners in conducting retrospective evaluations and documenting the results. The guide offers 17 guidance notes, with the first 11 showing how to map and document results. In note two of the guidance document, it is stated that data should be collected through interviews with change agents and key informants, but the process of recruiting and the criteria for identifying those informants is not clear. The selection process could be biased and that needs to be taken into account. In note four, guidance is given about writing a results story; the guidance instructs the writer on specific ways to tell the story by focusing on the objectives of the specific institution. Evaluating in this way relies heavily on the aims and objectives of the process, the organisation and the reporter of the story, as they select the story teller, the story to be told and the manner it is then presented in the reports. Stakeholders are shown to be participants in the process, but their role is almost scripted and, it could be argued, it is a token role. In trying to align the outcomes with the objectives, the real genuine stories are likely to be missed.

DFID suggests a balance between process and performance in evaluating programmes. DFID acknowledges that changes occur in people and contexts and therefore the process needs to be flexible in a way that can easily be adapted to these changes and ensure that learning and outcomes are captured. For DFID, keeping the process simple is important, to avoid burdening organisations with complex and time consuming processes. DFID suggests four key tools to follow, which are; outcome indicators, baseline mapping studies, log frame outcomes and key indicators, and respect for partnerships and ownership. The process of evaluation is difficult especially the problem of attributing specific outputs to specific inputs as shown in the 2009 DFID report on 'Monitoring and Evaluation Systems' (Thomas, Barnett, Yaron and DFID, 2009). There are various influences, particularly in the area of capacity building, which affect the outcome, and, therefore, generic indicators are usually the focus. Due to such difficulties, DFID suggests possible methods of impact assessment. These include end user surveys carried out at key points to collect opinions, case studies using interviews and story gathering - which are useful in getting evidence about the effectiveness of certain processes and activities - and self-assessment, where recipients are encouraged to assess their own impact. This approach has similar challenges as the one from the World Bank mentioned above. The role of the community in the process is minimal, which means the assessment is likely to be from one perspective.

A common approach used by a local NGO in Nairobi is the 'Most Significant Change' (MSC). This approach engages in dialogue and storytelling with the community to establish what the community values as significant change. The process searches for significant outcomes within an initiative through designated stakeholders and then reviews the value of the outcomes in a systematic and transparent way. MSC is a participatory monitoring and evaluation technique, designed by Rick Davies in 1995 (Davis and Dart, 2005). It is designed to have project stakeholders gather together to decide on what changes should be recorded and analysed. The 'Significant Changes' (SC) stories are collected from the ground level, and a panel of designated stakeholders discuss how to select and process those stories. This approach is useful because it can capture unexpected changes and identifies what is of

value to the community. Due to the simplicity of its approach - telling stories - it poses little threat to those who might want to express an opinion but feel limited for various reasons such as confidence or self-efficacy issues. It also does not base on inquiry into what someone else has perceived as a possible significant change. Instead, it asks the participant to 'tell' their own story, to explain what is significant to them, thus supporting a bottom-up approach to evaluation. The information gathered is evaluated by a different set of individuals in order to reduce bias, increase authenticity and enable broad participation. It is encouraged to have the evaluation done locally for the benefit of a local perspective (Davis and Dart, 2005). Because MSC does not largely use predefined indicators, participants are encouraged to exercise their own voice and any questions used are widely open-ended which makes the process dynamic and adaptive.

One of the NGOs who participated in this research explained that they mainly use the MSC approach for their evaluations. They also look for reports and records of the impact of their projects and particularly the impacts of a social, economic and environmental nature. They look for impact such as ways in which the communities have enhanced their lives and have been enabled to access more choices. The environmental impacts would include clean energy and hygienic environments and the economic impacts would include job creation, income generation and capacity building. The capacity building in their reports focuses on skills such as accounting, procurement and management skills, rather than on providing tools that enable effective decision-making and self-reliance. The reports would include a list of goals, some of which would be, for example, to improve hygiene, provide a source of clean water for the community and raise awareness about the importance of sustainable methods of sanitation. The NGO, as stated in their reports, supports a community led process in which stakeholders participate fully. Their evaluation strategy includes working with local institutions and the community, through the means of a survey, using questionnaires designed by the team from the NGO. This process does not report on how the decisions on selecting the project to survey is arrived at, and the survey questions provides a selection of options that the participants can respond to. A process that pre-determines

possible responses can be limiting if the community is not given space to speak, to make their thoughts and ideas known.

A report made available for this research by VSO Jitolee (Kenya) shows how the organisation works to engage the community and promote volunteering. VSO Jitolee is a member of the international VSO Federation that seeks to address global poverty and enhance participation of disadvantaged members of society in socio-economic and political development (About VSO, 2014). VSO Jitolee programmes are rooted in the knowledge and experience of partners and communities. VSO Jitolee's new programme strategy focuses on secure livelihoods, inclusive education and responsible citizenship. Their 2012-2013 report showed the number of beneficiaries reached, indicating that there had been improvement in capacity through increased enterprise activities. Several partnerships are mentioned such as the 'Kenya government vision 2030', the Ford Foundation commitment towards financial support as well as funding from USAID towards diaspora volunteering. VSO used the funding received in January 2013 to implement a project to address the lack of inclusion and meaningful involvement of people with disabilities. A research project titled 'The Involvement and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in *Environment and Natural Resource Management* (ENRM)' was conducted to enable the establishment of a framework of engagement with stakeholders. The report did not contain evidence of consultations with affected communities or those whom the project was to benefit. It did, however, show recognition for the role of participation through the inclusion programme and the new framework that was designed. The 2013-2014 report similarly focused on funding received and projects supported, and there was an indication of participants' involvement, but no details were provided. These reports are useful, but without specific identification of the role of the community in the evaluation of the projects' effectiveness, it can only be assumed that this is a one sided opinion. Reports such as these can be difficult to use for reference when conducting similar initiatives.

Using pro-community approaches such as the MSC, can offer potential for many participants to be involved. The MSC steps help to foster an interest on the part of stakeholders and particularly of the community who tell their

significant change stories rather than answering pre-defined questions. In such a process, the participant has the opportunity to say why those stories are significant to them, which can provide a chance to appreciate what is important to the community. This approach enables the user to establish real impact from the perspective of those for whom the change was intended. Such approaches are not without criticism, for example, bias in the process of selection of the stories told and the people telling the stories. There is the possibility of favouring success stories only, but, in this approach, the emphasis should be on what was significant to the story teller. The use of strict structures that define and attempt to prescribe how change can and should occur are suggested, which can be seen as a way that attempts to 'theorise change' as discussed next.

8.3 Theorising evaluations

Because of the difficulty of establishing practical ways of assessing impact that is meaningful to many actors, there are always attempts to find further methods that can effectively show impact, where it occurred and what caused it to occur. One of the recent ways that is becoming popular is to attempt to identify what catalyst can cause change and where in the process that can be predicted to be. This means it is an attempt to prescribe what activities, who participates as well as their roles and responsibilities. Coryn et al. (2011) refer to such an approach as theory driven although some might argue that they are not necessarily theories, but are merely maps, 'how to' plans, or simply, strategies. Those arguing for them say that a theory driven approach to projects and particularly an evaluation process can offer greater explanation of how impact has occurred, or can occur. An approach that is gaining popularity among the international development agencies is 'theory of change' (ToC).

The term 'theory of change' is referred to in various ways, such as pathway of change, engine of change, logic modes or theory of action. It offers a road map, pointing out important destinations and how to recognise that you are on the right path. A ToC can be any shape or size and uses different techniques to develop a visual diagram that depicts relationships between an initiative,

strategies and intended results. Short and long-term results are included, reflecting the different levels and types of changes. There is no correct way to draw a theory of change map; it depends on a community's unique needs and choices. The input and views of the community on how change should occur is what counts and it is important to document the assumptions that underlie an initiative, including philosophies, principles and values ((Ortiz and Macedo, 2010; Patton, 2011; Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

This type of approach to informed action for social change and participation promotes the importance of reflection on activities in development as well as offering an opportunity for learning and then acting. ToC has gained a huge amount of interest, as it is seen as an approach that makes an initiative clearer. It is a dynamic process of critical thinking based on strategic planning ideals. Driven by the results agenda, which is one of the key elements of the Paris Declaration and is further emphasised by the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA, 2005), as it supports the aspects of demonstrating impact and change.

Development initiatives are complex, involving political and social dynamics within different community contexts, and this can pose a problem in dealing with all the issues. Ownership of a change process and collaborations with the various actors in development is increasingly being encouraged and ToC plays a role in mapping the complexities and dynamics of such collaborations and diversities of interests, to enable clearer results. Mapping initiatives and the change process in this way helps to make a case for realistic evaluation, as argued by Pawson and Tilley (1997). They observe how a theory-based evaluation helps to highlight the reality that implementations go through and to identify what might cause change. A process like ToC helps to test assumptions that may contribute or hinder change and seeks to bring to the surface possible changes in a project as well as to establish the anticipated sequence of links from inputs and activities in logic or results chain process.

The complexities within a development process, such as the numerous actors involved and interested in it, as well as the time and effort it takes to identify impact, means that such an evaluation requires hard work. Communication is important, triggers of change need to be identified and who plays what role

needs to be specified. A development process has many more than these aspects, and capturing as many of them as possible requires clear structures and strategies. As a starting point, a visual diagram can serve to map out the key aspects and relationships between the strategies and results of an initiative. Assumptions made can be stated clearly and these can include philosophies, values, community context and ways of working together. The types of changes mapped are usually meant to be spontaneous, emergent or informal where the goal is lasting change that is positive for those in need. Changes can include those related to knowledge, skills, behaviours and living conditions. All these activities form a 'theory of change', which is then used to evaluate the effectiveness of a programme. Some organisations use ToC effectively as shown in the following examples.

