

Enhancing Local Economic Development through strengthening governance structures

The role of traditional leaders

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on how traditional leadership can enhance Local Economic Development (LED) in South Africa. Based on the literature review, it argues for the coexistence of traditional and modern-day democratic forms of leadership. The importance of governance in LED is discussed and the place of traditional leadership in local development is underlined from a neo-traditionalist point of view. Subsequently, the article reviews a few other cases in Africa where traditional leadership forms part of local governance. A couple of roles that traditional authorities can assume in LED, and in the broader socio-economic development, are discussed within the framework of public sector leadership. Consequently, a discussion is made on how traditional and other leaders can work together within the local government sphere to ensure successful LED.

INTRODUCTION

LED, with multi-players and different institutions involved in its implementation, calls for a well-defined code of co-operation. Good governance has emerged in many group efforts as a *sine qua non* for success. According to Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, good governance is perhaps the single most important factor to eradicate poverty and promote development (Kofi Annan in Abdellatif 2003:2). The African context – especially the sub-

Saharan region with its traditional hereditary governance structures of governance that coexist with the popular democratic forms of government – creates complexities in terms of their approaches to meet the developmental needs of localities.

The question is not whether or not some structures are necessary, but rather, how the ideologically distinct structures should work together. It is about finding answers as to what form of governance is required to achieve LED goals and how it can be attained. It is interesting to note how the paternalistic functions of hereditary leaders can be reconciled to the popular democratic structures that characterise modern government structures. Traditional leadership place in South Africa's development is worthy of some close scrutiny, as its role has a bearing on community transformation – especially in rural areas. This is significant considering that service provision in the rural areas is much more costly than in the urban settings due to their spatial distribution. Access to basic services is still a profound challenge in rural areas. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs' (COGTA) report on the state of Local Government highlights largely rural areas with apartheid legacies are the most vulnerable (COGTA 2009:27).

This article begins with a brief discussion of what LED is and how it relates to governance. This is followed by a brief description of traditional leaders within the South African context. Subsequently, some forms of governance are highlighted. The role of traditional structures in governance and LED is also explored. Finally, the article highlights some specific areas where traditional leaders can champion local development.

LED AND GOVERNANCE

LED has been practised for many decades throughout the world. However, it is still a relatively new concept in most African countries. The forces of globalisation and most states' failure to drive development at sub-national levels acted as catalysts for the growth and spread of LED in Africa. The effects of the failed Bretton Woods programmes, such as structural adjustment, intensified the search for a way to boost worn out local economies. According to Rodriguez and Tijmstra (2005:3), these factors aggravated the state of underdevelopment in many countries. LED has grown from an unplanned local response to high poverty and low growth levels, to a formally planned effort to maximise the opportunities brought about by globalisation and to minimise associated threats.

There are as many definitions of LED as there are scholars on the subject. LED is essentially a process where local governments and/or community-based groups manage their existing resources and enter into partnership arrangements

with the private sector, or with each other, to create new jobs and stimulate economic activity in an area (Nel and Rogerson 2005:4). According to Patterson (2008:21), LED is an on-going process that is driven by local actors from different societal sectors. Notably, this implies collaboration and even co-responsibility – between the public and the private sector to ensure economic development of an area. It can be defined as the collective effort between different role-players to improve the locality as a place to do business. From a participatory development perspective, working partnerships should come up with strategic and synergistic policies that support business by strengthening territorial advantages, as well as improving tangible and non-tangible factors. LED seeks to improve citizens' quality of life through a number of socially and environmentally sustainable economic interventions (Swinburn 2007:3). Governance is a key element to help determine LED endeavours' success or failure.

