

**GOODBYE TO PROJECTS?  
THE INSTITUTIONAL IMPACTS OF A LIVELIHOOD APPROACH ON  
DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS**

**RESEARCH PROJECT NO. R7908**

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**A livelihoods-grounded audit of the  
Community-Based Planning action  
research project in South Africa**

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## **BACKGROUND TO PROJECT AND WORKING PAPER SERIES**

This paper is one in a series of working papers prepared under a research project entitled: ***Goodbye to Projects? The Institutional Impacts of a Livelihood Approach on development interventions.***

This is a collaborative project between the Bradford Centre for International Centre for Development<sup>1</sup> (BCID) with the Economic and Policy Research Centre (EPRC), Uganda; Khanya – managing rural change, South Africa; and, Mzumbe University (formerly the Institute for Development Management (IDM)), Tanzania. The project is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) under their Economic and Social Research Programme (ESCOR).

Approaches to projects and development have undergone considerable change in the last decade with significant policy shifts on governance, gender, poverty eradication, and environmental issues. Most recently this has led to the adoption and promotion of the sustainable livelihood (SL) approach. The adoption of the SL approach presents challenges to development interventions including: the future of projects and programmes, and sector wide approaches (SWAPs) and direct budgetary support.

This project intends to undertake an innovative review of these issues. Central to this will be to question how a livelihood approach is actually being used in a range of development interventions. This will be used to identify and clarify the challenges to the design, appraisal and implementation of development interventions and changes required from the adoption of a livelihoods approach.

The research was conducted in two phases. The first phase consisted of general and country reviews on SL and development interventions. The second phase of the research involved the compilation of ten detailed case studies of development interventions in Uganda, Tanzania and South Africa. These case studies compare and contrast the implementation of a range of sector wide approaches, programmes and projects all developed with a livelihoods-orientation.

Each case study intervention was examined through what might be termed as a ‘sustainable livelihoods (SL)-grounded audit’, which uses sustainable livelihoods ‘principles’ as the basis. The results of this analysis offer useful guidance on the opportunities and challenges faced by development practitioners in operationalizing sustainable livelihoods approaches.

**This paper ‘A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Community-Based Planning (CBP) Project in South Africa’ is the sixth in the series of project working papers.**

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly Development and Project Planning Centre (DPPC)

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## **PROJECT WORKING PAPERS TO DATE**

- 1. Annotated bibliography on livelihood approaches and development interventions.**
- 2. Appraisal of the use of livelihoods approaches in South Africa.**
- 3. Review of approaches to development interventions in Tanzania: From projects to livelihoods approaches.**
- 4. Review of development interventions and livelihoods approaches in Uganda**
- 5. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Participatory Planning for District Development within Capacity 21 programme (Tanzakesho) in Tanzania.**
- 6. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Community-Based Planning (CBP) action research project in South Africa.**
- 7. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Agricultural Sector Programme Support (ASPS) in Tanzania.**
- 8. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland and its Catchment (SMUWC) project in Tanzania.**
- 9. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Magu District Livelihoods and Food Security Project (MDLFSP) in Tanzania.**
- 10. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Sexual Health and Rights Programme (SHARP!) in Lesotho and South Africa.**
- 11. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Training for Environmental and Agricultural Management (TEAM) project in Lesotho.**
- 12. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Programme (SCLP) in South Africa.**

**13. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) in Uganda**

**14. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the AIDS/STD programme in Uganda.**

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For more details on the project and copies of recent publications please consult the project's web site:

<http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/dppc/GTP/goodbye/html>

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## 1. The SL-grounded audit of development interventions

The cases studies in this research were chosen for inclusion following a first phase review of the use of livelihoods approaches in Tanzania, Uganda and Southern Africa. Data was collected using a number of methods including questionnaires, semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, collection and review of process documentation and workshop activity.

All ten case studies have been analysed according to what we have termed the ‘SL-grounded audit’ so that the emerging comparative lessons can be compared. Each study is divided into two sections: the first a general introduction to the intervention; and the second, a structured response to a series of questions adapted from the SL-principles as defined by Carney (2002) in Box 1. SL principles are one element of sustainable livelihoods approaches. This research adopts these principles as a structuring tool and as means of pinpointing the practical implications of adopting a sustainable livelihoods approach to development.

### **Box 1. SLA principles defined by Carney (2002)**

Sustainable livelihoods approaches: Progress and possibilities for change, p14-15, London: Department for International Development

Normative principles:

**People-centred:** sustainable poverty elimination requires respect for human freedom and choice. People- rather than the resources, facilities or services they use- are the priority concern. This may mean supporting resource management or good governance, for example but the underlying motivation of supporting livelihoods should determine the shape and purpose of action.

**Empowering:** change should result in an amplified voice opportunities and well-being for the poor.

**Responsive and participatory:** poor people must be key actors in identifying and addressing livelihood priorities. Outsiders need processes that enable them to listen and respond to the poor.

**Sustainable:** there are four key dimensions to sustainability-economic, institutional, social and environmental sustainability. All are important-a balance must be found between them.