The DFID shows how they use a ToC process to map assumptions made and use those to inform their plans for the stages of an initiative (DFID, 2012). ToC is considered a useful tool in assessing the complex factors that form part of the initiative and its outcomes. In the review document, it is stated that information is collected from different actors including development organisations, donor agencies, international NGOs and research organisation, in the hope of getting information that works towards developing a more consistent approach within DFID. The review recognises the need for flexibility, as there is no consensus on the definition and process of ToC and therefore various approaches could be considered aspects of ToC. According to Vogel and DFID (2012), the core elements of ToC are context, long-term change, the sequence of anticipated change, assumptions and a diagram with a narrative summary of outcomes.

An example in the review document shows how one programme - the 'AWARD fellowship', which is a programme that seeks to strengthen the research and leadership skills of women in agriculture - uses ToC. The programme found when using ToC that most change is non-linear and acknowledged that preconditions are necessary for change to occur. DFID shows a leaning towards this type of reporting, as shown in their 2012 report on the 'Operational plan 2011-2015' for Kenya (DFID, 2012). In the monitoring and evaluation section, the report states that a framework that provides data to track progress against

targets should be prepared. It is stated that the process would be monitored by the implementing partners on a continuous basis and the results used to inform future programme—decisions. The process consists of monitoring key development outcomes as well as the outputs, measured at a second level where DFID projects are analysed against expected results set out in operational plans. The effectiveness of the operations is examined by looking at how well the department manages itself (Vogel and DFID, 2012).

The UNDP also encourages the use of ToC and gives an example of its use - the UN Women and UNDP target of fostering sustainable women's political participation and transforming that into tangible gains. An awareness of the way in which this can be a complex process of interventions, particularly the interaction between multiple interventions and the environment, means there is a need for a framework such as the ToC to guide and help strategise the process. Using the underlying assumptions about the factors likely to contribute to transformative change, the strategies make assumptions about activities likely to contribute to changes and the outcomes that further women's participation.

Evaluations, as key parts of what informs reports, are important, as these reports contribute to future development decisions. The MDG, as an example, involves a large part of the world's population and addresses critical aspects of development. The target date of achieve the eight goals by 2015 is quickly approaching, and the reports that will emerge from this exercise will be used to decide the next set of activities. One would expect that great attention would be paid to the process so that practical information is acquired that would enable useful decisions for the next set of years. Yet, various interim assessments are indicating that there are likely to be great concerns about the type of reports emerging. This is mainly due to a lack of clarity about the methods to use for evaluation, and standardising report formats without paying attention to differences that are likely to contribute to better results in one region and not another. A study by Fukuda-Parr and Greenstein (2010) indicates that results in some of the regions are likely to lead to report of failure due to the set-up of the MDGs themselves. The selection of the MDG goals is not clear, and arbitrary choices could create bias against some regions

such as Africa, causing failure reports to emerge due to such bias. The authors give an example of goal number two, the achievement of universal primary education, where success will be measured by the percentage of enrolments achieved. In regions where low achievement was significant, not achieving the set percentage will be reported as failure, whereas that area may have made significant progress in enrolment than another which may have started at a higher level and therefore was able to achieve the set targets percentage. There is a huge amount of attention on the MDG and many future initiatives will base their decisions on reports originating from them. This can create a concern if the reports do not reflect real scenarios of practical change.

The importance of an evaluation process cannot be over emphasised, as the information that emerges from them forms final reports that go on to inform important decisions. If we put aside the challenges arising from a possibly flawed process from the very start where stakeholder engagement did not take place effectively, and assume that the process had some saving graces, then a practical evaluation of such a project may provide useful insights. To focus on the important role of those who are to be affected by the intervention, the need for them to 'tell' their story of what was significant is necessary. Such an engagement method can at the same time also act as a way of collecting data about what really matters for the community. This approach would create a better understanding of what makes a difference and has potential to support meaningful progress.

Such approaches, particularly those favoured by international agencies, such as the ToC, have their own advantages. They provide a reasonable guide to follow in the process of development. I argue, however that they are, to a large extent, a means to control the process, despite their flexibility in design. It is not being suggested here that they are not useful in supporting an initiative, but because they tend to be designed by agencies that rely on information from other sources, they are likely to miss out on important significant catalysts. ToC processes tend to be rather complex and detailed. This can be challenging in itself, and the process of putting together such an evaluation process becomes tedious and unfriendly. Complex processes that are theory driven can create an illusion of change without necessarily providing the depth

that clearly supports the understanding of impact and change. Clarity is necessary in a process of recording impact and change, and processes need to make clear what they hold themselves responsible to deliver. This has potential to ensure that real impact is targeted, rather than just listing hopes and desires that are farfetched and difficult to reach. Clear inputs, outputs and outcomes need to be tracked, to learn what works, which means it is an ongoing process of reflection, adjustment of parameters and other measures. This process creates new assumptions and relationships as necessary and is also one that can support continuous learning through 'learning plans' that become part of the review process.

Summary

The emphasis on the importance of reports on impact and the need to be accountable to those who fund the processes make it necessary for development agencies to concentrate on ways to evaluate their effectiveness. This process of evaluating can become an end in itself, with a plethora of tools and frameworks designed for that process alone. There is value in evaluating a process, but it needs to become a part of the whole, where, rather than relegate it to the end and potentially miss opportunities to reflect, it can be integrated as a continuous process. This chapter has reviewed the significance placed on those reports as well as some practical tools to use. In order to promote a continuous process of review, tools such as ToC are introduced whose aim is to map where change is likely to occur. This can be a useful way of identifying when and where change occurs and what is likely to have been a catalyst. This, however, does not reflect a critical thinking or self-reliant approach, as it attempts to predict change and possible catalysts. Such processes of evaluation are a valuable part of establishing progress, but I argue that they do not reflect an inclusive process. This is because they do not engage those involved in determining what the impact is, and only the evaluator's perspective of 'change' and impact is considered. The process should be collaborative and therefore fall into the same category as that in chapter eight where the focus should be on reciprocity.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

This chapter begins by revisiting the objectives of this thesis and traces the process through the chapters to consider what the response has been to the questions asked at the beginning of this thesis. The contribution and implication of this study are discussed looking at the empirical data as well as the methodological approach. I then reflect on the question asked in chapter one ‘why are we not building our own bridges’, reflecting on bridges in the literal sense as well as metaphorically. I look at a bridge as an element that connects people and allows them to cross over from one side to another, and take a personal perspective on my own experiences, and how I can become a bridge that can connect others.

9.1 Overview

Revising the aims and objectives

This thesis aimed to explore the practical aspects of international and community development, particularly seeking to examine the role of self-reliance from a communities-led perspective, and how communities and individuals use their own knowledge in such a process. The meaning and process of development, who is engaged and how they are engaged were examined. Popular concepts of sustainable livelihoods and people-centred interventions were examined for their value and practical impact. Thinking through the questions of whose reality is being addressed, as posed by Chambers (1997), and the role of equality and justice, I sought to establish how self-reliance is incorporated in capacity development intervention strategies. I used the broad objectives that aim to explore how capacity development initiatives support self-reliance, the role of or lack of critical thinking in that process and what that means for meaningful progress. I refined these broad objectives further to include questions that address the planning

of development interventions, the meanings and perceptions of development and the roles played by the actors involved as well as the tools and frameworks used in the process of development. Because of the nature of the questions I sought to pursue, it was possible that they would be perceived as intrusive or seeking to criticise. It was therefore important to carefully consider the way in which I engaged with actors and to carefully select methods of data collection that would elicit useful information. The study was particularly keen on establishing what a meaningful development intervention involves and how local individual and collective knowledge is integrated, and therefore meanings and perceptions that reflected real realities were of great value.

From the empirical data, there was evidence that self-reliance is not a key aim for development agendas and where capacity development is identified as being an aim, it focuses on skills rather than abilities to do and to be. This is illustrated by the way in which the interventions are designed, implemented and evaluated by the development agencies. The evidence from development agency representatives indicated that the process of intervention to support capacity development used information gathered from an engagement process, but the community groups in this study indicated that they did not recognise the existence of such a process. Further discussion about where and how the process of implementation was said to have taken place, indicated that it happened in collaboration with the community. The evidence shows this as a process of instructing the community on how to implement a process that had already been designed. This type of approach does not adequately address meaningful and sustainable progress. Real progress comes from freedom to choose what direction one's development and progress should take. This is enabled by having capabilities to do and to be (Nussbaum, 2011) in a process of exchange of knowledge and information in the way that Graeber (2001), in reviewing Mauss', referred to as exchange. In the process of such exchange, those involved reciprocate and learn from each other in a way that has potential to support a level of confidence that leads to self-reliance. The evidence of this was demonstrated in the chapters which I re-visit next.

Revisiting the chapters

The first set of chapters, one to three, introduce and review the concepts under consideration. Chapter one explained that the study is about the use of knowledge to improve a person's living conditions and their immediate environment in a self-reliant way. The recognition of the importance of critical reflection in such a process and its connection to issues of self-worth and ultimately social change, were discussed. Using Immanuel Kant's (1784) response to the question 'what is Enlightenment?', I evaluated how people allow others to take over their lives and impose ideas on them and the circumstances in which people give themselves over to the experts to be their guide. These ideas were explored in a community development setting to establish whether critical reflection and self-reliance took place. The setting was selected because of the connections and interactions between the various actors in the initiatives. The chapter reflected on the question of why we (communities) do not build our own bridges and considered the role played by critical thinking and self-reliance as aspects of social change. These ideas were investigated because they show the way in which development interventions from the supposed experts began through a perception that some communities were unable to support themselves and needed intervention from outside to enable them to progress.