Governance is used in a variety of ways and has a variety of meanings (Stoker 1998). According to Stame (2004.1), in a traditional sense, governance relates to the process of governing. Matovu (2003:123) defines governance as the prevalence of legitimacy of authority; public responsiveness; public accountability; partnerships between government and civil society organisations; and information openness and public management effectiveness. Good governance upholds the law, equity and participation. According to Abdellatif (2003:4), good governance refers to the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions that enable citizens and groups to articulate their interests; exercise their legal rights; meet their obligations; and mediate their differences (Abdellatif 2003:4). It also ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad societal consensus, and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard with regard to decision-making over the allocation of development resources.

The need for consensus and participation has seen most African states embarking on reforms that are aimed at achieving some level of democracy in governance. Most post-independent states have advocated the decentralisation of governmental functions to sub-units as a means to increase citizen involvement, enhancement of good governance and economic development of localities. Decentralisation has grown to be regarded as a critical element of good governance. This belief and the need to attract outside investment (all the governance preferences that accompanies it) have encouraged most Third World countries to work on a number of reforms to strengthen governance and democratise development. In South Africa, the local sphere of Government is regarded as the champion of LED. The unfortunate thing with democracy in most countries is that in many cases substantial power has remained in the hands of central government and their local allies.

The challenge of decentralisation moves includes cases where considerable responsibility is devolved to the local government sphere, while little is done in terms of supporting resources. Subsequently, local citizens have lost faith in their municipality and in some cases they prefer to seek direct intervention from the provincial or national sphere of Government. Furthermore, democratic development has suffered as a result of weak civil structures, such as the Village Development Committees in Zimbabwe (VIDCOs). Due to a lack of resources, these committees became very unpopular and in most cases they were seen as time-wasting talks. In South Africa, some ward committees are almost defunct due to incapacity. These committees are at times disconnected from the decision makers, rendering them almost useless. Certain higher spheres of Government undermine the local sphere of Government's legitimacy, as they sometimes by-pass the municipalities and deal directly with communities.

The effectiveness of local government is affected by lack of clarity in terms of the roles that different stakeholders should play. Notably, governance is not merely a matter of a municipality's competence, but also of other key role-players. According to Matovu (2003:123), governance is more than the work of a sphere of government; it also includes partnerships between government and civil society organisations; information openness; and effective public management. The multi-player dimension of governance brings about complexities in coordinating work effectively. One such complexity in South Africa and in some Southern African states includes the role of traditional leadership. The White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003 (hereafter referred to as the White Paper), states that the institution of traditional leadership should support LED. In the Foreword to the White Paper, former Minister for Provincial and Local Government, Fholisani Sydney Mufamadi, highlights the spirit of cooperation between local government and traditional institutions and underlines the role of traditional institutions in local development: " It is the government's considered view that the institution not only has a place in our democracy, but that it has the potential to transform, to contribute enormously to the moral fibre of our society, and to play a significant role in the reconstruction and development of the country, especially in rural areas..." (DPLG 2003:8).

In line with the White Paper, the President (ED's note: Name?) of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of Southern Africa (CONTRALESA). (Holomisa 2009:127) intimates that Government's vision is to transform and support the institution of traditional leadership, so that it is aligned with constitutional principles of democracy and equality. Furthermore, it should represent communities' customary interests; contribute to socio-economic development and nation-building; and be accountable. It therefore becomes pertinent that the said support is defined and harnessed to ensure that the intended outcomes

are reached. In order to appreciate the role of traditional leaders and how this can be redefined, it is essential to take a look at who makes up this institution.

STRUCTURES OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS

The institution of traditional leaders has evolved with the country's changing socio-economic and political environment in the country. Notably, South Africa's prevailing ideology influences the composition of traditional leadership. During the apartheid era, nature and role of traditional leaders displayed the focus of the government-of-the-day. Section 4 of the White Paper indicate that the apartheid regime altered the institution of traditional leadership by introducing new positions such as Supreme Chief and Paramount Chief that were alien to the institution's traditional functions. The alteration thereof was calculated to further the marginalisation of Blacks.