Operational principles:

**Multi-level and holistic:** micro-level activity and outcomes should inform the development of policy and an effective governance environment. Macro- and meso-level structures should support people to build on their strengths.

**Conducted in partnership:** partnerships can be formed with poor people and their organisations, as well as with public and private sector. Partnerships should be transparent agreements based upon shared goals.

**Disaggregated:** it is vital to understand how assets, vulnerabilities, voice and livelihood strategies differ between disadvantaged groups as well as between men and women in these groups. Stakeholder and gender analysis are key tools.

**Long-term and flexible:** poverty reduction requires long-term commitment and a flexible approach to providing support.

Each case study follows the structure detailed below:

**Description of the intervention:** this includes a chronological description of the evolution of the particular intervention and details the main stakeholders and activities

undertaken in implementation. Original logframes and planning documents have been reviewed where possible.

**Impact:** Assessment of the impact of interventions relates to the success or failure of an intervention to achieve the outputs or outcomes that were the main focus of the intervention. The effect of this is that our understanding of impact is somewhat limited and partial. The methodology used in this research project did not allow for significant impact assessment with intervention beneficiaries at the micro-level (although this was done on a small-scale in most of the case studies). This section also includes some assessment of the costs of the intervention balanced against the number of people who benefit from it.

### **Poor People as focus**

Do, or did, the objectives of the intervention include a mention of people and their livelihoods?

How central is this to the intervention's objectives?

How much were household livelihoods a focus during implementation?

### **Participation**

What type of participation was used at each stage of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

How and when did this participation occur?

What incentives were there for people to participate?

### **Partnerships**

What was the type of partnership and collaboration between these organisations at micro-meso-macro?

Who owned the project?

### **Holistic approach**

How holistic was the analysis used in design?

How does the plan for the intervention fit into the broader development plan?

How does the intervention coordinate with other development interventions in the area?

### **Policy and institutional links**

How integrated was the intervention with existing institutional structures?

What evidence is there that the intervention addressed linkages between policy at micro, meso and macro levels and across sectors?

### **Building on strengths**

Does the intervention build on existing strengths at the different levels?

### **Dynamic and flexible**

Did the objectives and activities of the intervention change to respond to a changing environment and/or demands?

What further interventions have arisen from the intervention? How did this take place?

### **Accountability/ responsiveness**

How were those implementing the intervention accountable to the public and intervention's beneficiaries?

Who reports to who and what about?

Do beneficiaries (micro) or partners (meso) have an influence on the intervention and how?

### **Sustainability**

#### Economic

Is the system able to be sustained financially?

Are the "technologies/services" economically viable for beneficiaries?

#### Social

Are vulnerable groups able to access and use effectively the systems of the intervention?

Are the institutions created/used by the intervention able to sustain themselves beyond the life of the intervention?

#### Environmental

Are the technologies/services environmentally beneficial?

Are the systems (meso level) beneficial/neutral?

#### Institutionally

Are the capacities and systems established in such a way so that the system will continue (beyond the life of the intervention)?

Will they continue to generate the outcomes envisaged?

### **Critical factors**

What were the critical factors affecting the performance of this intervention?

### **Comparing Cases**

Each case study can be read as a stand-alone document as the SL-grounded audit is in itself a useful means of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of an intervention. However, the broader aim of this research is to compare lessons across all ten case studies in order to identify more generally the challenges and opportunities faced by development practitioners in operationalising a sustainable livelihoods approach.

## **2.0 COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING PROJECT- SOUTH AFRICA**

### **2.1 Description of the intervention<sup>2</sup>**

The Community Based Planning Project (CBP) is a 4-country action research project involving South Africa, Uganda, Ghana and Zimbabwe, and explores three main themes:

- the promotion of decentralised approaches to services and for planning
- the promotion of empowerment, involving use of participatory methodologies
- an emerging body of work in the promotion of sustainable livelihoods approaches.

CBP is managed by Khanya (South Africa) and is founded on research carried out between 1998-2000 on 'Institutional Support for Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa', which demonstrated the necessity of improving the linkages between micro level (community) and meso level (local government and district service providers). It is funded by DfID Rural Livelihoods Department but has also drawn in funds from NGOs, partners and multilateral donors. For the purposes of this case study, the work of the project in South Africa will be the main focus, but it is important to recognise the close international co-operation and learning that was an integral part of the project.

CBP has been in operation since 2001 and was due to conclude at the end of 2002 but has now been extended to the end of the financial year 2003/4. It focuses primarily on increasing the ability of poor people to influence the resource allocation system at the local level, which is seen as being necessary for the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

The goal of the project according to the original logframe (see appendix 2.2) was: 'by 2005, community-based planning systems have been developed and are operating in 4 African countries which are integrated into the local government planning and resource allocation system'. The purpose is "Realistic plans developed in each country for implementation or piloting of community-based planning systems, which participating institutions are committed to take forward".