In chapter two, I reviewed the literature related to development, focusing on the rise of the need for development beginning from the aftermath of the Second World War and the end of colonialism. The effects of colonialism are examined particularly where they are considered to have contributed to issues of the lack of self-worth through enforcing the use of the colonisers' language and the denouncing of local cultures. The chapter reviewed how post-colonial thinking has been considered as an aspect of critical thinking that will enable the formerly colonised people to think in ways that move them forward. The chapter reviewed the role of learning for life as a way to encourage the critical thinking and reflection that leads to action.

Keeping the theme of critical thinking, I continued in chapter three by examining the practical aspects of development where I review methods, tools and frameworks that are centred on people and their needs. At the centre of current approaches is the debate on the importance of engaging with the communities and long-term viability in development projects. Using Chambers' (1997) question of 'whose reality is it?', I investigated the way in which the engagement process works to include all actors and particularly those who are intended to benefit from the intervention. In this chapter, I reviewed how reciprocity can be useful in the process of learning from each other through exchange of information and knowledge, and the way that this can act as a potential mediator between possible conflicting agenda. I pursued concepts of developing capabilities through the capabilities approach, as suggested by Nussbaum (2011), coming from Sen's (2009) idea of development as justice that creates an equitable world. Using this background, I explored some of the frameworks designed for such a project and evaluated some publicly available frameworks from different organisations, from the large well known UNDP to other smaller independent organisations. Using a simple assessment of what their stages involved, I summarised the different stages into one diagram, which formed a representative framework of four key stages. These stages were used in the analysis section to assess the effectiveness of such an approach.

In chapter four, I explained the research methodology. To be able to effectively explore issues on opinions such as these, I needed to design the research process in such a way as to reflect the ideals of keeping people central to the process by letting the people themselves tell me what the issues were. This required methods that would enable the community groups in particular to reflect and communicate in an open and non-judgemental way, and allow the agency groups to raise their concerns in whichever way they felt was necessary without my suggesting an agenda or imposing an hypothesis. The selected methods were focus group discussions using the Ketso creative tool and unstructured interviews for individuals representing the development agencies. These approaches were selected for their potential to produce meaningful and rich data. The selection of these methods was based on a framework of the emancipatory aspects of critical theory and combined with

the Freirean dialogue where the value of discussions that produce a level of critical consciousness are recognised and promoted. I then added PAR as an important process that enables effective participation. In an exploratory process such as the one in this study, and with the sensitive nature of the discussions that touch on issues of justice and equality, it was important to consider ingenious ways that enabled participants to articulate their opinion effectively and in their own words.

Chapter five presents the summary of themes identified from data. It begins with the background and history of the locations selected to provide some context for the reader so that the situations and circumstances of the participants can be appreciated. The pilot study process for both focus groups and individual interviews are discussed in this chapter, before I present the summarised themes, separated into themes from focus groups and from unstructured interviews, where I also give a brief background of participants. I then show how the themes were selected and presented a brief summary of the three main focus areas that form the analysis and discussion chapters.

The next three chapters, six, seven and eight formed the analysis and discussion of that data. Chapter six began the analysis by evaluating the process of development through processes that are centred on sustainable livelihoods. I queried the validity of these from a perspective of exclusions through a lack of equality and justice as posited by Sen (1999), and argued that a capability approach to development should be central to enable communities to use their own knowledge to decide what they need. This is evidenced by the issues raised by community groups about the need for effective engagement in the process of developing their own community. The communities identified the need to be able to do and to be in a capabilities approach in the way that Nussbaum (2011) suggested. I argued that supporting development in this manner can be effective in building capabilities to do and to be that are useful for critical reflection and self-reliance.

In chapter seven, I reviewed the question of whose reality is used in the process of development. By assessing the community's discussion of what role they play in the decision process about their development, I found that the act

of engagement means different things to different groups. The communities stated that engagement does not exist, or is not meaningful, while the development organisations believe it is carried out effectively. To understand what happens in a development process, I analysed the set of stages summarised earlier in chapter three, by taking apart each stage and assessing it against the data from discussions and from the documents analysed in this study. This process found that meaningful connections are not made, and assumptions about what is right or what should happen are made on behalf of the community. In order to support effective and real change, I argued that lifelong learning through a process of critical reflection can play a key role in resolving the key issues and should be a central aim.

Because of the emphasis placed on development agencies to provide evidence of change, the process of assessing that change is examined. Evaluation of intervention projects is one way to assess results or changes and this then generates reports. Chapter eight analysed the significance placed on evaluations and the impact of the reports generated from such processes, in particular reflecting on the design and process of such evaluations as well as who is involved. Types of evaluation process were examined, in particular where the evaluations were based on plans that theorise and predict change. I argued that evaluation is a valuable part of establishing progress, but, where it does not make connections to assess and reflect a real meaningful impact, its significance may not bear the value intended. I recognise that evaluations are tied to the whole process of development intervention, and if that first process of engagement is skewed due to the type of engagement at that stage, then the evaluation is not likely to generate useful results.

9.2 Responding to the questions

As mentioned above, the objectives of this study were refined to form several questions and this section reviews each of them individually. There is some overlap of the issues that came up as some participants saw them as linked whereas others did not see the links.

What is the understanding of the role of various activities by different actors and how are the goals and purpose communicated?

The evidence from this study shows that all actors have a general desire to equip people to take control of their own lives and their own development. This is a good aim, but, from the evidence here, we observe how the concept of equipping people and the manner in which the process takes place are laden with control elements centred on the perceptions and background of those who are in charge of equipping others. The assumption that people need to be given tools or to be trained by others to think in a certain way does not clearly recognise the distinct heterogeneous ways people perceive and act. It assumes that one person has the ultimate tools, which they have selected for the other person, and they can therefore 'give' to those they assume not to have such tools. This way of thinking seems to be attractive due to the fact that it aims to support means of self-reliance and also comes from the more recent development approach that aims to place people at the centre of the process. This may not adequately address the real concerns of progressive development. This is because the tools and ideas are based on the perception of those providing the tools or supporting the development, particularly in capacity development. When it comes to communicating and connecting with others, the empirical evidence from this study indicates there is an impasse over perceptions of the meaning of engagement. The community group participants clearly stated that engagement and collaboration had not taken place effectively, while the development agency organisations stated engagement had in fact taken place. This happens where effective dialogue between actors does not take place and where a community is framed as a needy group that has to be assisted. By placing one group above another, the giver above the receiver, it becomes a skewed relationship that is likely to benefit the group that holds the power. Therefore, an approach that focuses on empowering people and providing tools in this way has connotations connected with and controlled by one person giving to another, and does not effectively support freedom towards self-reliance through critical thinking. I argue that meaningful progress is driven by the need to facilitate freedom to access services that will enable a desired quality of life.

What systems are in place to empower people and support long-term viability of projects, self-reliance and critical thinking? How are they implemented?

From the review on the previous question, we observed how control from one set of actors can take place through an approach to 'empower' in a way that is not inclusive. To address the challenges of control attached to 'equipping and empowering', using evidence from this study, I agree with Sen (1999) that development should be about freedom. I argue that rather than trying to raise self-reliance through a controlling act, which only furthers the dependency standpoint, the focus should be to encourage discovery through the freedom to explore. An outsider may not be able to understand the values people attach to their lives and therefore what will make a meaningful difference. This thesis contends that perceiving development as freedom can avoid the social deprivation brought on by a lack of ability to exercise choice. Exercising this choice enables one to be reflective about the choice to be made and therefore practise critical thinking that can encourage self-reliance. The interconnection between ability to choose and the freedom to make those choices can encourage making decisions that are meaningful to the individual and community. This freedom to do what is considered to be of value is significant in strengthening meaningful outcomes and is a basis for determining individual and social effectiveness. What becomes important therefore is a quality of life that is possible through the choices available and choices made. This freedom is however difficult to pin down and this takes us back to assessments of whose freedom it is and where one person's freedom ends and another person's begins. Equality and justice play a key role in determining those responses, and can come through respecting the customs, values and interests of others, and by stepping outside one's own values and prejudices to reason with others. Freedom through equality and justice is therefore central to meaningful development with human dignity and the need to treat each other with consideration is important. This type of freedom, one that makes people's choices wider is connected to the capability approach concerned with what people are able 'to do' and 'to be' in a human development process.

What frameworks and tools are used, how are they designed, implemented and reviewed? Who is involved in that process?

A human development approach that is about creating capabilities ‘to do’ and ‘to be’ can increase progress in the wider context. This is because there is a chance to construct new knowledge through the process of ‘doing’ and to attach that knowledge and experience to the ability that is created through that practice. Human development is not about telling people what to do, or attempting to fit them into frameworks as that can be constraining to creativity, but rather is about creating conditions where people can have meaningful lives through access to their rights. Enlarging choices and expanding opportunities is investing in people without controlling them. It empowers them in a different way, one that is not based on being attached to another person’s perspective or their idea of what life should be. Empowering through human development comes from supporting people to have the power to make choices and increase freedoms. Therefore, genuine opportunities created by a capabilities approach that focuses on what people can do and can encompass the role of social justice, that takes into account overall well-being and focuses on assets rather than needs. I contend that the concept of development as freedom, human development and creating capabilities can still keep people in positions of being controlled and separate those who have and those who have not, or the givers and takers. I presented the lifelong learning approach as a mediator between those processes, and that lifelong learning process is reviewed further in the response to the next question.

What do communities and individuals see as their role, in the process of development; for example do communities expect an intervention to take place and do development agencies believe it is their duty to intervene?