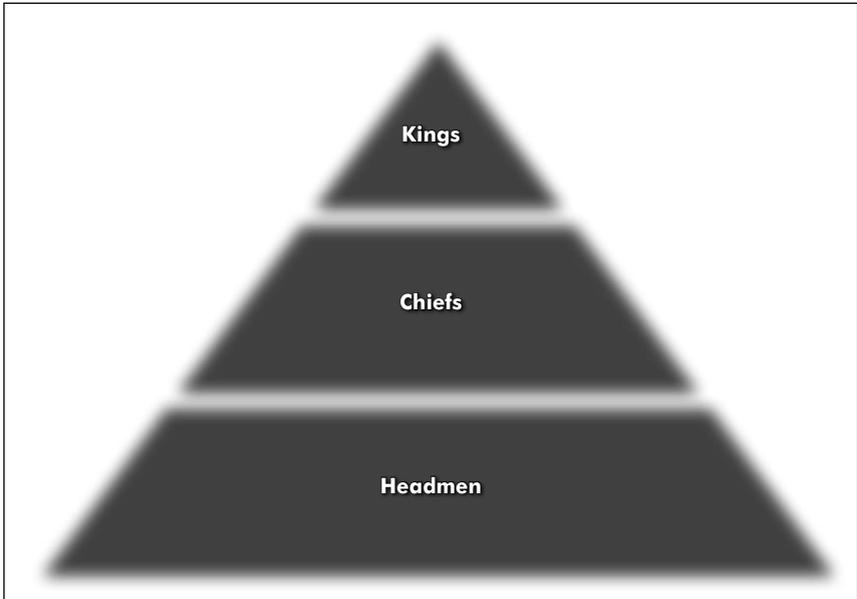
The dawn of democracy saw the government-of-the-day taking measures to restore the institution to its previous role by getting rid of alien compositional elements, such as the colonial positions of independent Headman. However, the new government did not end its endeavours with merely restoring the institution. With the help of communities, it has worked towards aligning the institution with democratic principles that uphold non-discrimination. The institution is governed by customary law, while their functions are guided by custom and the statutory law as prescribed by the Constitution of South Africa. Therefore, while customarily leaders were expected to be elders and mostly men, the democratic Constitution exerts the need for equal rights. This implies that this traditional institution has to adapt to the changing environment.

The Government recognises three sets of traditional leaders, namely Kings/Queens, Chiefs and the Headmen. According to Section 219(a) of the Constitution, these groups of leaders receive governmental salaries for their functions. In addition to customary duties, traditional leaders are expected to play an active and accountable role in developmental matters. As noted in the White Paper, there has to be a mechanism to ensure the traditional leaders in fact perform the duties for which they are paid. This is critical to ensure that the critics of the institution do not view such payments as an unnecessary fiscal expense. The pyramid below indicates the basic structure of traditional leaders and the general relationship between the positions.

Figure 1: Traditional leadership structure

The pyramid shows the basic traditional leadership structure in hierarchical order. It also indicates that there are more Headmen than Chiefs and Kings; and more Chiefs than Kings. The White Paper's statistics on traditional leaders indicate that Chiefs and Headman are the most common positions of authority. Thus they

Figure 1: Traditional leadership structure



should be strategically aligned to pursue the developmental requirements of the day. According to the White Paper, in 2003 there were 12 Kings in five of the country's nine provinces, 773 Chiefs in six provinces and 935 Headmen in six of the country's nine provinces.

In terms of policy and planning, this implies that Chiefs and Headmen are a critical and essential link to the communities, as they have a more visible presence than Kings. The few senior traditional leaders, such as Kings, can play a pivotal role promoting excellence and high performance in the South African Public Service. These honoured figures can play an official role in rewarding entities that contribute positively to LED. The New Public Management theory upholds performance management to ensure that these goals are attained (Morse, Terry and Kinghorn 2007:8). Notably, recognising high performance can contribute to the pursuit of LED. Section 8 of the *KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act of 2005* provides for the role of conferring honours and distinctions. This function can be applied to promote service delivery and LED.