Evaluation reports show that the project met and exceeded its purpose and project documents state that the project had already achieved this in the first half of 2002, and with particular success in Uganda and South Africa (Khanya 2002). Stated project outputs were met rapidly in South Africa and the project was able to fully implement the CBP methodology in Mangaung Local Municipality and to extend the work to other areas of South Africa, such as Limpopo Province.

### ***Activities***

The CBP project was launched in June 2001 with a series of workshops in each country reviewing best community-based planning practice. Around 40 participants were involved in each workshop and included project partners, donor representatives, national and regional government officials and international and local NGOs. Following the

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<sup>2</sup> Khanya are both project managers of CBP and partners in this research. Therefore, Anna Toner of BCID undertook the data collection and analysis in this case study in order to maximise its independence. Full access to project documentation was given and an e-mailed questionnaire sent to CBP partners in October 02. Interviews with the project management team were undertaken in October 2002.

national workshops a cross-country meeting was convened in South Africa in July 2001 to bring together project partners, where the core approach and methodology were developed. Based on this, partners from Uganda and SA met to develop a core manual, which was provided to all partners for local adaptation.

From September 2001 the CBP methodology was piloted. In South Africa an adapted ward planning manual was produced and ward plans were produced covering all of Mangaung Municipal area. In Mangaung the CBP involved a week-long process of community meetings, collective participatory analytical activities (such as livelihoods analysis) service providers interviews, development of vision, goals, strategies and projects/activities. Submissions were also drawn up for the local government plan (IDP). Successful ward plans were found to require dedicated local champions, integration with and recognition of government annual budgeting process, political support and a good relationship between councillor, ward committee and ward. Ward plans were allocated R50 000 to begin implementation. Examples of activities funded include job creation schemes, cleaning the environment and HIV/AIDS projects.

Learning from experience in other countries was a major theme of the CBP project and this has been continued through study visits to India in September 2001, to Bolivia and Sao Paulo in May 2002 and to Bushenyi District in Uganda, which, like Mangaung, was in the process of piloting it's own version of the CBP methodology (Khanya 2002).

Both pilots in South Africa and Uganda were independently evaluated in October 2002 and a major workshop was held at the end of October to share lessons with policy makers and between project partners (Marais & Botes 2002).

The project continues to expand in SA . A national steering committee has also been convened to share lessons at the macro-level, and a project has been funded by four donors to extend to 8 municipalities in 2003/4 prior to national rollout in 2004

### ***Stakeholders***

In South Africa the key stakeholders in CBP are:

- Khanya, both as overall project managers and as local facilitators;
- Mangaung Municipality;
- Ward committee members, residents, service providers, CBOs and NGOs have all been local stakeholders in the development and implementation of ward planning processes. It should be noted that 'residents' as a general category were represented at meetings by people from a range of livelihood groupings;
- The national Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG).

With the establishment of a national Steering Committee, new stakeholders are the Provincial Department of Local Government and Housing, SA Local Government Association, Independent Development Trust, Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality and Ethekwini Municipality (Durban).

### **Beneficiaries**

All of the above mentioned stakeholders have the possibility of deriving benefits from the CBP project.

- Khanya as the successful managers of a useful and well-recognised project, the Municipality as a means of improving service provision and resource allocation to all members of the community.
- Ward committee members, residents and service providers all potentially benefit from having their voices heard and if the system is fully integrated, from working in partnership with local government.
- DPLG are interested in seeing how to build stronger participatory processes into local government planning, and more recently how to operationalise the ward committee system<sup>3</sup>

### **Costs**

DFID's Rural Livelihoods Department originally awarded £259,779 for the operation of the CBP project, although some additional funds have been granted to ensure that the benefits of the project are captured and scaled up in the longer term. Additional funds were drawn in from Mangaung Municipality of R2.5 million<sup>4</sup> to cover the cost of local facilitation, implementing the planning and providing R50 000 to each ward for implementation. The original bid recognized the contribution that would be made through the staff time of participants.

Essentially CBP funds were used to kick-start a system that is to be driven by local government partners, and therefore integrated into existing funding streams. CBP project funds were used to effect this integration through study visits, testing and developing improved community-planning methodologies and learning exchanges

## **2.2 Impact**

In South Africa the CBP project both met and exceeded the original purpose as set out in the logical framework. This document stated that by Dec 2002, funding should have been committed to the implementation of community-based planning. In fact, full implementation of the system was achieved early in 2002. As mentioned above, efforts are continuing within Mangaung Municipality in revising the CBP methodology and implementation. In addition a national working group has been established to lead in extending the use of CBP in South Africa.

At a local level, evaluation reports indicate high levels of support for the process, after some initial scepticism in some quarters (Marais & Botes 2002). In common with many interventions it is difficult to tell what impact has been made by the intervention at the local level in general. For instance what is the level of awareness of CBP amongst ward residents as a whole? The impact at the local level may also take a number of years to be fully recognized as the processes become fully integrated and refined.