The analysis chapters showed the way in which interventions that do not effectively engage with the local communities are unable to address the real needs of those communities. Because of the way in which some of the development interventions take place, with the agencies taking control of the

process and imposing a project, the community begins to believe it is the role of the agency to carry out projects, such as the building of schools or health facilities. The community decides to take a back seat and watch as the development, of their community is controlled by someone else. But the changes in recent times in the field of international and community development, which are beginning to focus on encouraging communities to take control, are changing that. Communities are beginning to see the value of their role in building the community they want. The availability of and access to information, particularly through the internet, are playing a key role in enabling individuals and communities to see what others have been able to do for their own communities and learn from those examples. They are learning that they can speak up and stand for what they believe in, as we have seen in recent uprisings in some parts of the world, even in Kenya where there were peaceful general elections in 2013 despite many predictions of that not happening. The international development agencies still continue to believe they have an obligation to support other communities, but are constantly reviewing how that process can be of benefit to all involved.

With regards to strengthening the relationship between actors, this study showed that there is value in respecting local communities through listening to what is really being said about their needs, and appreciating that they can have enough knowledge to make decisions about the direction of their own development. I argued for the role of lifelong learning as the mediator between the one who gives and the one who takes. Using Graeber's (2001) concept of exchange, as well as the value of reciprocation, I argued that the core of self-reliance should be based within the practice of learning for life. Learning as a way of life goes beyond thinking about a setting or institution, to become a way in which one views life. It should be a process that enables us to exchange skills and knowledge and participate in life. This means thinking beyond settings where we frame an expectation of learning and prepare ourselves for it, but instead to have an attitude of learning at any opportunity.

This means learning becomes an attitude of openness to receiving and, to an extent, an attitude of giving in a form of exchange. This is based on the concept of exchange of information and knowledge during an encounter, in the

way that Graeber (2001), in his review of Mauss, suggested. It is a process where one person gives a gift and the other feels obligated to reciprocate. Each encounter becomes an opportunity to learn through reciprocating, and, in development, driven by respect for others and a genuine need to support a meaningful process, this becomes a way that works by engaging in dialogue and that listens to what is really being said. As evidenced in this study, communities clearly stated they wanted to be heard, they had something to offer and they needed to be able to share that in a process of exchange, an exchange of information in a learning process that is reciprocal. As knowledge and information continually evolves and as human beings continue to interact with new people from different parts of the world, the need to reflect on what one can learn from those interactions becomes a lifelong process. Development therefore becomes an encounter based on the exchange of knowledge among those who respect each other and work towards a relationship rather than a transaction.

9.3 Significance and contribution

The findings of this study suggest a twofold contribution to knowledge; first, findings from the empirical data suggests that, community development initiatives that focus on self-reliance should aim to be collaborative, where there is mutual respect for each actor's knowledge and experience. This knowledge should be shared through a process where actors exchange what they know and each has a chance to learn from the other, and this has potential to become a process of learning throughout life - as a lifelong learning process. This contribution adds to understanding of the value of ways of working within development for practitioners as well as others working in similar fields. The second contribution is a methodology one, where the selected tools for data collection in this research adds to the understanding of the importance of using creative hands-on tools, such as the Ketso tool used in this research, to encourage engagement that is likely to yield effective information. I begin by presenting the contribution from the data, followed by that from the methodology.

Empirical evidence

By examining the processes of community development as stated earlier, I sought to challenge the practices, to understand what they entailed and to establish what the lived experiences could reveal. The thesis has challenged the practice of the process and questioned the aims with reference to meaningful progress through critical thinking, working towards self-reliance. Interacting with the different actors involved in the process has revealed what constitutes the thinking associated with each set of actors. The findings show that - the community groups are concerned about the lack of genuine engagement and would prefer a collaborative effort. For the development agencies and funding organisations, their key concern is about their accountability to those who fund the activities and the need for tangible results. The intermediary organisations such as NGOs are caught between the needs of the two groups.

Because of these conflicting priorities, meaningful progress is relegated to a position further from the top priorities and relationships become transactional, rather than relational. They are transactional, because the agencies view the process as a task to be completed, instead of being relational, where the intervention would be about finding ways to solve problems together and establishing long-term viability of projects and sustainable livelihoods within that process.

Using evidence from this study, I argued that a central focus needs to be on the value of knowledge and the ability to reflect and act on that knowledge to support a process of decision-making that benefits the individual and their environment. To this end, I presented the argument that progress is about sharing information and knowledge in an exchange format where we learn from each other. It is about respecting what is important to others and what they value and appreciating that it has the potential to contribute to the process. This is based on the concept of exchange and reciprocation as argued by Graeber (2001) and from the evidence from the participants in this study. The communities clearly stated that they had something to offer, that they needed to be heard too, in their various references to the importance of engagement

and collaboration. Other actors also had something to offer, which is appreciated by the local communities, but it needs to be meaningful and to meet a genuine need. This genuine need can possibly be identified through a process of effective engagement in which those involved listen to each other, which can then become a process of learning from each other. Using evidence from this study, and reflecting on ideas from the ideals of early thinkers as reviewed in this study, I suggested that achieving self-reliance in community development settings such as those in this study depends on the approach to that process. I argued that approaching the process as a learning experience will have a more meaningful impact, through a combination of understanding that development is freedom and that it should be a human development approach that is centred on creating capabilities to do and to be (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011). This approach to progress focuses on supporting a culture of questioning, of using reasoning and of valuing own knowledge, one that led to the 'Age of Enlightenment' in different parts of the world. An interesting question might arise here; has there been an 'Age of Enlightenment for Africa', is one required; is it time for an 'African Enlightenment'?

Considering the question of enlightenment for a whole continent is a huge task, and one that a thesis such as this may not be able to pursue. What can be pursued here is the possibility of enlightenment on a personal basis, where individuals and those around them can begin to experience a form of enlightenment through critical thinking, reasoning and self-reliance. This study therefore, adds a contribution to the work of community development practitioners and academics in further understanding how lifelong learning can be a useful process of sharing knowledge, and how they can encourage individuals and communities to act on, and share their knowledge as a way of supporting self-reliance.

Methodological process

The way in which data is gathered and the methods selected for that process can impact on the type of information gathered. Some traditional approaches for data-gathering among vulnerable groups or individuals may not always yield effective information as seen earlier, due to reasons such as language and trust

or cultural inhibitions (Kvale, 1996; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). By appreciating the dynamic nature of the world we live in and the heterogeneous nature of its individuals and cultures, then emphasis on understanding local realities should be made paramount. To gain a better understanding of the real realities, this study selected a creative hands-on approach for collecting data that would make a meaningful difference to the individuals and groups as well as to the research community. Research and consultations in community development initiatives are commonly framed in a way that creates a separation between the researcher and the researched, or the consulting expert and the groups or individuals. This standard approach may not encourage open dialogue appropriately and, to some degree, may turn into a mechanical process in which those engaged have mastered what is required and their responses become automatic. By deciding to use participatory approaches in this study, I was clearly stating that, as a researcher with a deep interest in making an effective difference, it was important for me to think critically about the process and what it was likely to produce. The research process was exploratory in nature and it was necessary that I did not take my pre-conceived ideas about how development initiatives work, or should work. Selecting the Ketso creative tool for group discussions, because of its ability to engage people, and unstructured interviews because of their ability to allow participants to reflect, made the statement that I was willing to really listen to what was being said and was clearly open to dialogue.

The selected approach contributes methodologically to research where real meanings and experiences are important. In research where there is need to establish genuine ways to support individuals or communities, it would be futile to gather information that does not add value to the process. This adds to the question that Chambers (1997) asked about whose reality counts. How are we going to establish real realities if we do not address the concerns about the way we relate to the people to whom we are asking questions. This links with the empirical findings about the need for exchange and reciprocity, where the community expresses the need to be able to give back, in the form of knowledge that they possess about their community. In the example given earlier of Ernesto Sirotli who wanted to help the African community by planting tomatoes, it was clear from his experience that listening and effectively

engaging was of great value. In a consultative process where information and knowledge was exchanged, Sirolli would have shared the knowledge of planting good tomatoes. In return, he would have learned that hippos were likely to invade the tomatoes in that area, and together, through a process of exchanging information and reciprocating, a suitable solution would have been found.

A practice of engaging and consulting that respects all actors and, uses tools and processes that involve everyone, such as the Ketso creative tool, clearly states that everyone's opinion is of value. Using this method to gather data for this research, and being able to gather rich data as a result, has proved the usefulness in a setting where real meanings are important. However, as in many research and consultative processes, using such methods does not guarantee full and unequivocal responses to research questions; they have their limitations as seen in earlier sections. What they do, however, is offer a chance for a better researched approach and for better results through the way in which they handle issues and participants. Using this design, and in particularly using Ketso tool in the way it has been used in this study, adds to the process of improving research participants' engagement and the results that emerge from that process have potential to contribute to methodological designs in community development research and related areas.

9.4 Reflection, limitations and recommendations

In this section, I reflect on the process, particularly evaluating the methodology in this research, I review the limitations and offer some recommendations for further work.

Reflecting on the research method

This research aimed to explore the practical aspects of international and community development, particularly seeking to examine the role of self-reliance from a communities-led perspective, and how communities and

individuals use their own knowledge in such a process. This required careful consideration of the method used in interacting with participants in order to elicit useful information. The decision to use Ketso was based on the capability the tool has to encourage participants to be creative, to engage and to share their ideas.

Ketso is designed in a way that can enable opinions to be acknowledged and values respected, and it involves everyone in a creative and non-threatening way. Using Ketso showed willingness to collaborate on my part as a researcher, and it appealed to the participants' sense of security as well as addressing concerns associated with group dynamics. Knowing that such key elements were incorporated in a discussion was important in providing a relatively safe position in which to express personal opinions, as demonstrated by the participants of the FG-T group. In this group, the participants were both male and female and, as indicated earlier, one appeared to be the leader and preferred to have a discussion rather than write ideas on the Ketso. The women in the group, who were younger, clearly opted for the Ketso approach, and this indicated to me that they may have something to say that they did not want to have other participants involved in. When I asked about their experience of using Ketso at the end of the meeting, the women said that they felt encouraged to state their opinion as this does not often happen during most meetings they attend. They said that the people who are more vocal at such meetings always took over the discussion and they would end up without a chance to speak. Using Ketso facilitated the sharing of views that were important to those participants and, in a case such as the one mentioned above, it had the chance to address their concerns about relationships such as those of power and cultural perspectives particularly those that relegated women to a lower position in a leadership hierarchy.