The significance of traditional leaders

Maphosa (2010:12) writes that it is crucial to acknowledge that post-colonial governments of Africa have generally failed their people. This is partly because

of their inability to recognise indigenous governance systems and the African way of life. The importance of traditional leadership cannot be undermined in the region – in some cases the rural population exceeds 50% of the total population.

Anti-traditional scholars argue that the existence of traditional leadership is a source of conflict and it does not support the pursuit of development. Despite other controversies surrounding the success of China and other Asian countries, rich cultural norms and ethics have been dubbed as one of their unique advantages. African states today blame colonialism for breaking traditional forms of leadership that were punctuated by empathy and a strong sense of family. Many view these as the very elements that are lacking in the African traditional leadership model. Implementing these values can help Africa to follow the Asian success stories. According to Amoateng and Makoae (2007:17), neo-traditionalists argue that the new African elite should not only recognise their people's loyalty to traditional leaders, but should also involve them in governance.

Traditional leaders and their role in socio-economic development

Knowledge of territory plays a key role in the success of LED. This includes available resources; how local citizens earn their livelihoods in that territory; and the area's cultural and social dynamics. Rodquez-pose and Tijnstra (2005:6) (in Khumalo 2010:72) note that LED should not be sector-based, but should rather focus on a locality's prevailing environment. LED is regarded as a local agenda – traditional leaders have in-depth knowledge of their territories and such knowledge should be harnessed for development. The territorial approach to LED is crucial in that it enables tailor-made strategies to utilise local opportunities. It also helps to foster wide-scale community participation. The traditional leaders are at a vantage point to rally people behind LED.

Sustainability is an important cornerstone of LED. This may include different facets including environmental, cultural, social and economic elements (Estes 1993 Reed 1996 in Hague 1999:200). According to Hague (1999:200), a comprehensive approach to sustainable development should encompass environmental, cultural, economic and social sustainability. Traditional leaders can be a strong link to attaining sustainability. They can be a vital resource in spearheading sustainability matters, such as erosion control, grazing practices, -re-forestation and upholding law and order within their communities.

Environmental sustainability relates to the use of non-renewable resources and depleting these resources will be to the detriment of future generations. The case of King Mpondondombini of the Mpodoland is quite informative on

this aspect. When asked about the development initiatives in his territory (such as the construction of N2 highway) the King underlined that, while his people yearned for development, it was vital that nature and the environment were protected and conserved for future generations (Holomisa 2009:127). Notably, traditional leaders have a lot of wisdom and are attached to the environment. These aspects have to be included in development planning for two basic reasons. Firstly, considering the leaders' opinions and accommodating their concerns will ensure their support for initiatives. Secondly, this approach improves the chances of ensuring balanced, sustainable development. Lutz and Linder (2004:19) assert that traditional leaders have a greater capacity to mobilise communities. This compels the state to consult and convince the traditional leaders – even in cases where the state does not formally recognise this institution.

Locally, there has been considerable debate on the political-administration interface with its dynamics and complexities. Traditional leaders have been formally recognised as active stakeholders in advancing local development, which further complicates this already complex terrain. It is a complex process to bring together elected leaders who get their legitimacy from a democratic process, hereditary leaders whose legitimacy is drawn from custom and pragmatic professionals who obtain their prerogative from the employment contract. Thus, the challenge is to harmonise populist politicians with the traditional leaders, while simultaneously including professional, pragmatic civil servants. However, despite the challenges of co-existence, the idea of abolishing traditional authorities as a misfit in modern democracy is idealistic wishful thinking (Khan, Benoit and Vawda 2006:91). Ray (1997:12) states that, although these forms of legitimacy differ considerably, they can be combined to form a powerful authority that is able to achieve high levels of development and democratisation. Different groups of leaders should collaborate to achieve what Morgan, Green, Shinn and Robinson (2008:14) refer to as 'result oriented legitimacy', where leaders and public servants are judged by their ability to deliver on issues that affect the people they lead.