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<sup>3</sup> Eg see Minister's speech at CBP Workshop 29-30 October 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Approximately \$250 000

Many wards found the process to have encouraged ‘community empowerment’ and some schemes have been conducted on the initiative of the ward committees outside of the wider CBP process such as home-based care, sewing projects and sports clubs (Marais & Botes 2002)

**Table 2.1 Summary of progress against outputs (drawn from CBP Quarterly Report July 2003)**

<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b> By June 2002 (note project now extended to March 2004):	<b>Progress as at 31 March 2003</b>
1 Start-up effective with teams operational and case studies selected	1.1 Two case study sites selected/agreed by hosts 1.2 Consultants commissioned and workshops arranged	1.1 Case studies selected as Madhya Pradesh and Bolivia 1.2 Consultants commissioned in all 4 countries and first phase of in-country work completed
2 Methodology finalised and understood by participants	2.1 Team able to adapt methodology for case study	2.1 Core methodology developed for participating country case studies (Aug 01) 2.2 Generic CBP manual developed, and adapted version produced in all 4 countries (Sep 01). 2.3 Revised manual produced based on experience and results of evaluations (Nov 02). 2.4 Training of Trainers manual developed (Jan 03)
3 Case studies completed, clarifying best practice lessons from case studies and recommendations	3.1 Report on existing country experience produced for each participating country 3.2 Report on each of 2 case studies produced identifying learnings	3.1 4 country case studies completed and written up (July-Aug 01). 3.2 Visits to India and Bolivia completed and written up (Oct 01 and May 02). 3.3 Draft country reports produced documenting what happened in project and lessons learned (Aug 01) and early 2003. 3.4 Work started on a comparative report on lessons across the 4 countries
4 Learnings amongst partners workshopped and disseminated in-country	4.1 Workshop happens 4.2 Reference group meets in-country to discuss findings	4.1 All countries have held workshops, and country reports have been produced and disseminated. 4.2 Reference groups have met regularly in Uganda, SA and Zimbabwe and are being incorporated into on-going programmes 4.3 Exchange visit happened for facilitators from SA to Uganda in April 2002, from Uganda to Zimbabwe and Ghana in September 2002. 4.4 Learnings from methodology workshopped at 3 partner meetings (Aug 01, July 02, Nov 02) 4.5 Second national workshops held in SA (Oct 02) and in Zimbabwe (Jan 03).
5 Implementation plans developed which reflect learning and are refined by comments from collaborating partners	5.1 Plans produced for all 4 countries 5.2 Proposals made for how policy should be modified	5.1 Pilots planned in all 4 countries 5.2 National rollout planned in Uganda and SA (see output 8)
<b>Unplanned outputs</b>		
6 Pilots run and methodology adapted		6.1 Pilots run in one district in Uganda, and 2 districts in SA, Zimbabwe and Ghana.
7 Methodology applied in all of at least one local government area in each country		7.1 Full implementation in one city in SA (Mangaung/Bloemfontein), one rural district in Uganda (Bushenyi), one rural district in Zimbabwe, and 2 rural districts in Ghana covering 2 million people 7.2 Rollout of HPPG in all districts of Uganda (first indications that 30% of the country has applied it at parish level) 7.3 Programme developed in SA for rollout to 8 municipalities and national guidelines, which will to start next quarter.

<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b> By June 2002 (note project now extended to March 2004):	<b>Progress as at 31 March 2003</b>
8 National policy adapted to incorporate CBP		8.1 HPPG for Uganda incorporates CBP methodology and being rolled out nationally under LGDP1/2 (including DFID funding). 8.2 KPIs for DPLG in South Africa include CBP – national Steering Committee leading on stage 2 which includes development of national guidelines 8.3 Zimbabwe national CBP Steering Committee established, aiming for national guidelines in 2003. Pillar in decentralisation policy added to include CBP.

The strength of the partnerships within CBP has been a key factor in its success. Through working with the project Mangaung Municipality were able to target one of their own strategic priorities - that of making local planning more responsive to the wider community, and particularly the poorest and most excluded. They took the risk of committing R2.5 million of their own funds to support the process, and undertake a very extensive and politically sensitive process right across the municipality, rather than just piloting in 3 wards. Therefore there was a significant political commitment and willingness to innovate.

The drive and focus of Khanya as project managers and local facilitators appears to have been of key importance in meeting and going beyond stated outputs. The fact that they had hands-on experience of doing the CBP also contributed to their ability to act as project managers. In addition the fact that they were involved in developing the overall 5 year strategic plan for the Municipality (this happened after the start of CBP) also strengthened the impact.

There was also a very committed champion in the IDP Manager of Mangaung, who personally took charge of the CBP process.

CBP operates specifically to link the meso to the micro level and as such has strengthened capacity for communication between the micro and meso levels in Mangaung Municipality. The capacity to conduct research and refine community-based planning methodologies has also been increased in both municipal government and at the ward committee level.

The extension of the project and the formation of a national steering committee puts in place the link to the macro-level<sup>5</sup>. As an international project operating in four countries the project has also been effectively linked to the international macro-level. This has increased the capacity of individuals and organisations to learn internationally and to share lessons more widely.

### ***Cost-effectiveness***

Over the four countries the actual CBP project has cost £259,000. In addition, resources were drawn in by partners in the form of both staff time and financial resources.