As a research method and tool for engagement, Ketso was useful in encouraging participants to view themselves as partners instead of just a source of information, which has potential to support their believe in the capabilities to contribute in other activities. In this research, participants were able to reflect on the way they had been able to engage with the process and to express themselves without fear of their ideas being ridiculed. Participants

commented that the chance to reflect and then write their ideas gave them a chance to reflect on what they needed to say. Participants felt that such a process demonstrated to them that their opinions were valued. From the various quotes seen, particularly in chapter six and seven, it was clear that the community had opinions about the development of their community and they were willing to express those opinions in the right environment. Ketso played a key role in enabling such an environment.

In this research, Ketso was used in focus groups with community groups. Another way that Ketso could have been used in this research would have been in a focus group that included different actors within a development process. This would be a good way to observe the way in which the actors would interact with each other and how they would discuss key themes that would be important to each separate group, in particular those that relate to working relationships. There are likely to be challenges with this approach due to established traditional ways of working in community development where there is a separation between the actors and their roles. It is likely to take a huge effort to convince participants of the usefulness of such a joint meeting, but it would be a useful way of introducing and encouraging working relationships that are inclusive.

Unstructured interviews were also selected for use in this research because they added value in promoting a conversation that could otherwise be difficult to achieve with other forms of interviews. Interviews that are structured or semi-structured have questions that ask about a perceived notion of what goes on or contain a hypothesis that seeks to be confirmed or rejected. This means that the interviewer has or needs to have adequate knowledge of or background in the subject in order to design relevant questions, or that there are specific areas of interest they intend to cover. These have their advantages, in that the discussion is focused on the intention, but they can be limiting in the sense that the responses are framed from the researcher's perspective based on the type of questions asked. Such a process is not open to an exploratory approach, where meanings and experiences are important. This study being exploratory in nature would not have benefitted from a structured or semi-structured question approach.

Unstructured interviews are not commonly used because of the challenge of being able to containing the discussion, which may lead into discussions that may not add value to the research process. But this is the very reason why unstructured interviews were useful for this research. To explore the realities for the participant, it was necessary to allow for that open flow of discussion, to discover what was important for the participants. To mitigate the process in general and to maintain the discussion within meanings in development matters, an overall discussion on intention and the type of ideas that would be of benefit was held. This method proved helpful in gaining useful information about meanings, perception and values, which was necessary to understand the lived world and the reality of the participant. Applying the principles of respecting, trusting and valuing those we engage with in a community development initiative has been mentioned in this study as a useful means towards meaningful progress. The same principles of engaging effectively with participants were applied in the selection of methods used in this research process.

Role of researcher

The role and involvement of the researcher in particularly a PAR process can be limiting and can possibly create gaps in the data. According to Baskerville (1999, 2001), an action researcher is face with several problems, for example, lack of partiality, lack of clarity due to various actors participating as well as some confusion due to the fluid nature of the process. The collaborative framework of action research diminishes the researcher's ability to control the process and to some extent, the outcome. This has potential to shift findings where pre-defined research plans move in different directions and keeping that commitment to the original pursuit while maintaining new directions becomes a necessary balance, says Baskerville (1999). Baskerville (1999), while investigating relevance of action research in information systems research found that despite these problems, it responds directly to the need for relevance for those who work closely with practitioner community. Within the social sciences, action research occupies a specific area defined by focus on

practical problems and this unique position allows it to produce relevant results that can inform knowledge (Baskerville 2001). Bearing this in mind, I was keenly aware of my role as a researcher, and how I could possibly affect the process and the outcome. While exploring the community groups in this study, it was necessary to aim for a degree of understanding and to effectively coordinate the different perspectives from the participants. This required a collaborative approach to the inquiry on my part as the researcher, and therefore my role became that of a facilitator and moderator, able to channel the ideas in a relevant direction, as suggested by O'Donoghue and Punch (2003). My aim in that role was to ensure there was balance between researcher and community participants and to resolve any potential practical problems in order to have successful outcomes.

Lessons learnt

The process of this research provided great opportunities to observe situations as they unfolded and it was a good opportunity to reflect on the lessons learnt. The key lessons are;

In the Ketso focus group meetings, it is important to have clear information with potential participants ahead of time, about what the focus group discussion was going to be about. This would avoid situations where there are likely to be misconceptions about the purpose of the focus group meeting, leading to discussions and ideas that would not be useful to the research process. This was seen in two of the focus groups which seemed to focus on specific group organisational challenges, rather than the overall development experience.

Another lesson from Ketso was the importance of reminding participants that the process was about their experiences in community development and not particularly about the Ketso tool. Although it was useful to observe the use of Ketso and to note important outcomes from that process, the research aim was about the practical aspects of community development. It was necessary to make that clear on an ongoing basis because the participants were using a tool

that was new to them and were likely to confuse the process to thinking that the aim was to learn about Ketso.

In a PAR process, participants need to be reminded that it is a collaborative process and that the researcher is working together with participants. This is important because most participants are used to traditional methods where the researcher takes the lead role and asks the questions, and the participants' responsibility is to answer the questions posed to them. This was observed in this research where the participants, particularly in focus groups kept waiting for guidance in the form of questions from the researcher. The lesson learnt in this situation is that it is necessary to have a clear conversation about how the focus group would be conducted and it should be reiterated throughout the meeting.

Limitations

There are conclusions drawn from this study, but those conclusions are limited in a number of ways. First, the data collected was within one context of community development and in two areas of one selected city. This does not claim to represent the wide range of adults who are in a community development setting and in a potential learning situation. It is therefore challenging to determine to what extent this can be used in a wider context. As well as this, the community groups and the participating members selected may not fully represent the range of different groups and their make-up, which may exist even in a small selected area. Other limitations may include the type of data gathered; for example, the unstructured interviews were carried out with individual representatives of development agency organisations who may have expressed opinions of a personal nature. These opinions, although useful for the process, may not have reflected the position of the organisation, and it may have been difficult to draw a distinction between a personal view and the view of the organisation. But as stated earlier, research can be a 'messy' process (Law, 2004); we do not always have perfect scenarios or deal with perfect settings, but we make the best of the information and the situation we

have. The information gathered in this research process can be useful as a starting point for related further work.

In order to enrich the research information gathered in this research, it was important to combine various data gathering methods. Triangulation was used with the aim of increasing the credibility of research and to give more detailed and balanced picture of the situation as suggested by Altrichter et al (2008). The authors suggest that triangulation has the potential to aid the cross checking of information in order to produce more reliable findings from data collection. Methodological triangulation approach, as suggested by Denzin (1978, 2006) was use in this research, using interviews, focus groups and review of documents where the combination of these instruments was useful in providing more detailed set of findings than could be arrived at using one instrument.

Triangulation however, has been criticised for assuming that sets of data acquired from a different approach can be unambiguously compared and regarded as equivalent in terms of the capacity to address a research question. This is likely to disregard different circumstances associated with specific methods, where, for example, findings from individual interviews and those from focus groups may differ as the former is likely to express views of a personal nature, rather than public views that may be expressed in a public arena such as a focus group (O'Donoghue and Punch 2003). However, combining the perspectives from the different sets of data and from different participants allowed the divergent and convergent themes to be observed more clearly, and the careful planning of the process was useful in ensuring that the information was responding to the aims of the study. The findings of this study are based on those specific settings mentioned, and those can be taken forward in further research as suggested below.

Recommendations for further research

This study can be taken forward in a number of ways in order to further enhance it, in the following ways.

A Ketso focus group involving participants from different sectors could be conducted. This would involve, for example, participants from NGOs, donors/funding organisations and community members. The participants can be selected from different development projects in order to draw from experiences in different settings and to be able to reflect and learn from possible similarities and differences of each situation. This would also serve as a useful way to observe how participants interact, and what converging or diverging themes and priorities would emerge, and how they would be dealt with.

A research could be designed so that it takes place over a longer period of time using Ketso. This period could be over, for example, a period of six months where focus group meetings would be held on a monthly basis. Changes in the way participants communicate and engage would be noted and the range and type of themes and ideas would be identified to see if or what changes would be observed.

Use of Ketso as a research method can be tested and compared by, for example its use in locations, context or type of development that are different from each other. This would include researching the use of Ketso in development practice where participants would be encouraged to use Ketso as part of their work practice, and this can be observed to identify how it works as a tool that supports engagement and participation of community members.

This research has suggested that there would be difficulty in replication and generalising the results, testing the use of Ketso in these different ways and assessing the outcomes could lead to establishing of key factors that are likely to impact collaborative development and ways of encouraging critical reflection and work towards self-reliance.

Personal reflection - Why are we not building our own bridges?

Returning to the initial question of; why we are not building our own bridges, I suggest that it is because we do not have the tools and methods that enable us to think in a way that empowers us to be critically reflective. By being able to think and reflect in this way, we can build incrementally on the success of each activity or project. Thinking in a critical way enables us to draw on what we know, what we experience and what we learn and then make a distinct decision based on our circumstances. Freedom to choose and the capability to do and to be are central to enabling reflective practice that can encourage people to work on a platform of exchange of information and knowledge. Each individual or community shares what they know, what they have experienced, what works and what does not. In this way, those involved can pick and choose what is suitable for them, and identify where help is required to support a process, that can develop into the next stage. This is a useful process in building self-reliance, as there are lessons to be learnt, that enable individuals and communities to deal with everyday life experiences. We can learn to use our knowledge and our positions to take forward the interests of our community and ourselves.