Certain sections of South African communities' lack of confidence in traditional leadership can be explained by the fact that apartheid altered the nature and role of these institutions to help oppress Blacks. As noted in the White Paper, "the system of Bantu authorities eroded the culture of consultation and collective wisdom, instead, traditional leaders relied more on the power of their backers than on the collective wisdom of the communities they were leading" (DPLG 2003:25). These structures became an apartheid-devised tool for dividing and ruling Black communities. Due to colonial and apartheid distortions, the traditional leadership's role and place in governance and development needs to be redefined. Guri (2006:7) argues that traditional

authorities have an important role to play in providing leadership in community development. Furthermore, the author points out that these structures need to reform their colonial tendencies and take on a proactive role to address the development needs of their people – rather than lording it over them (Guri 2006:7).

This article argues that the source of conflict between elected officials and traditional leaders stems from lack of appropriate coordination. This is mainly due to the fact that traditional institutions' roles, functions and powers are not clearly spelt out in policy documents. According to the Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa team (Ashley *et al.* 2008:8), the Constitution and other legal and policy documents' lack of clarity on the roles of traditional institutions contributes to the considerable tension between unelected Chiefs and elected councillors. Despite spelling out the Apartheid Government's alteration of the traditional institution, the White Paper does not categorically present the current roles of the institution. Khan, Lootvoet and Vawda (2006:92) notes that the White Paper presents the traditional authority as a facilitator of local disputes; adjudicator of traditions and customs; and state informant on matters of development without any robust engagement.

The position of Chiefs in African nations predates colonialism and in a way gives them some source of legitimacy. The *International Development and Research Centre 2001 Report* (www.idrc.ca) notes that the roots of legitimacy for African Chiefs are partly pre-colonial (historic), partly religious, and partly cultural. This contrasts with the contemporary state's legitimacy, which includes the legal system, the Constitution, the nationalist struggle and democratic elections.

Presumably due to colonial distortion, traditional leadership is undemocratic in nature and are highly revered in rural settings, while elected officials become somewhat of a threat to the authority that these institutions have enjoyed for many years. In some countries such as Zimbabwe Chiefs have limited power and influence. Instead, the ruling party uses chiefs to sustain political dominance and rarely to facilitate for economic and social development reasons (Ashley *et al.* 2008:8). In Zimbabwe, the role of traditional leaders as custodians of culture has been hijacked for party politics and therefore they have not contributed to good governance and LED. In many countries Chiefs have an influence on land ownership. In Ghana these structures have made it difficult for foreign and domestic investors to obtain title deeds, as the House of Chiefs opposed private ownership on the basis that this would be socially disruptive resulting in a landless class (*IRDC Report 2001* available at www.idrc.ca).

Traditional leaders have been instrumental in maintaining order within their areas of jurisdiction. Issues such as crime and other forms of behaviour that are inconsistent with the community's core values would be punished under the

office of Chief. Notably, this has helped entrench traditional leaders' legitimacy. This influence prompted the argument that, "if Chiefs continue to have influence, and if there are still problems in carrying out development projects, one way of aiding the process of development could be to involve Chiefs" (*IRDC Report 2001* available at www.idrc.ca). Chapter 12 Section 212(a) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* recognises the need for legislation to provide for the role of traditional leadership as a local-level institution to help deal with issues that affect local communities.

Notably, the roles and functions of the traditional leaders have to be defined and spelt out to help ensure that the South African Local Government achieves LED. Section (1) of the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003*, provides for Provincial and National Government to assign roles to traditional leaders. According to the White Paper, traditional leadership faces marginalisation in some countries and localities, as it is viewed as resistant to democracy and change. This view emanates from the fact that this institution has withstood some changes in Africa. However, it should not be seen as a hindrance to change. Rather, traditional leadership should be regarded as a key element that calls for the appreciation of a people-sought development; not some top-down programmes that disregard local communities.