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<sup>5</sup> Note that the CBP methodology has also been incorporated into the Uganda Harmonised Participatory Planning Guidelines, so impacting on the national sub-district planning policy in Uganda.

In South Africa, Mangaung Municipality funded the facilitation of the CBP planning, provided 30 facilitators, and offered each ward approximately \$5000 to spend directly on their plans, amounting to \$250 000 in total.

It is not possible in this study to isolate a specific figure for the South African costs, as the entire project was managed from South Africa. However estimates in project quarterly reports suggest that around 2 million people have been covered by the project (around 800,000 in South Africa). If the CBP system remains fully integrated, funded in and continues to spread to other areas, then the CBP project will have proved a cost-effective means of establishing a system.

A very crude calculation suggests that the actual CBP project (discounting funds drawn in by partners) cost £0.17 per head.

### **2.3 Poor People as focus**

The CBP project, by its own definition, takes a sustainable livelihoods approach in its design and implementation. What this means in practice is that it is designed to provide answers to the six governance issues developed by Khanya as important for implementation of an SL approach (Khanya 2001) and this project in particular targeted achieving the first of these (“people active and involved in managing their own development, claiming their rights and exercising their responsibilities”, and the third “services at local government level effective, responsive, accessible, and coordinated effectively, whether public or private”).

The CBP methodology developed by this project includes livelihoods analysis undertaken with different ‘livelihoods’ and social groupings. The livelihoods analysis included is necessarily brief and based on the self-reporting of participants as to the nature of their assets, vulnerabilities, opportunities and preferred outcomes. That said, CBP is about improving the linkage between livelihoods and various governmental planning structures to make them more people-centred. Other tools used look at the constraints and opportunities provided by policies, institutions and practices, and these are all used to plan in a strengths-based way.

### **2.4 Participation**

A critical pillar of CBP is the need to increase poor people’s participation in order to enable them to influence resource allocation. In the CBP methodology participation is enabled by the construction of a plan, at ward level in South Africa, for implementation of a ‘community vision’. Different livelihoods groups, service providers and elected and appointed officials are represented in the process, which lasts from 2-5 days (depending on the adaptation of the methodologies between countries).

The CBP project set out to improve on ‘ad-hoc’ and unreplicable PRA attempts at community-based planning. Whilst the methodology uses PRA tools and has developed new tools, the vital difference is the recognition that community-based planning needs to ‘fit’ into established hierarchies of local and national government, in order to form a

bridge between the micro and the meso levels. The project aims to establish systems of interactive participation between government and residents, which brings about a context in which self-mobilization of residents can occur side-by-side.

It is unclear whether the planning process derived through CBP is adequately pro-poor or inclusive. The process adopts 'PRA-style' techniques and thereby attracts most of the criticisms commonly levelled at such processes: that they are too easily captured by local elites, that they are extractive (despite being dressed in the language of empowerment) and that most marginalised groups still face barriers in attending. However, the CBP methodology does attempt to identify the most marginalised groups and the South African evaluation does conclude that the aspirations of the poor have influenced the plans that were produced by wards.

The report by Marais & Botes (2002) mentions that some facilitators and councillors questioned the use of PRA techniques, which were not viewed as being appropriate for former white and urban township areas. Concern was also expressed that 'people are bombarded with several of these participatory processes but nothing ever happens. People are tired of being called to participate without delivery' (Marais & Botes 2002). However, in the case of CBP, participation brings a 'reward' in the form of a R50 000 grant to the ward.

It is possible for a project to aim for interactive participation or self-mobilization, but to end up with functional or consultative participation in reality. This study has not been extensive enough, nor have CBP processes been in operation for long enough to conclude on the type of participation that has been achieved.

Putting aside the criticisms outlined above the CBP project does represent a pragmatic attempt to institutionalise a link in the planning process between the micro and meso levels of government. These processes have been previously overwhelmingly 'top-down' and CBP therefore offers a significant step towards addressing this situation. It recognises the need to reconcile the demands for replicability with intensity and reach of participation. The early experience shows that the methodology can be used across whole districts rather than in scattered pilot villages.

This is not to say that it is without problems. The recent evaluation report from Uganda remained concerned about the sustainability of the methodology and a wish by parishes to have more feedback about their plans (Androa 2002). However, considering the short timescale in which CBP has been operational these concerns may be addressed in further planning cycles and as confidence and experience of the methodology increases.

In South Africa, the evaluation reports show a great degree of satisfaction with the CBP process. However, in this case the evidence of wider scale satisfaction and representation is limited. Evaluation was confined to those individuals who were actively engaged with the process and it does not allow us to make an assessment of how and why certain people participated and who did/could not and for what reasons. This is an area that

requires a good deal more understanding in order to substantiate claims for the 'inclusiveness' of participatory planning processes.