In relation to the process of learning as an everyday experience, I now reflect on my personal position.

I think about myself as an individual who has personal interests and ideas about the world, as well as obligations and commitments to those around me. As a woman, I am constantly faced with the challenges of gender equality that many women encounter on a regular basis. As an African woman, that is compounded further by race issues, real or perceived, that I and others experience on a regular basis. Living in a land other than the one that I was born in makes me a foreigner with cultural challenges to deal with, and language challenges where there is a lost intimacy with my own language and a degree of limitation with new languages. The end result is a feeling of being caught between two (or more) worlds and belonging to none. But I have had many life and career experiences and I am also an educator and researcher with something to contribute to the worlds that I am connected to. I cannot

allow the ideas of the person I am perceived by others to be to hold me back. Instead, I look beyond those perceptions and focus on what I can be and can do. Using what I am and what I know, I can connect to the different aspects of where I find myself - as a woman, an African, a foreigner, an educator, a researcher, a family member, a community member - to consider how those interactions can connect and be useful to others. I can be connected to others using what I can do and what I can share and become a bridge that connects others and that can have an impact on the connections that I make or will make in the future.

I use the analogy of a bridge that allows the users to come and go without interfering in their business. They use a particular bridge to get them from one point to another, which may be their final destination or may take them to another bridge to get them further forward, towards their destination. There are many bridges serving different purposes; some can carry heavy loads, while others are smaller and used only for crossing streams. Each serves the purpose of getting those crossing to the other side. This means we can all serve as bridges of whatever size, shape or purpose. We share and exchange what we know, and that can be used as information to get one person to cross over from where they are to the next 'bank' in their life.

It is important to build those bridges that connect us to others. If we think of who we are, the connections we have and what we can share as knowledge, then information and experiences become the bridges that others can use to support them to cross over. So, metaphorically, are we or have we built those bridges? In a literal sense, as seen earlier, freedom to do and to be will enable us to critically reflect on whether we need those physical bridges and how to build them.

Summary

This thesis asked a question about the way in which adults use their knowledge to improve their circumstances. The community development context was used to explore the way in which actors in that setting interact in the process of a

development intervention and this revealed a number of things. The first was that development is about freedom to choose what the communities want to do and to be. Denial of equality and justice stands in the way of that freedom and affects further choice. Human development through creating capabilities to do and to be is useful in its focus on people, but because it still maintains the element of one person giving and another receiving, it falls short in being able to truly liberate and create that freedom. Exchange of knowledge and information can take that process further through lifelong learning as a mediator for that exchange.

How the Monkeys Saved the Fish

The rainy season that year had been the strongest ever and the river had broken its banks. There were floods everywhere and the animals were all running up into the hills. The floods came so fast that many drowned except the lucky monkeys who used their proverbial agility to climb up into the treetops. They looked down on the surface of the water where the fish were swimming and gracefully jumping out of the water as if they were the only ones enjoying the devastating flood.

One of the monkeys saw the fish and shouted to his companion: "Look down, my friend, look at those poor creatures. They are going to drown. Do you see how they struggle in the water?" "Yes," said the other monkey. "What a pity! Probably they were late in escaping to the hills because they seem to have no legs. How can we save them?" "I think we must do something. Let's go close to the edge of the flood where the water is not deep enough to cover us, and we can help them to get out."

So the monkeys did just that. They started catching the fish, but not without difficulty. One by one, they brought them out of the water and put them carefully on the dry land. After a short time there was a pile of fish lying on the grass motionless. One of the monkeys said, "Do you see? They were tired, but now they are just sleeping and resting. Had it not been for us, my friend, all these poor people without legs would have drowned."

The other monkey said: "They were trying to escape from us because they could not understand our good intentions. But when they wake up they will be very grateful because we have brought them salvation." (African proverbs, sayings and stories, 2013)

(Traditional Tanzanian Folktale)

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Plain Language Statement (PLS) - Individual interviews

PhD Research, School of Education

The working title for this project is - exploring the importance of critical thinking in creating capabilities for self-reliance in international community development.

You are being invited to take part in this study. It is important for you to understand the reasons why the research is being done. Please take time to read the information below and ask questions if anything is not clear. You can also discuss it with others if you wish.

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of programmes such as capacity development that are used to support development initiatives. The study will look at the process of developing and implementing such programmes, as well as find out what changes have taken place that are directly related to such programmes. The study will also explore the types of skills learnt to establish if they are useful for a specific programme or they are skills that can be used for other purposes. The researcher will ask you to discuss your experience paying particular attention to what you think are the important aspects of the programme.

You have been selected to take part in this study because we believe that your experience will help this study to identify issues that need to be addressed in enabling successful development. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, I will ask you to sign the consent form. Even after you have accepted to take part, you are still free to withdraw at anytime and without giving reason. The interview will last no longer than an hour. The researcher will ask you to discuss your experience and may ask specific questions in order to clarify issues. The interview will be audio recorded. Once the interview is completed, the recorded material will be transcribed and used for the purpose of the study. The audio recordings and written notes will be destroyed at the end of 2015.

We will ensure that the information you give us is kept confidential. You will be identified by a pseudonym and any information about you will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised. The research report will be available at the University of Glasgow. The results of this study may also be presented at conferences and published in journals. In any of these cases, your identity will be kept confidential. The study is supported by funding from the Adam Smith Research Foundation. The study has been reviewed by the University of Glasgow, College of Social Sciences Ethics committee.

If you require further information, you may contact the researcher, Nancy Njiraini on 07981 293423, or n.njiraini.1@research.gla.ac.uk. If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research project you may contact the supervisors Prof. Alison Phipps - Alison.Phipps@glasgow.ac.uk or Dr. Niamh Stack - Niamh.Stack@glasgow.ac.uk or the Ethics Officer at the College of Social Sciences Dr Valentina Bold at valentina.bold@glasgow.ac.uk.

THANK YOU

Plain Language Statement (PLS) - Focus groups

PhD Research, School of Education

The working title for this project is - exploring the importance of critical thinking in creating capabilities for self-reliance in international community development.

You are being invited to take part in this study. It is important for you to understand the reasons why the research is being done. Please take time to read the information below and ask questions if anything is not clear. You can also discuss it with others if you wish.

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of programmes such as capacity development that are used to support development initiatives. The study will look at the process of developing and implementing such programmes, as well as find out what changes have taken place that are directly related to such programmes. The study will also explore the types of skills learnt to establish if they are useful for a specific programme or they are skills that can be used for other purposes. The researcher will ask you to discuss your experience paying particular attention to what you think are the important aspects of the programme.

You have been selected to take part in this study because we believe that your experience will help this study to identify issues that need to be addressed in enabling successful development. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, I will ask you to sign the consent form. Even after you have accepted to take part, you are still free to withdraw at anytime and without giving reason. The focus group meeting will last no longer than one and a half hours. The researcher will ask you to discuss your experience and may ask specific questions in order to clarify issues. The discussion will be audio recorded. Once the focus group meeting is completed, the recorded material will be transcribed and used for the purpose of the

study. The audio recordings and written notes will be destroyed at the end of 2015.

We will ensure that the information you give us is kept confidential. You will be identified by a pseudonym and any information about you will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised. The research report will be available at the University of Glasgow. The results of this study may also be presented at conferences and published in journals. In any of these cases, your identity will be kept confidential. The study is supported by funding from the Adam Smith Research Foundation. The study has been reviewed by the University of Glasgow, College of Social Sciences Ethics committee.

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THANK YOU

Consent Form



Consent Form

Working Title of Project:

The working title for this project is - exploring the importance of critical thinking in creating capabilities for self-reliance in international community development.

Name of Researcher: Nancy Njiraini

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. Understand that the interview will be audio taped; the transcribed and the records will be destroyed once the study is completed. Any publication arising from this research will refer to the interviewee by pseudonym.
4. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Person giving consent

Date

Signature

(If different from participant, eg Parent)

Researcher

Date

Signature

Unstructured interview guide

These will be unstructured interview questions based around some specific key areas although the participants will not be expected to only discuss these areas. The questions will ideally be used as prompts and the participants will be encouraged to discuss their experience as openly as they can.

- Tell me about your role in this process/programme
- Tell me about your organisation - what does it stand for, what are its aims.
- Show me the process of putting together/designing the programme.
- Describe the people/groups that you collaborate with in the process?
- How do you ensure that the people intended for the programme will benefit.
- Show me the measures you use to establish if the programme is effective.
- Show me what you would keep, change or improve in this process, how and why?
- What other groups would you like to work with either as partners in delivering the programme or participants?
- Describe the changes you saw during and after the programme. Tell me about the different types of changes - those you liked, those you did not like as well as those you would have liked to see.

Focus groups questions/themes guide

Focus group (Ketso) -guiding questions and theme ideas

These will be used to guide the focus group participants in thinking about the issues that this research is interested in. They should also help in forming ideas that can be used to start a theme on the Ketso tool. The questions are to be used as a guide only and participants will not be expected to only discuss these areas, they will be encouraged to discuss their experience as openly as they can.

Focus groups

- Tell me about the programme you were involved in.
- Why did you get involved, did you have a choice about participating?
- Tell me about the learning process, for example; did the instructor stand in front and teach, did they get you to participate, were there practical activities? And what did you feel about this way of learning and why?
- Show me some examples of what you have done or made and describe how you did that.
- Show me how you were involved in developing the programme, if not how would you have liked to be involved.
- Describe how you have used your skills or lessons recently or how you plan to do so in the future.
- Show me what you would keep, change or improve about the programme.
- What would you tell your friends/colleagues about the programme?