The existence of traditional leadership as a legitimate institution should not be seen as a stumbling block to good governance and promoting LED. Rather, policy clarifications should be made. This will perhaps achieve partnership instead of the competition currently taking place at the local sphere of government. Motshekga (2007:13) observes that the conflict between traditional institutions and municipalities could be minimised if people are put first. This reiterates the need to establish collaborative mechanisms with regard to community development and service delivery. In similar vein, Morse *et al.* (2007:5) note that public leadership does not focus formal leadership positions. Rather, the primary aim is to create public value within, outside and at all levels of the organisation. Furthermore, leadership should reflect the realities of a shared power world, where governance is the product of many organisations and not just of Government. The White Paper recognises that, as an institution located in the rural areas, traditional leadership can play an important role in the fight against poverty, homelessness and illiteracy, as well as promoting governance. It is worth noting that social networks and systems built around traditional leadership could provide a social fibre for rich social capital in LED. Certainly, Chiefs can contribute immensely to the Government's effort and intention to give more people access to land in South Africa.

However, there is a need for transforming traditional institutions' functions to meet the development needs; and for rural areas to enjoy better service delivery like their urban counterparts. In other words, if this institution is to remain

relevant, it has to go beyond officiating in traditional ceremonies and be actively involved in developing communities. In line with this thinking, Moshekgga (2007:13) argues that traditional communities are already organised and that they can form trusts and companies, attract investment; and enter into farming, heritage, tourism, and herbal farming business through their traditional councils. Moshekgga (2007:13) states that, “traditional communities should move away from solely investing in burial societies and the afterlife”. A partnership with National Government departments presents one way of improving traditional councils from an institutional point of view. It can help equip this institution with the necessary skills to foster development without undermining their rich traditional knowledge.

The influence of Chiefs as community spokespeople could be utilised for many community upliftment programmes. In Ghana, some traditional leaders have participated in health promotion programmes and people are easily mobilised with the help of their leaders (IRDC Report 2001 available at www.idrc.ca). Traditional leaders who serve as community advocates have earned some influence and legitimacy, which elected officials struggle to attain. Within the LED development sphere, traditional leaders could work with ward committees to mobilise communities with regard to development planning, while simultaneously acting as vocal advocates who bring the local government to account.

It will appear from most arguments presented, that those opposed to the continuation of the traditional leadership in the present-day democracy fail to see the significance and relevance of this institution. Against this background, it remains paramount, and indeed necessary, that the institution is seen as playing an active role in finding solutions for current development issues of their communities. One such area of collaboration with other government agencies is through cooperative development. In his 2011 State of the Nation Address (www.gov.info.za) President Jacob Zuma highlighted Government’s pledge to create jobs. Small businesses and co-operatives were identified as some of the vehicles to help achieve this goal. The President underlined that Government would have to forge partnerships with other stakeholders and the community to help facilitate job creation. Currently, the nation faces a high attrition rate of co-operatives and other LED initiatives. Notably, traditional leaders are strategically positioned to help support and monitor such co-operatives and other LED ventures.

Due to their proximity to the people, traditional leaders can be equipped with basic skills to provide continued support to the co-operatives within their jurisdiction. It has been argued that most of the co-operatives fail to live beyond the initial funding stages. Notably, governance and business management issues are high on the list of the causes of this failure. Khumalo

(2010:237) points out that one of the reasons why LED initiatives fail is the ineffectiveness of municipalities' monitoring and evaluation units, as most LED units are inadequately resourced. While development agencies have in some ways attempted to monitor the progress of co-operatives, these initiatives have not helped due to resource constraints. An internal approach to monitoring by local actors such as traditional leaders can yield better results. The traditional leaders could be trained to provide that kind of service within their communities and work together with municipal officials to improve the output and outcomes of these initiatives. The idea of traditional leaders backing and supporting entrepreneurs within their jurisdiction could help instil community ownership of developmental initiatives, which is critical for survival. Conflicts that often wreck co-operatives can be amicably resolved internally with the help of traditional leaders. The values of self-reliance help and responsibility, as outlined in the preamble to the *Co-operatives Act of 2005*, could be fostered by allowing traditional authorities to champion self-governance in these initiatives.