## **2.5 Partnerships**

What was most apparent in this review was the rate at which the ideas and practices of CBP have been adopted, particularly in South Africa and Uganda. The CBP action-research project was undoubtedly the right idea at the right time, but this was not a coincidence. The greatest strength of this project is that it has offered strategic advantage for those involved to pursue wider requirements (both at national and international levels) for resource allocations to reflect the wishes of citizens, and particularly the poorest and most marginalised groups.

Many of the CBP partners (although not all) had prior connections to Khanya and with each other (in country), and so were able to build on existing relationships in order to move forward rapidly. Participation in CBP workshops and study visits over the duration of the project have strengthened and deepened these linkages.

New partnerships have also been formed over the course of the project and clearly the workshops and study visits have played a key role in this. The value of the study visits to India and Bolivia was obviously an important factor in bringing new partners on-board. However some concern was expressed that such visits had had a limited validity beyond this. Partnerships appear to have worked effectively as strategic alliances, which enabled different interests to work in conjunction to achieve specific organisational goals.

Partners have also crucially accessed the additional resources necessary to move to implementation of CBP methodology. In South Africa, Mangaung Municipality funded the facilitation of ward planning and in addition allocated 50000 Rand (about \$5000) to each ward to begin implementation of their plans. The series of workshops and study visits, aside from being an effective way of bringing partners together, appear to have been structured in such a way as to gradually construct a shared vision and understanding of CBP. This is not to suggest that all partners have an identical view of CBP and the adaptation of the process to suit conditions in each country has obviously been vital. Yet, the importance of shared foundations was clear and perhaps gave partners the confidence to drive the process forward.

The most successful implementation of CBP has been underpinned by the commitment and perseverance of the partners involved in those instances. Individual CBP champions within NGOs and local and national governments have obviously played a crucial role in this, and have sought to identify key leverage points for the adoption of and scaling-up of CBP methodology.

Vital direction and focus has been channelled through Khanya, as project managers with the self-confidence to allow partners to shape the process. Khanya have provided a strong channel of communication and consolidation of the overall lessons from the in-country processes.

In many respects CBP in South Africa has succeeded in being a truly multi-agency project, although the project managers do play a strong role. Partners developed and refined their own methodologies and came together (facilitated by the project management) to share lessons, with national government acting as observers but not restricting or managing the process. Very little direct funding flowed to partners from the project- they were responsible for integrating their activities into existing funding streams. In Uganda the national government was one partner in the process, and one of the successes of the project has been the partnerships created between NGOs<sup>6</sup>, local and national government.

## **2.6 Holistic approach**

As a project testing a community-based planning methodology the intervention is not specific to any one sector and therefore is by definition holistic. In addition, this project was designed using an explicitly sustainable livelihoods approach and it sought to connect people's livelihoods (in their totality) to local governmental planning structures. The project was also designed to improve the co-ordination and integration of development activity by linking residents, service providers, and private enterprise with local government. CBP methodology brings all of these interests together to produce a ward plan, which is used by the Municipal government in the drawing up of their integrated development plan.

Wide scale use of CBP methodology should start to generate a richer picture of development activity and interventions occurring a local area and so potentially improve co-ordination of them.

The CBP project itself was fully integrated with other interventions- it picks up on international and local demands to enable the poor to directly influence resource allocation and utilized strategic alliances to enable partners to meet this goal (for example, the aims of CBP have helped to guide content and process of national implementation of the Government of Uganda's Harmonised Participatory Planning Guidelines).

## **2.7 Policy and institutional links**

Perhaps the greatest strength in the design of CBP as an externally funded development intervention is the explicit recognition of the need to link the micro level with the meso. This, of course, is fundamental to the whole project. Using a participatory micro mechanism to develop ward plans and to attempt to integrate these plans into the integrated development plans at the municipal (meso) level using strategic partnerships is certainly the key lesson offered by CBP. It is important to consider what might be the limitations in this respect. Although substantial progress has been made in beginning the process of linking the micro-meso-macro, as the CBP process has only been in operation for one year it is difficult to tell just how much impact the micro 'visions' of the poorest are going to influence the meso and macro agendas. In Mangaung the priorities of the ward plan were added together to produce an aggregate priority, which was used for the

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<sup>6</sup> With Khanya being a semi-NGO in this regard

overall priorities for the local government's 5-year plan, hence this potential hurdle maybe adequately addressed. Early evidence from Mangaung suggests that due to micro-level demands spending has shifted away from infrastructure development towards local economic development.

One potential danger expressed in the South African evaluation is that excessive decentralisation and local agenda setting may result in the loss of a bigger strategic picture, but in CBP the local planning process is designed to integrate with strategic planning at both meso and macro levels and so should inform but not dominate wider strategic planning concerns.

As the project has currently run over only one planning cycle there is obviously great scope for improving and refining the methodology. One key factor to have emerged is the need to coordinate planning cycles between the micro and meso levels. This has been recognised in evaluations of pilots in South Africa and Uganda, as has some concern that the CBP may be a one-off process due to the lack of feedback received by wards concerning the integration of their plans into the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). However as the process has attracted substantial involvement from the meso level, it is likely that these problems will be addressed as confidence and experience of the process grows.

