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A Case Study of Rural Communities in
Three South African Provinces

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The Value of the Kha Ri Gude Literacy Campaign in Attaining the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development Goals: A Case Study of Rural Communities in Three South African Provinces

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Abstract: This research evaluated the extent to which the long-term goals of the Kha Ri Gude (KRG) mass literacy campaign have been achieved by using the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as a benchmark. The literacy campaign, which arose from the Education for All (EFA) goals of the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was initiated to empower disadvantaged people to become self-reliant and participate more effectively in the economic activities of their communities. In this study, the achievements of the literacy campaign introduced in South Africa in 2008 (called Kha Ri Gude) are weighed up against the first five SDGs to find out if there was any policy cohesion, which is one of the tools for effective community development. This study forms part of an initiative by the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and Youth Development Department of the University of South Africa (Unisa) to assess the implementation of the KRG mass literacy campaign in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo. Since the researcher did not form part of the Unisa team who visited these provinces, secondary sources (such as interview transcripts, journals, and a voice recorder) employed by Unisa's ABET Department from 2013 to 2015 were used. A qualitative approach and purposeful sampling technique were used to source information-rich participants. The sample consisted of KRG graduates, voluntary educators, and coordinators of the KRG project. The study found that the program had a positive effect on participants and their communities. To some extent, it eradicated poverty, encouraged healthy living, and enhanced female empowerment. This is what the South African government aspires to achieve with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. However, funds are needed for start-ups to boost livelihoods and to ensure further development.

Keywords: Empowerment, Entrepreneurial Skills, Finance, Kha Ri Gude, Literacy, Policy Cohesion, Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction

A UNESCO report states that “at least 880 million adults are illiterate, of whom the majority are women” (UNESCO 2000, 8).” The study in this article focuses on the South African government’s initiative to reduce illiteracy through the Kha Ri Gude (KRG) mass literacy campaign. *Kha Ri Gude* is a Tshivenda phrase meaning “let us learn” (Department of Education 2008). In this study, the impact of KRG on various communities in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Mpumalanga is explored, with reference to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).² The researcher tried to find a synergy between empowerment owing to KRG and the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. In this study, the KRG mass literacy campaign’s empowerment in the form of reading, writing, numeracy, and life skills, such as health, gender, environment, and civic education, is evaluated against the first five SDGs, which address poverty, hunger, education, health, the environment, and education. It is the wish of most countries to develop cooperation across government departments to encourage interconnected priorities and what Le Blanc (2015) calls “policy coherence.” The study evaluates the impact of KRG on the lives of the aforesaid communities, juxtaposing it with how the

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² The 2030 agenda for sustainable development seeks to build on the Millennium Development Goals. Its main aim is to realize the human rights of all, achieve gender equality, empower all women and girls, end poverty and hunger in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

Department of Education's policies interconnect with those of the Department of Social Development regarding the SDGs.

Some literature has been published on the effectiveness of the KRG literacy campaign, such as the paper written by Romm and Dichaba (2015). They primarily give an account of the focus-group sessions with volunteer educators and former learners in a KRG campaign conducted in the Eastern Cape in 2013 and 2014. From their research, it is clear that the campaign has impacted the lives of many marginalized, impoverished, and illiterate communities by imparting literacy, health, and entrepreneurial skills. This study is an extension of their research and includes data from two other provinces, namely KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo. In fact, the present study bears similarities with the study conducted by Fourie (2018), who compared the South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) with the SDGs to show the importance of policy coherence (Le Blanc 2015), which is a requirement for development in any country. The current study evaluated how the results of KRG led to the attainment of the SDGs. At the moment, there is little literature on the interconnectedness of government policies aimed at achieving food security through literacy, social development, or any other political initiatives. This study sought to bridge that gap. The outcome of this study sheds light on the important role that the KRG literacy campaign played and on whether it has laid the foundation on which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals is to be developed.

The study followed a qualitative approach. Participants in the aforementioned provinces were selected according to the purposive sampling method and the data were collected using one-on-one and focus-group interviews. The findings of this study revealed that the KRG mass literacy campaign has, to some extent, led to poverty alleviation and has improved people's livelihoods—goals which the 2030 Agenda aims to achieve.