Since traditional leaders receive salaries for their activities, it stands to reason that they need to be in a position to deliver what they are expected to. Vaughan and McIntosh (in Khan, Lootvoet and Vawda 2006:85) highlights the long history of neglect of traditional authorities under the Bantustans and has led to a situation where traditional leaders might not possess the required degree of knowledge and skill that is needed to play a role in present and future land tenure arrangements, livelihood provision and governance issues. In similar vein, Maphosa (2010:10) notes that traditional leadership lacks the participatory skills to integrate and interact in the democratic governance system. This raises the need for capacity-building to enable traditional leaders to fulfil more modern roles that communities require them to participate in. The bottom-up form of decision-making required in participatory development demands a number of skills and managerial capabilities. There is a need for the Department of Co-operative Governance to establish a formal training system to ensure that traditional authorities confidently and meaningfully engage with other stakeholders in LED. Capacity-building for traditional authorities through workshops and conferences can enable them to engage with Government on important policy issues – rather than simply being consulted and informed about issues of their communities.

Due to its proximity to communities, religion and culture traditional leadership has notable mobilisation capabilities. This could be harnessed to deal with issues that are pertinent to socio-economic development. The State has done considerable work to improve HIV/AIDS awareness and access to anti-retroviral drugs. However, there is more work to be done – especially in the rural areas. Low levels of education affect the efficacy of awareness campaigns.

Importantly, traditional leaders can partner with other Government branches to encourage adult learning and assist in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The high acceptance of the traditional leadership in rural areas can play a profound role in HIV/AIDS-related behavioural change campaigns.

Besides low literacy levels in rural communities, traditional leadership face high levels of poverty; and difficulties to contribute to service delivery and local development. Maphosa (2010:8) points out that although KwaZulu-Natal has been duped as an example of best-practice as far as decentralised democratic systems are concerned, insufficient administrative and fiscal resources make it difficult for traditional leaders to translate their symbolic appeal into actual mobilisation to ensure development in the province. Inadequate resources are a current reality in many governments. Furthermore, traditional authorities stand a good chance of working with non-governmental organisations that prefer working directly with grassroots entities, rather than through the State. One of the challenges LED initiatives face is the problem of accessing appropriate markets. Some ventures are started without a target market, which results in products being sold or services being rendered at give-away prices. A partnership between local government and traditional councils can help communities to find markets for up-and-running ventures and to encourage new ones to be market-driven.

Traditional leaders can play a pivotal role in land allocation for development purposes. Communities still face the challenge of land ownership and in some cases LED initiatives could not be explored due to ownership wrangles. In some communities, numerous potentially-feasible tourism- and agro-based LED initiatives are not being utilised, as some sections of the population do not have access to land (Khumalo 2010:186). The traditional councils can partner with the state departments to find an amicable way of land allocation for development purposes.

CONCLUSION

The article highlighted the central role of governance in LED and the expedience of incorporating traditional leadership in its implementation. Traditional leadership, with its cultural underpinnings, can play a significant role in rallying communities to support people-led development – especially in rural settings. Furthermore, the article highlighted that traditional leaders needed to play a participative role in land distribution, health campaigns, adult education, monitoring and market support for LED initiatives to ensure the success of LED in rural communities. The article also underlined the need to redefine the role of traditional leaders, so that they could serve their communities’

development needs. Furthermore, the article pointed out that traditional leadership roles needed to be clarified to minimise conflict between elected officials and traditional leaders. The article argued that traditional authorities should be included in current developmental priorities and that they need to be capacitated to function effectively in their new roles. Notably, the article has upheld the importance of traditional leaders in today's democratic governments to help ensure socio-economic development.

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