In South Africa clear attempts have been made to keep the national (macro) levels involved in the process and the recent workshop in South Africa reached agreement on increasing the national dimension of the project, through a national steering committee. In Uganda the CBP methodology has been adopted as part of the national harmonised participatory planning guidelines.

## **2.8 Building on strengths**

Local ward plans in Mangaung Municipality are said to be 'vision' rather than 'needs' based and hence begin by identifying the strengths of a particular ward rather than needs. To some extent it is hard to tell how much plans derived in this way differ from needs-based analysis (Mangaung Municipality Ward 2, 20 Plans 2001). It rather depends on the validity of the assertion that working from community strengths allows solutions to be 'owned' by a community. The difference between defining needs and strengths maybe marginal for both are required- people define needs in order to understand what strengths maybe available and conversely define strengths in order to see which needs may be addressed. Participants in the planning process have also indicated that working with a vision gives confidence to those involved, whereas identifying problems can lead to paralysis, in addition the normal needs-based planning results in needs usually being infrastructure, which is very expensive, and almost possible to meet – by using outcomes you can start being creative about how to take forward the plans, and build on what the community can do)

The crucial aspect of this is how strengths are identified and what is valued and recognized as being a strength. In CBP the underpinning assumption is that by using

strengths as a starting point people will be empowered to self-mobilize in the interests of the community, rather than simply waiting to have their needs met.

At the meso level this discussion is more straightforward as the project definitely builds on the strengths of the existing members of staff and organisational structures, in utilising 'champions' to drive the CBP process forward

### **2.9 Dynamic and flexible**

As an action-research project, the CBP project is necessarily self-reflexive. It set out to learn from and build on previous experiences of attempts to increase participation in resource allocation. The series of learning events in which partners came together (nationally and internationally) made visible the underlying principles and assumptions on which the resulting methodology is based, and as such have engendered the ownership of the process necessary to facilitate its continued adaptation and evolution.

Project documentation shows a good degree of awareness of the limitations of the methodology and the challenges faced in order to advance the adoption and evolution of CBP. All of the features discussed above are consolidated in the most successful aspect of the CBP project, which has been the successful linkage between learning and action.

The project has stimulated partners to form strategic alliances to pull together the necessary will and resources in order to implement CBP methodology, and to manage the linkage of different levels of government and NGOs in the development and implementation of the methodology.

Partners obviously feel that they have considerable ownership of the methodology and have adapted and implemented the methodology in a variety of ways. The opportunity to shape and facilitate this implementation has also been personally empowering and rewarding for many of the partners.

The project was fully designed as action-learning research, hence was inherently evolutionary in design and implementation. The extension to the project shows that DFID as funders have recognized its success and have been sufficiently flexibility to ensure that maximum benefits are sustained and scaled-up.

### **2.10 Accountability/ responsiveness**

Project partners routinely report progress to Khanya and also shared lessons through workshops and study visit activity that formed an integral part of the intervention.

The opportunity to share experiences through workshops and study visits has been vital in stimulating and sustaining action. One note of caution might be raised over the usefulness of study visits to Bolivia and India. It is not clear that specific lessons concerning CBP were fed into the project from these visits, and although the visits were obviously useful as a team-building tool, the cost-effectiveness of these visits is not established (CBP partner- personal comment).

In turn, Khanya report to DFID via quarterly reports giving details of activities and expenditure.

At the partner level, the intervention was influenced by their responses to the project and was necessarily shaped by the interaction of the partners.

At the local level, beneficiaries were not specifically involved in the overall CBP project, but obviously they played a key role in shaping and testing CBP methodology. That beneficiaries should influence the intervention was an integral part of its design

## **2.11 Sustainability**

### **Economic**

The CBP as a project has operated as what Bevan (2000) calls a ‘growth-pole’. As such it has not instituted a separate and specific project management structure. Khanya as project managers rather have stimulated the collaboration and learning potential of the activities within the CBP. National Steering Committees of varying formality have been established to drive the project in country.

The total budget of CBP has been around 259 000GBP but through strategic partnerships has attracted larger sums for implementation. Again this is a great strength in a intervention. As a DfID-funded project, CBP did not set out to be an economically sustainable entity but to stimulate action in others, and particularly in South Africa and Uganda it has succeeded in doing so.

### **Social**

Vulnerable groups were specifically targeted for inclusion by the intervention. However, it is not possible at this stage to say how effective the CBP process will be in integrating marginalised groups into the planning processes, although strong foundations have been prepared for this to occur.

The intervention works with pre-existing ward committees and therefore there is little concern about the continuing sustainability of these structures. However, there may actually be a bigger question of how such committees are established and whose interests they represent. In SA these were only elected in early 2001 and so were very new when this process started. One of the key interests for DPLG to participate was in looking at the role of the ward committees.

### **Environmental**

Environmental sustainability was not a particular concern of CBP, although it formed part of the participatory planning methodology that was developed. Again in the short term it is impossible to make a judgement on the project’s impact on this aspect but a refined and functional community based planning mechanism would allow meso and macro response to both social and environmental factors at play at the micro level.