The rest of this article proceeds as follows. Firstly, the literature, a theoretical framework, and the research questions provide a focus for the study. Secondly, the sampling and data-collection methods are outlined. Thirdly, the findings and a discussion of the social and economic outcomes of the literacy campaign, as well as the synergy between KRG and the SDGs are presented. The article concludes with a summary of this study and some recommendations.

Literature Review

The Need to Develop Policy Coherence in a Global Agenda

The aim of this study was to determine whether the two South African government goals (KRG and the SGDs) worked coherently to improve the lives of disadvantaged communities. Both initiatives have the same set of development goals, namely to end poverty, improve health, and make individuals more self-reliant. Policy coherence is an essential tool to “stimulate cooperation across various government departments” (Fourie 2018, 5), and it leads to the achievement of shared goals. When developmental initiatives by government are linked, they lead to improvement in peoples' lives (Le Blanc 2015). When government policies talk to each other, it not only enhances the sharing of information on how to deal with issues but also results in informed decision-making (Cheng, Chen, and Chen 2013). According to Civera, De Colle, and Casalegno (2017), stakeholders must have ownership of the organization's overall mission and show their commitment (Kumar and Pansari 2016) to reach their goal. Cooperation between stakeholders, which is made possible when they have a joint interest in a particular activity, will bring change in the form of development (Dawkins 2014, 2015). Government initiatives working toward one goal make a huge impact on the lives of stakeholders, because the coherent structure becomes a strong front against opposition. To this end, Fourie (2018) suggests synergies between different governmental departments to ensure food security. Currently, policy makers are striving to identify policies that change the lives of their communities and culminate in improved livelihoods (Harris and Jones 2018). Harris and Jones (2018) opined that policy cohesion yields good outcomes, because it encourages joint action and collective decision-making. The authors

further indicated the importance of using both human capital and social theory in reforms and policy implementation. The use of such an approach results in imparting skills that benefit people and lead to an improvement in their work and social lives, because knowledge is power (Fomunyam and Teferra 2017). The improvement in the socio-economic lives of communities allows them to compete, because they now have the “will, the purpose, discipline, consensus, coherence and theory” (Lodge 2009, 461). Fourie (2018) discusses synergy between the National Development Plan and the 2030 Agenda for SDGs and emphasizes the importance of developing an issue-based approach during the implementation of policies. In other words, policies should work together to solve a common issue. Thus, synergy between the KRG and the SDG led to the development of a common national ideology, which helped in changing the lives of households. According to Lodge (2009), coherent ideologies lead to the creation of values such as survival, justice, self-fulfillment and self-respect.

While the KRG literacy campaign’s core business was to combat illiteracy in South Africa, the first five SDGs address poverty, hunger, education, health, the environment, and education. The SDGs sought to build on the Millennium Development goals (MDG) and were aimed at completing what the MDGs did not achieve (UNESCO 2015). In the same breath, the Kha Ri Gude literacy campaign emerged from the six Education For All (EFA) goals³ which, among other things, advocate for access to quality education for all, including adult literacy (DBE 2014). EFA’s long term goals were aimed at improving livelihoods and it was compatible with the first five SDG goals namely,

Table 1: The First Five Sustainable Development Goals

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Action</i>
1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2	End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
3	Ensure healthy lives and promote the well-being of all people of all ages.
4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5	Achieve gender equality and empower women of all ages.

Source: UNESCO 2015

Theoretical Framework

Given the purpose of the study, empowerment theory (originally articulated by Rappaport in 1981 and extended by Civera, De Colle, and Casalegno 2017) was applied to get a theoretical understanding of what community literacy campaigns are about. Definitions of the word “empowerment” differ, depending on the context in which it is used (Speer 2000, Zimmerman 1995). Rappaport (1981, 4) defines “empowerment” as a worldview that includes a social policy and an approach to solving social problems stemming from powerlessness. Civera, De Colle, and Casalegno (2017) see it as an act of addressing basic needs by sustaining productivity, developing skills, and emancipating self-awareness. According to Rappaport (1981), powerlessness is brought about by a lack of essential resources that would make an individual or community self-reliant. Sadan (1997, 144) posits that when people acquire essential resources, they undergo a “transition from a state of powerlessness to a state of relative control over their lives, destinies and environment.” All of these definitions align with how the literacy campaign

³ EFA: A global initiative, launched at the world conference on education in 1990, and endorsed education as a fundamental human right (DBE 2014).

and the SDGs brought empowerment to impoverished communities who were powerless because they lacked basic skills such as literacy, which empower them to be employed and live a healthy life.