Example of Ketso Workshop Results - 1

This is simple record of the results of Ketso workshop

Ketso Workshop Results Simple	
Workshop Information	
Title:	Focus group – <u>Xxxxxx</u> community; water & sanitation
Date:	20 th March 2013
Location:	<u>xxxxxx</u> area, Nairobi
Facilitator:	Nancy Njiraini
Host:	
Number of participants:	
Information about participants:	Community members from <u>xxxxxxxxxxxx</u>
Legend	
Challenges, what can be improved, what can be better	What are the limitations, barriers – why
what is good, what is positive	Future plans, what can we do what ideas do we have
Water and sanitation	
Incomplete development of projects (poor planning)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the toilet are full with human waste, there is always an odour Sometimes makes the environment dirty when removing faeces from toilet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never thought of what would happen next – poor planning. Insufficient funds to the project.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an income generating activity for us Helps in bringing up and supporting other projects Empowering the youth to be creators and not seekers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tungependa kama tungewezekana watusaidie na iyo project... (we would like if possible for them to help us with the project.) Kitu inafact sana ni drainage system, ningependa maybe watuengese drainage ndio itupunguzie cholera. (The drainage system is poor, so I would like them to build us a good drainage to reduce cholera.) Improve the project by making use of the waste rather than having to dump it. Inform people on the ways of environment (conductive?)
	Notes
Project management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor development Ningependa pia sisi kama group pia tujionge tufanye change kama za late change in our community. (I would like that we as a group organise ourselves to make changes in our community) No adequate training in training in managing project Sometimes the training of managing the project moneywise to improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of money Assuming that maybe everyone has the knowledge on how to manage Lack of empowerment by the NGOs by training the group or at least a few of the members
Engagement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least should be involved in decision making to know what we want in common The person with special needs were not put to consideration since they must be assisted to also to the loo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people are not interested in inclusive programmes We can't communicate Wanfanya project na awamalizi. Hiyo ndio naweza ona ni shida. They start projects that they then do not complete) The NGOs apply for funds from donors on projects that feel are best decided in board rooms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has offered employment to some of the members They have helped with some ideas (to know how to manage waste) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To repair the toilet Watutafutie tanks za maji ndio tupate mahali tunaweza store maji safi (they should get us tanks for water storage) Build health facilities e.g hospitals to improve <u>medicare</u> encourage people to develop interest in group project
	Notes
Water	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water kiosk without water Poor toilet Lack of water It is quite expensive to empty the sanitation (toilets ??) when they are full with human waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't involve those who deal with water sometimes High level of illiteracy in the area

Example of Ketso Workshop Results - 2

Ketso Workshop Results Simple

This is simple record of the results of Ketso workshop - [redacted].

Workshop Information	
Title:	Focus group - [redacted] p group'
Date:	28 th March 2013
Location:	[redacted], Nairobi
Facilitator:	Nancy Njiraini
Number of participants:	4
Information about participants:	Community members - [redacted] community group'
Legend	
Difficulties, challenges, what is not working	Limitations, why are those things not working.
Positive, areas that are working well	way forward, new ideas, how to achieve our goals
additional comment	Important issues
Self-help community HIV community support group'	
NGO Relationship	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funders to reach community level • NGOs not open, they tend to use us • NGO not to mis-use funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of co-operation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some are good, others not so good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to write own proposals encourage openness e.g. 'lea toto' • Government involvement
Teaching young generation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding will reduce poverty which increases (poverty) HIV • Teaching will increase awareness and reduce poverty • Reduce HIV due to knowledge * Engage together, encourage involvement • Teach skills to reduce issues e.g theft * Zina rudisha support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also help to teach peer group • Enhance young people skills
Expand business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting people to understand about HIV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of knowing (HIV) status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self employment and create employment • Will help generate income for sustaining family • Income to help with school fees Keep them busy • Join with others women to support them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand out of Nairobi • Funding for business
Building Support in rural areas in creating awareness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to avoid suspicion * Show people that the project is genuine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build support group in rural areas * Teach about human rights especially women • Create awareness about issues of urban areas * Avoid rejection – awareness • Future generations learn about their origin * Economic awareness by example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Example of Ketso Excel representation of data - 1

Date	Lesson	Felt	Branch	Leaf	Water and sanitation	Swelich	Sorted (Felt-Branch-	Charts & Tables: Open new workbook
Felt	Branch	Leaf Type	un leaf)	Import	Move or Insert	Diagram	Blank	Clear
Siral Camm	Engaqement	Future planz, ideaz	To repair the toilet					
Siral Camm	Engaqement	Future planz, ideaz	They zhauld get ur tanks for water					
Siral Camm	Engaqement	Future planz, ideaz	Build facilitaz o.q hospitals to improve					
Siral Camm	Engaqement	Future planz, ideaz	Encourage people to develop interest					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Difficultiaz, what'z n	When the toilet are full with human					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Difficultiaz, what'z n	Some timoz makez the environment					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Paritivor	It iz an income generating activity for					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Paritivor	Helpz in bringiq up and zuppertiq					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Paritivor	Empoweriq the youth to be creatoz			1		
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	3 Challonqz, limitat	Never thought of what would happen					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	3 Challonqz, limitat	inufficient fundz to the projezt					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Future planz, ideaz	We would like if pazzible for them to					
Siral Camm	Incomplete development	Future planz, ideaz	The drainaqe zyztem iz poor, zol would					

Example of Ketso Excel representation of data - 2

Details Legend Felt Branches Leaf +				Water and sanitation	Spellcheck	Sorted (Felt-Branch-Colour)	Charts & Tables: Opens new workbook
Felt	Branch	Leaf Type	Participants' Idea (written on leaf)	Important	Moves us forward	Disagreement	Blank Icon
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Difficulties, what's not v	At least should be involved in decision making to know what we want in common.				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Difficulties, what's not v	The person with special needs were not put into consideration since they must be assisted to also use the loo.				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Positives	I thas offered employment to some of the members.		1		
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Positives	They have helped with some ideas (to know how to manage waste).				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	3 Challenges, limitation	Some people are not interested in inclusive programmes.		1		
Sisal Commu	Engagement	3 Challenges, limitation	We can't communicate.				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	3 Challenges, limitation	They start projects that they do not then complete.				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	3 Challenges, limitation	The NGOs apply for funds from donors on projects that feel are best decided in boardrooms.				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Future plans, ideas	To repair the toilet				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Future plans, ideas	They should get us tanks for water storage				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Future plans, ideas	Build facilities e.g hospitals to improve medicare				
Sisal Commu	Engagement	Future plans, ideas	Encourage people to develop interest in group project				
Sisal Commu	Incomplete development projects	Difficulties, what's not v	When the toilet are full with human waste, there is always an odour.				
Sisal Commu	Incomplete development projects	Difficulties, what's not v	Sometimes makes the environment dirty when removing faeces from toilet				
Sisal Commu	Incomplete development projects	Positives	It is an income generating activity for us				
Sisal Commu	Incomplete development projects	Positives	Helps in bringing up and supporting other projects				
Sisal Commu	Incomplete	Positives	Empowering the youth to be creators and		1		

Details Legend Felt Branches Leaf +				Water and sanitation	Spellcheck	Sorted (Felt-Branch-Colour)	Charts & Tables: Opens new workbook
Felt	Branch	Leaf Type	Participants' Idea (written on leaf)	Important	Moves us forward	Disagreement	Blank Icon
Sisal Commu	Project management	3 Challenges, limitation	Lack of money				
Sisal Commu	Project management	3 Challenges, limitation	Assuming that maybe everyone has the knowledge on how to manage.				
Sisal Commu	Project management	3 Challenges, limitation	Lack of empowerment by the NGOs				
Sisal Commu	Project management	3 Challenges, limitation	Should train the group or at least a few of the members.				
Sisal Commu	Project management	Future plans, ideas	Also train on management skills.				
Sisal Commu	Project management	Future plans, ideas	offer the members with other options like micro-finance.				
Sisal Commu	Water	Difficulties, what's not v	Water kiosk without water				
Sisal Commu	Water	Difficulties, what's not v	poor toilet				
Sisal Commu	Water	Difficulties, what's not v	lack of water				
Sisal Commu	Water	Difficulties, what's not v	it is quite expensive to empty the sanitation (toilets??) when they are full with human waste				
Sisal Commu	Water	Difficulties, what's not v	We have a water kiosk but it has no tank, that is the biggest problem.				
Sisal Commu	Water	Positives	has reduced the level of crime in the area				
Sisal Commu	Water	Positives	at least we use the water kiosk as an office				
Sisal Commu	Water	Positives	fises (waste??) to make fertilizer				
Sisal Commu	Water	Positives	one of those is water ???				
Sisal Commu	Water	3 Challenges, limitation	Don't involve those who deal with water sometimes				
Sisal Commu	Water	3 Challenges, limitation	high level of illiteracy in the area		1		
Sisal Commu	Water	Future plans, ideas	to build a shower because we don't have one		1		
Sisal Commu	Water	Future plans, ideas	Good clean water				
Sisal Commu	Water	Future plans, ideas	develop waste collection centres				
Sisal Commu	Water	Future plans, ideas	Engage fully with water suppliers so after the water kiosk, they come in with the water				
Sisal Commu	Water	Future plans, ideas	We want to build a good water kiosk				