A responsive and engaged meso level is of course a necessary part of stimulation and supporting environmentally beneficial behaviour and activity at the micro-level. So the

CBP process in the longer-term offers potential in addressing environmental sustainability. There has been concern in the project that this is not dealt with adequately, and a consultant was commissioned to add to the generic manual, and the latest version has been strengthened from the environmental side.

### ***Institutionally***

Project resources have been focused on strengthening partnerships and building capacity in order to draw in resources from statutory bodies and donor agencies to fund the planning process. As CBP worked with existing institutions, it does not have to worry about its own institutional sustainability but more about the institutionalisation of the concepts and practice that it set out to explore. The lasting effects are yet to be seen given its recent implementation, but in theory it has the potential to have given impetus and direction to a generally felt need to increase the responsiveness of resource allocation to the poorest and most marginal groups.

It appears likely that CBP will become an integral part of the planning processes in Mangaung Municipality and potentially across the whole of South Africa and Uganda.

## **2.12 Critical factors**

In summary the key features of the success of CBP are the:

- Formation of strong and effective partnerships;
- Strengthening of trust between partners;
- Creation of a shared vision;
- An ongoing learning process including developing a core approach and adaptation to suit local requirements;
- Utilisation of existing institutions and funding streams.

What has been achieved by this project is considerable, and there obviously remains a question of what could or should happen after the project has ended.

However, considering the degree of success in institutionalising CBP methodology, in attracting resources for implementation, and in grounding the methodology locally, it would seem that the action stimulated through the project has a good chance of proving sustainable and in fact being scaled-up. In relation to a sustainable livelihoods approach this project writes some of the rules. With a view to complete reflexivity we need to recognise that both the funders and project managers are key players in the development and promotion of the DfID sustainable livelihoods approach, but CBP has specifically endeavoured to respond to the whole range of factors defined as 'livelihoods principles'. CBP's success can clearly be linked to the participatory and flexible manner in which it was operated, but more critically to its integration within existing structures, and attention to the micro-macro linkages at work in effecting change. It also considered explicitly how to 'fit' the intervention around existing funding streams.

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## Appendix 2.2 Logframe for Community-Based Planning Project

Narrative summary	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
<b>Goal</b>			
Community-based planning systems developed and operating in partner countries	By 2005 CBP systems integrated into local government planning and resource allocation system in 4 African countries		
<b>Purpose</b>			
Realistic plans developed in each country for implementation or piloting of community-based planning systems, which participating institutions are committed to take forward	By December 2002 implementation plans for use of community-based planning have funding committed, including from own departments		- Political commitment for community-based planning and management. - Donors prepared to support.
<b>Outputs (for indicators by June 2002 unless stated)</b>			
1 Start-up effective with teams operational and case studies selected	1.1 Two case study sites selected/agreed by hosts 1.2 Consultants commissioned and workshop arranged	1.1 Report/letter of confirmation 1.2 Check commissioned	
2 Methodology finalised and understood by participants	2.1 Team able to adapt methodology for case study	Check methodology for case studies	
3 Case studies completed, clarifying best practice lessons from case studies and recommendations	3.1 Report on existing country experience produced for each participating country 3.2 Report on each of 2 case studies produced	3.1/2 Check reports	
4 Learnings amongst partners workshoped and disseminated in-country	4.1 Workshop happens 4.2 Reference group meets in-country to discuss findings	4.1 Check report 4.2 Check minutes/reports	Reference group or similar mechanism happens
5 Implementation plans developed which reflect learning and are refined by comments from collaborating partners	5.1 Plans produced for all 3 countries 5.2 Proposals made for how policy should be modified	5.1/2 Check plans	
6 Funding proposals drawn up and submitted	6.1 At least 3 proposals for funding implementation	6.1 Check proposals	Able to be dealt with in budget year concerned
7 Project managed effectively	7.1 Country reports produced 7.2 Final report produced 7.3 Project objective achieved in budget	7.1 Check reports 7.2 Check reports 7.3 Check funding proposals/budget	
<b>Activities</b>		<b>Inputs (£)</b>	
1.1 Kick-off visit to Ghana and Zimbabwe 1.2 Organise visits		Fees 64290	
2.1 Develop preliminary methodology 2.2 Meet prior to case study to finalise methodology 2.3 Revise after each case study		Overheads 26073	
3.1 Review in-country experience 3.2 In-country workshop 3.3 Visit one and write-up 3.4 Visit 2 and write-up		Flights 72000	
4.1 Develop national reference group and meet 4.2 Workshop in SA after country reviews 4.3 Workshop in SA after last case study		Car-hire 8098	
5.1 Develop generic concept at earlier workshop 5.2 Each country develops concept at workshop 5.3 Concepts discussed and revised at final workshop 5.4 Finalise proposals		Subsistence 82320	
6.1 Discussions with partners/donors 6.2 Each country draws up proposal		Misc 2000	
7.1 Summary report for each country produced		Total 254780	

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7.2 Final report 7.3 Report publicised internationally 7.4 Project administration, reporting, liaison	
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