According to Rappaport (1981), empowerment can be achieved by divergent methods. The South African government subscribes to the principles of Education For All (EFA), which are espoused by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2000), and launched a mass literacy campaign called Kha Ri Gude, the outcomes of which match the first five goals of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. People gain control over their lives either by their own efforts or with the help of others (Rappaport 1981). People can gain control over their lives themselves only if the four dimensions of empowerment posited by Spreitzer (1995, 1996) are taken into consideration. They are meaning, competence, self-determination, and personal control. According to these four dimensions, people will be self-empowered when the project they are involved in means something to them. When people attach great value to a project, their level of interest increases. Interest in an activity makes individuals more competent (Civera, De Colle, and Casalegno 2019). Therefore, competence emanates from self-determination which, in turn, leads to self-control. Education and motivation are important tools to enhance these behaviours. What is more, the acquisition of skills through education leads to increased productivity (Harris and Jones 2017; Kyaw, Ahr, and Lee 2018).

If empowerment is achieved with the help of others—in this case, governments and the South African government in particular—Fourie (2018) advocates policy coherence so that countries implement the same set of development goals (UNESCO 2015). The KRG and SDG initiatives are interconnected in the sense that they both aspire to eradicate poverty and powerlessness. A collective engagement in the empowerment of the powerless makes stakeholders feel engaged, and that makes them stronger and competent (Dawkins 2014, 2015; Kumar and Pansari 2016). People are able to improve their lives if they are provided with resources because, although empowerment does not require particular qualities of people, empowerment still is an important precondition for people's existence (Sadan 1997). This means that people who are empowered are in control of their lives, irrespective of who they are.

This theory has far-reaching implications for non-government organizations and government programs. If such programs are intended to raise the standard of living of marginalized and impoverished groups, they should focus more on empowering these people by aiming at policy coherence. The theory also implies that for people's level of interest and competence to increase, they depend on extrinsic motivation. Imparting skills to communities (in an after-school program) to combat poverty, as indicated in the research conducted by Mampane (2017), is another form of extrinsic motivation. This study found that the government's KRG literacy campaign has motivated graduates to improve their lives.

Research Questions

The main research question for the study is: How did the Kha Ri Gude mass literacy campaign contribute to meet the 2030 Agenda of SDGs? The sub-questions are:

- Which socio-economic factors that the SDGs aspired to achieve were addressed by the literacy campaign?
- How did the improvement of lives change the existing socio-economic structure?
- What role did policy cohesion play to enhance improvement in livelihoods?

Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative research approach was followed because the views of the participants in the KRG campaign could be known only through dialogue. This approach created an environment where direct semi-structured interviews could take place, which helped the researchers to collect as much information as possible. An interpretivist paradigm was followed, whereby the researchers constructed meanings and developed understanding through their interaction with the KRG graduates, voluntary educators and coordinators. Since the study focused on only three provinces out of nine a case study was deemed the best design to employ.

Population and Sample

The population for the study comprised KRG graduates from the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo, prospective learners of the KRG program, voluntary educators, coordinators, and supervisors of the program. Unisa-ABET team visited the three provinces on separate dates, namely Eastern Cape (August 3–4, 2014 and revisited 2015), Limpopo (August 24–26, 2014), and KwaZulu-Natal (August 26–27, 2013). The purposive sampling technique was used by the Unisa-ABET team to source information-rich participants and a total of ninety-one participants (twenty-eight from the Eastern Cape, thirty-three from KwaZulu-Natal, and thirty from Limpopo) were interviewed. In the selected sample, the female participants outnumbered the male participants. The majority of the participants were aged between 35 and 65, and only a handful of them were between 22 and 24.