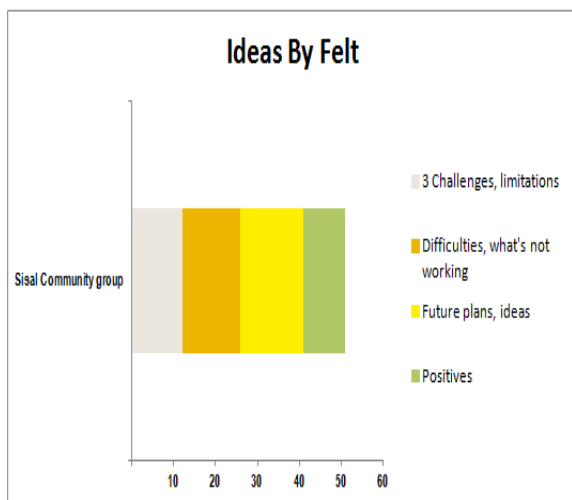
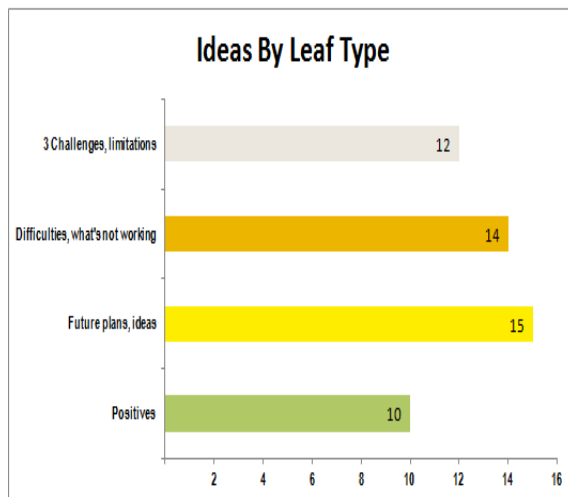
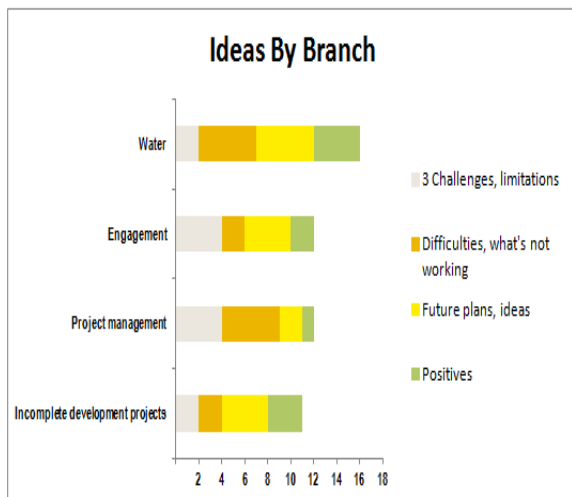
Example of Graphs generated through Ketso - 1

Sisal Community Group - Water and sanitation

0th March 2013

Total Ideas

51

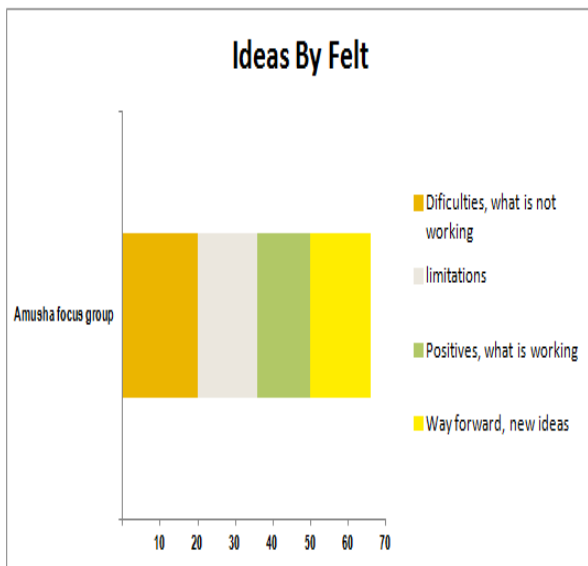
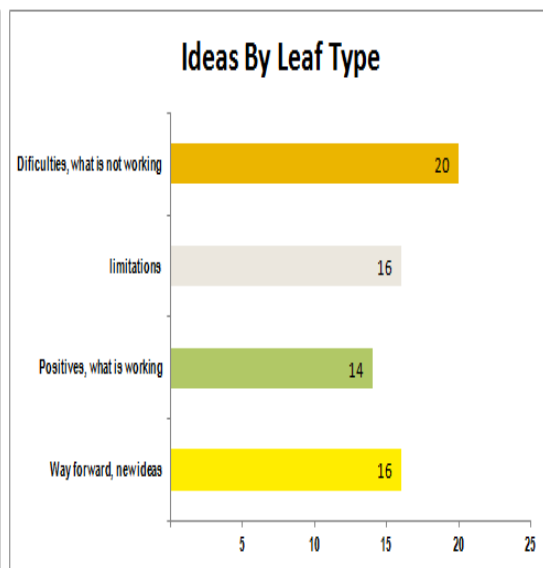
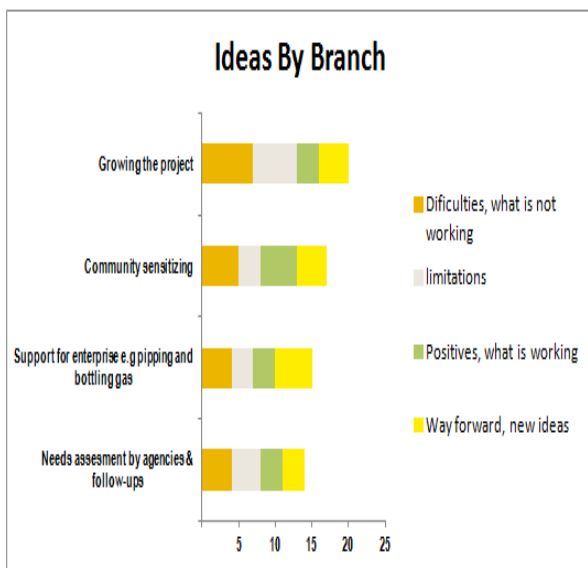


Example of Graphs generated through Ketso - 2

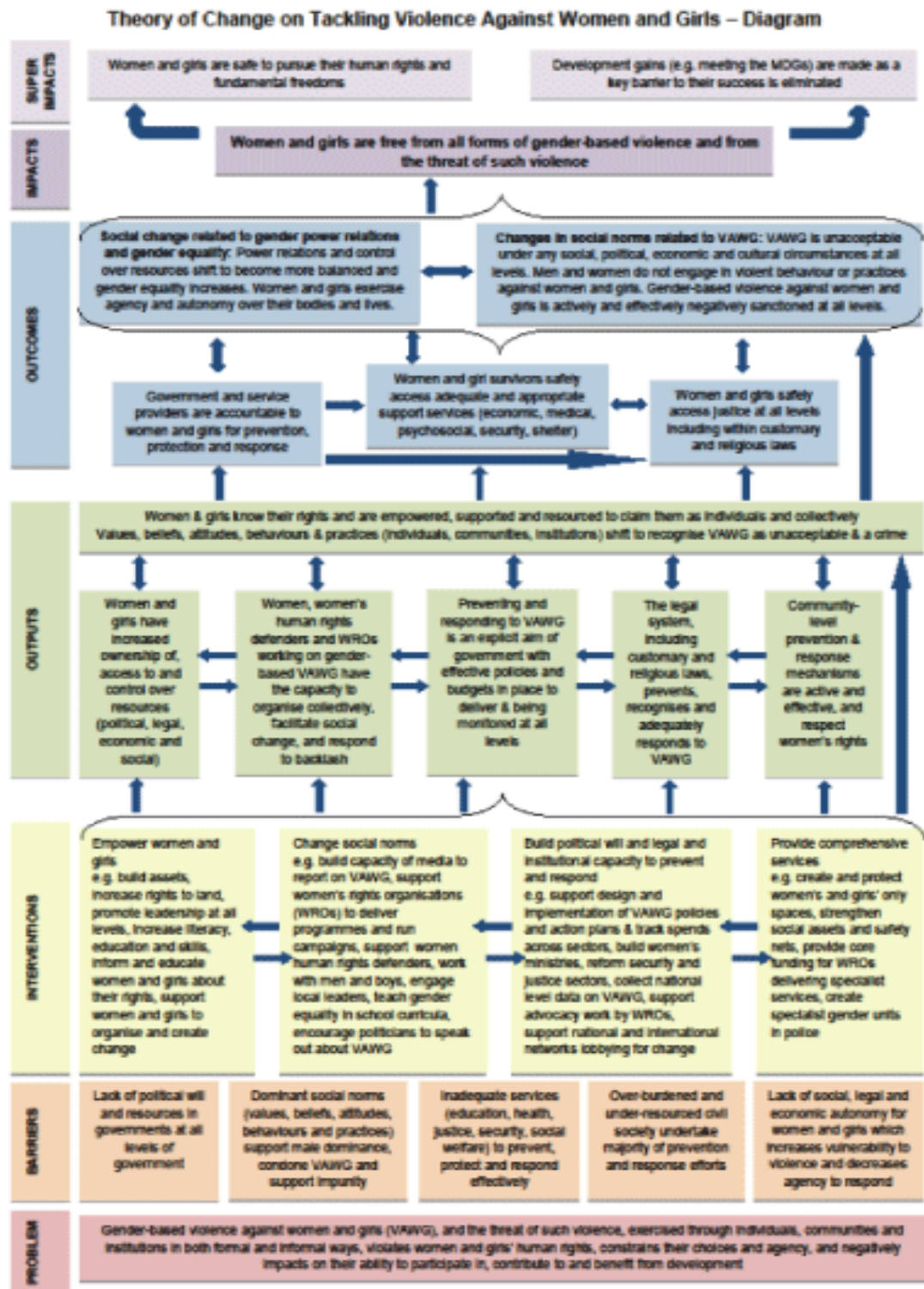
Overview - Sanitary and bio gas project

19th March

Total Ideas



Example of ToC



MDG Goals



Local community project



Local community sanitation project



Local community housing project - 1



Local community housing project - 2



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