Data Collection

This research received ethical clearance from Unisa's College of Education's Ethics Committee for all components of the evaluation, and permission to conduct research was granted by the chiefs of the communities in the three provinces. The team used one-on-one and focus-group interviews to collect data. This data-collection method was chosen because group interaction could present new perspectives on issues such as participants' challenges and the way in which they persuade and influence each other (Jensen and Laurie 2016). Six focus groups (KRG graduates and would-be learners) were selected and ten one-on-one interviews were conducted by five voluntary educators, two coordinators and three supervisors of the program. During data collection, the researcher kept a journal to record important information and used a voice recorder to capture missed information. Interviews were done in the native languages and the services of specialists in the three languages, namely Xhosa, Zulu, and Venda, were employed to do the translation into English.

Data Analysis

In the thematic analysis of the data, Saldaña's method of qualitative analysis (2016) was applied. Coding was done through the identification of patterns which demonstrated habits, salience, and importance in people's daily lives. Key issues, which reflected participants' views of the impact of KRG on their lives, were identified by the researcher. Data were then categorized by grouping, reorganizing, and linking the codes in order to consolidate their meaning. Similar issues were grouped together to provide meaning. Finally, certain themes emerged from these categories and were used to discuss the findings of the research. Six themes arose from the study, which revealed how KRG impacted on the lives of the three communities and laid the foundation for the attainment of the SDGs.

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of the KRG mass literacy campaign on the lives of a few Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo communities in relation to the first five of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Results and Discussion

In the focus groups and one-on-one interviews conducted by the Unisa-ABET Department team, one of the questions was about the impact that KRG had on the lives of the KRG graduates. The participants' statements on the impact of KRG were given codes, and similar codes were categorized into themes. Their responses, which were organized under five themes, namely the impact of KRG on literacy, family life, community, the improvement of livelihoods, and the relation between KRG and the SDG, are given below.

Theme 1: Impact on Literacy Levels

It appears that the KRG campaign was successful in addressing the literacy challenges faced by members of the communities. The following comments from participants confirm this assertion:

KRG has helped me a lot. I am able to read, sign, write, and count. I can read the Bible and the hymn book. (Participant A)

We are now in the light, KRG has brought light to the darkness we were in. (Participant B)

The participants were eager to learn more. In KwaZulu-Natal, the desire to study further was satisfied by a non-governmental organization called Operation Upgrade (OR), which provided ABET Level 2 training.

It emerged from the interaction with participants that, sometimes, widows were robbed of their inheritance because they could not read and write. Regarding this, Participant H stated, "when my husband died, I was given many papers to sign and, because I could not read and write, I just signed by writing an X."

Theme 2: Impact on Family Life and Change in Power Structure

The participants' responses indicated that the literacy skills acquired also improved their family life, because they were able to assist their children with their school work. Participant B said "I don't have to burden my neighbours with my family problems anymore. I am able to help my own grandchildren with their homework."

Family life also improved thanks to the dissemination of information about health-related issues. Participants indicated that the life skills taught during the KRG campaign have raised their awareness of epidemics such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Participant E commented:

We are able to take care of ourselves and take treatment for diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Most of us have planted herbs like "mooringa", which is very good for our health. It heals many diseases and fights germs. We also encourage others who are infected to go to the clinic.

One elderly woman mentioned the importance of exercise, which was one of the health skills encouraged by the KRG teaching staff. Participant F observed, "I use a walking stick, but going to KRG has motivated me to get some exercise. Sometimes I walk without it; I feel so strong."

The literacy skills taught by the KRG campaign empowered many female participants. They started to play an active role at home and in church and in the community at large. In this regard,

participant I commented “I am a secretary at the local organization burial society.” Participant J declared “I am a member of the school governing body.” The participants indicated that at meetings called by the local counsellor, they have made significant contributions to the development of their community. Participant C pointed out the following: “we can stand up and talk as women, and we talk like enlightened people.”

Theme 3: Impact on the Community and Job Creation

The female participants exceeded all expectations by even assuming leadership positions in community projects. In the Eastern Cape, some women initiated a poultry project; in Limpopo others started an agricultural project; and in KwaZulu-Natal, a tunnel vegetable garden and plastic-shoe project were launched. Participant K observed as follows: “we came together; five women contributed money and we started a poultry farm.” Participant L pointed out “our agriculture project is growing, because the royal kraal has donated two hectares of land to the project.” The prestige of their clients attests to the success of these projects. One of the participants mentioned “we supply Spar supermarket with our produce and have earned the sum of R25 000, which we divided among ourselves.” The findings also indicated that community members used the knowledge acquired during the KRG program to save and invest their money in *stokvels* or *mogodisano*.⁴ Participant N noted, “attending KRG classes has introduced me to a group of women practicing ‘mogodisano.’ It helped me to buy roofing material for my house.”

Apart from the projects above, participants indicated that, thanks to the KRG program, they were able to solve one of the problems they experience as a community. The problem involved pre-school children having to travel a long distance because the community did not have a local pre-school. According to participant G, they could resolve this as follows: “We have started a local pre-school, so that the young children do not have to travel long distances. But we are not satisfied with the building; it is a temporary structure. We need funds to build something which is more permanent.”

To a certain extent, the KRG campaign has also helped to reduce the youth unemployment rate. Participant O, a local councilor in the Eastern Cape, owns a bakery. He employs KRG graduates and said the following: “In 2008 I started the bakery with my own money. Things improved after 2008, when I began to employ KRG graduates.” The KRG campaign itself also employed 75 000 matriculants (as facilitators) as well as 700 unemployed people, who were engaged in producing and distributing the learning material.

Another participant, Participant G, remarked: “I am a widow and my daughter has matriculated recently. She was employed at the start of the KRG and received the stipend.”

Theme 4: Impact on Livelihoods Leading to Self-construction

Something that became evident after the implementation of KRG is that not only did participants’ employment prospects improve but also their standard of living. Prior to the campaign, many families had absolutely no income, but after graduating, individuals started reconstructing their lives

Participants also indicated that the entrepreneurial skills acquired during the program enabled them to start small businesses to improve their livelihoods. Participant P confirmed this by stating “my business is booming because I have more markets to sell my bread and buns in.” Most participants indicated that they have started initiatives to earn an income. Participant Q bore this out by saying “I do sewing and sell garments to customers in my community, even though my machine is old and gives problems.”

⁴ *Stokvels* or *mogodisano* refers to a strategy used by a group of community members to lift the financial status of each member of the club. Members take turns in receiving a lump sum of money.

Participant H confirmed this with the following remark: “I have a backyard garden where I planted some cabbage, potatoes and spinach. I also sell them. KRG taught us when to plant, how to take care of our gardens, how to prepare the soil, and how to feed the plants—even how to space them.”

Theme 5: Cohesion between the Literacy Campaign and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The implementation by the South African government of the two policies, namely KRG and the SDGs, indicate a global view of threats as being interdependent (Etschmaier 2018), which warrants a cohesion between policies to achieve the condition of sustainability. The outcomes of KRG reveal a strong correlation with the five SDGs listed earlier on. The literacy skills addressed issues of poverty, health, inequality, and education, as confirmed by the participants’ comments below:

The skills we have acquired from KRG helped us as a community to work on projects, which helped us to have income to fend for our families. (Participant R)

KRG has taught us how to live healthy lives; we know that to prevent being infected with HIV—we must either abstain, be faithful or use condoms. (Participant S)

Our lives as women has changed, our place is no more in the kitchen; like men we are able to source for income and compete with men for positions in the community. (Participant T)

Discussion

The findings above attest to the fact that the KRG mass campaign was successful in providing literacy to communities in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo. The people in these communities learned to read and write. The campaign assisted them in bringing about significant improvements in their livelihoods. A single intervention by government to deal with illiteracy as a social problem has empowered those individuals and communities. It has also addressed some of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals—especially Goals 1 to 5. The South African government’s initiative to empower those who have never had the opportunity to go to school has enabled these marginalized groups to evolve from a state of powerlessness to a state of relative control over their lives, destinies and environment (Sadan 1997; Rappaport 1981). The literacy skills acquired through the program have assisted these communities to shift from a state of dependency—where illiterate, underprivileged groups depended on the literate—to a state where they are able to help their children with homework. Because they are able to familiarize themselves with the content before they sign a legal document, they no longer fall victim to fraud.

The improvement in the livelihoods of the participants, which emerged after they had been empowered with skills, is a clear indication that knowledge is power (Fomunyam and Teferra 2017). Empowering these communities with literacy skills increased their level of interest in education, as posited by Spreitzer (1995, 1996), who holds that people’s level of interest increases as soon as they value a particular activity. Developing their interest in activities led to the self-construction of individual lives, where disempowered people started creating meaning in life. This was evidenced by the willingness of the KwaZulu-Natal KRG graduates to study further through the OU. Rappaport (1981) also postulates that for people’s level of interest and competence to rise, extrinsic motivation is required. As literacy and numeracy are the fourth SDG, the positive impact of literacy skills achieved through the KRG campaign can serve as a framework for promoting sustainable development. However, the good outcomes of the literacy campaign can be sustained only if Goal 4 (ensuring that everybody achieves literacy and

numeracy) is addressed in its totality. There is still a vast number of people who are illiterate and, therefore, the campaign still falls short of achieving its objective. Continuing the literacy campaign, as was suggested by the participants, will uplift and empower individuals and communities and, in turn, make South Africa a better place to live in.

As stated earlier, the campaign contributed to an improvement in family life. Moreover, the life skills imparted during the KRG campaign made a meaningful contribution for the residents of the three provinces in as far as health-related issues are concerned. The communities assumed personal control (Spreitzer 1995, 1996) over their lives by taking preventative action against diseases such as HIV/AIDS, caring for those with HIV, and advising others about medication and hygiene. Therefore, the KRG campaign has laid the foundation for the achievement of Goal 3 of the SDGs, which is the United Nations' collaborative action towards promoting healthy lives. The communities that participated in the KRG campaign started to grow herbs such as *mooringa*, which, according to participants, has healing properties that can cure many diseases and boost the immune system. Some did physical exercise as a way of staying fit and healthy. Life skills information also enabled couples to plan their families by using contraceptives. Family responsibilities were suddenly shared, in the sense that both fathers and mothers contributed to the education of their children. Before community members were empowered through the KRG campaign, one parent, who was either semi-literate or literate, would help the children with their homework and would explain to his or her partner what was written. The findings indicate that after the KRG intervention, both parents shared these responsibilities.

KRG changed the socio-economic structure of the communities under study; in other words, through the KRG literacy campaign, women were empowered and could contribute to the family income through income-generating activities. The social and economic structure changed from a situation in which women were responsible for taking care of their children and doing other home chores, to one in which they were also playing a role in society and the economy. Goal 5 of the SDGs promotes such shared responsibilities and women and girls are encouraged to play an active role in their families, as well as in politics and the economy (UNESCO 2015). From the findings, it is clear that KRG has leveled the playing field for women and girls and that the attainment of Goal 5 of the UN's SDGs is possible, because the women in the three provinces were eager to start small businesses. Without a doubt, this can be attributed to the KRG campaign, which motivated and inspired women to build on what they have learnt, which was an important factor in their entrepreneurial activities and successes. Women participated in a number of community projects which found solutions to social problems experienced by the communities in the three provinces. For example, starting a local preschool has eased the stress experienced by a community, because their children were safer as they did not have to use transport to get to school.

The participants indicated that financial assistance would make their businesses more sustainable. If Goal 5 of the SDGs, namely access to microfinancing, is achieved, it will increase production and expand the supply market. The importance of financial and structural support is demonstrated by the two hectares of land that were allocated to the community in Limpopo by the chief. This serves as an example of external support that leads to increased production. The research conducted by Mampane (2017) attests to the impact of external support. In Mampane's study, an after-school support program reduced the level of poverty by equipping impoverished community members with life and job-related skills. The success of both male and female participants in their business ventures has convinced the researcher that humans are born with the need for achievement (Collins, Hanges, and Locke 2004; McClelland 1965). In addition, it has persuaded the researcher that the KRG campaign was able to unleash the potential of men and women who used to be powerless. However, the sustainable development of such attributes in these men and women can be enhanced by both program and congruence factors which, according to Buchanan (2006:4), involve funding in order to meet the needs of the people.

As a government initiative that culminated in job creation, the KRG campaign, to a certain extent, reduced the level of hunger (SDG Goal 2) due to the fact that it created employment opportunities for not only 75,000 matriculants (acting as facilitators), but also 700 unemployed people (engaged in producing and distributing learning material). The participants declared that they were able to survive due to their monthly stipends. In addition, those who started small businesses, such as the baker in the Eastern Cape, employed KRG graduates. Employing KRG graduates could be an indication that they were employable. Employers regularly complain about the growing mismatch between what the job market requires and what graduates are taught (Egbenta 2015). Participants have indicated that they had started backyard gardens to feed their families and that they sold the surplus to generate income. They also acknowledged the fact that the KRG program has taught them to plant crops and to take care of the soil. In short, the KRG program has equipped these communities with the tools for sustainable production and development. The comments of the participants indicate that they were able to maintain their families by using the skills they have acquired in the KRG program, such as forming a saving club or association, called a *stokvel* or *mogodisano*. The mere fact that these money-making practices helped one participant to buy roofing material is an indication that communities' livelihoods have been transformed by the KRG campaign—something which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development wants to achieve.

The findings highlighted the importance of policy cohesion (Le Blanc 2015; Fourie 2018; Harris and Jones 2017). The synergy between the two government undertakings, namely the *Ka Ri Gude* mass literacy campaign and the SDGs, was evident. The initiatives were indeed a collective action toward poverty alleviation. Moreover, the experiences of the KRG graduates in the three provinces with regard to the literacy campaign should guide both government and non-government organizations' empowerment initiatives. Financial assistance could aid those who have been empowered by this initiative to reach their goals of self-determination and increased competence. These experiences should also inform the signatories of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that transforming the world through sustainable development calls for the empowerment of people by means of different methods, including the provision of essential resources such as raw materials and technology (Sadan 1997).

The limitations of the study relate to the fact that it was based on three provinces out of nine; thus, the KRG graduates, teachers, and coordinators who were interviewed would not give a full representation of KRG participants nationwide. Therefore the researcher cannot generalize the findings. I, therefore, recommend further studies involving a larger sample in the other six provinces

Conclusion

This article has shed light on the value of the *Kha Ri Gude* (KRG) literacy campaign in the lives of marginalized communities in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo in attaining the 2030 Agenda of SDG. The reading, writing, counting, and entrepreneurial skills acquired during this literacy campaign have brought about a remarkable improvement in the livelihoods of graduates from these marginalized communities. The transformation experienced by households in the three provinces ranged from an improved family life and the ability to read, write, and count, to starting backyard gardens and community projects, and engaging community members in the solution of social problems—something which the 2030 Agenda for SDGs aspires to achieve. However, mention was also made of an obstacle to sustainable development, namely financial constraints. The study also indicated the positive attributes that emanated from policy cohesion. Synergy between government policies enhanced the growth and development of marginalized communities.

The researcher therefore recommends the following:

- To attain Goal 4 of the SDGs, the KRG campaign should continue because of the positive impact it has had on individuals and communities. The KRG program should not be a one-off activity and graduates must be taught more, to become more competent.
- The signatories of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must take cognizance of the comments made by the KRG graduates that financial support will aid the sustainable development of the skills they have learnt from the literacy initiative.
- The South African government should make a concrete financial commitment to support these initiatives and achieve the SDGs, as espoused by UNESCO. More funds should be allocated to those who have already graduated, as a start-up and livelihood development strategy.

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Appendix

KRG Interview Guide

1. Since you have been in the KRG campaign, have you been able to start a community project?
2. Since you have been in the KRG campaign, have you been able to start your own or with others a business enterprise, income generating activity, or did you find work or promotion at work?
3. Your involvement in the KRG, has it contributed towards you having to assist your child's or grandchild's homework, or participating in the SGB?
4. Through engagement in the campaign, what type of community participation are you involved in?
5. How did empowerment on life skills contributed towards you or family members attending to health issues?
6. Have you considered studying further to ABET level 2?
7. Please can you cite in other areas in your life in which KRG had an impact?

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