

**EVALUATING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECTS: THE CASE OF MOKGALWANENG VILLAGE**

by

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to

My late mother

(Kgomotso Elizabeth Phologane)

Who never lived to see the completion of this work and see her tree bear fruits

And

My younger sister

(Katlego Fortunate Phologane)

## DECLARATION

I, Lerato Seah Phologane, hereby declare that: Evaluating community participation in rural development projects: The case of Mokgalwaneng village, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references

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Signature

(Ms. L.S Phologane)

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Date

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First and foremost I would like to give all praise, honour and glory to God the Almighty, He surely is My Provider.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ADB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>CRDP</b>	Comprehensive Rural Development Programs
<b>DRDLR</b>	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>EPWP</b>	Expanded Public Works Program
<b>GAPs</b>	Global Aid Partnerships
<b>HRDS</b>	Human Resources Development Strategy
<b>IBRD</b>	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
<b>IDASA</b>	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
<b>IDP</b>	Integrated Development Program
<b>IISD</b>	International Institute for Sustainable Development
<b>ISRDS</b>	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NPWP</b>	National Public Works Program
<b>PISRDS</b>	Presidential Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Program
<b>RSA</b>	Republic of South Africa
<b>SALGA</b>	South African Local Government Association

## ABSTRACT

Community participation is a concept meant to ensure that community members are an integral part of processes that determine their destination in relation to their development needs. It is a means of empowering people by developing their skills and abilities to enable them to negotiate and make appropriate decisions for their development. Community participation, however, is not without its challenges. In most development projects initiated by local municipalities and other government departments in South Africa, community participation appears to be an afterthought. Most often, community members are consulted after decisions are made by government agencies with regards to the kind of development projects that need to be implemented. As a consequence, community development projects which are intended to improve the quality of life of the majority of communities in South Africa, do not meet this objective.

The aim of this study was to evaluate community participation in rural development projects and focuses on the Mokgalwaneng community in the North West province of South Africa as a case study. The research asks the following questions: What is the nature of and extent to which community members participate in rural development projects? What are the challenges to community participation in rural development projects and how can these challenges be addressed? An evaluative research design and qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used. The sample groups were the community members and the DRDLR officials and semi-structured questionnaires as interview guides for data collection were used.

The study revealed that the majority of the respondents did not participate in the initiation and planning stages of the projects. And the study further revealed that no income and low-income, politics, favoritism, long working hours, illiteracy, low self-esteem, lack of training, lack of resources, lack of communication, lack of information and transparency about the projects are the challenges of participation. It is therefore recommended that, the government should support the community in all levels to ensure a strong commitment to participation in their development projects.

It is anticipated that this study will enable the community members and all role players involved in the Mokgalwaneng development projects to realize the importance and



advantages of community participation and that they will work through the challenges in order to increase community participation in development projects.

## **SUMMARY OF KEYWORDS**

Community development; community participation; development projects; rural development; community members; involvement; government; evaluation.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Higher education institutions, the private sectors, government and other role players, are expected to contribute to the development of the South African community, particularly the under-privileged rural communities (South Africa, 1997; South Africa, 2008). The participation of communities in their own development is seen as critical for an improved quality of life, the reduction of poverty and inequality (South Africa, 2008).

The topic of this dissertation was developed against the background of the characteristic of the Mokgalwaneng community in the North West Province, taking into account that the province consists mainly of rural communities where the Comprehensive Rural Development Programs (CRDP) Pilot projects, an initiative of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) have been implemented since December 2011. The research is thus entitled: *Evaluating community participation in rural development projects: A case of the Mokgalwaneng community.*

The aim of the CRDP Pilot project is to create vibrant and sustainable rural communities. Mokgalwaneng village, North West province, is one of the sites of the CRDP pilot project. The CRDP is intended to enable rural people to take control of their destiny, with support from government, thereby dealing effectively with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources. It aims to build the relationship of communities with land in rural areas (The Presidency, 2009). This engagement in the CRDP is through a process of knowledge building which encompasses social profiling of rural households through the participation of rural communities. Accordingly, the overall success of the CRDP will be measured on the realization of the common vision of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, that is, of creating vibrant and sustainable rural communities (DRDLR, 2009).



Community participation is critical to the success of development projects generally, and to the CRDP in particular. Community participation in development projects, however, is a challenge to many municipalities and other government departments, often resulting in the failure of development projects. The researcher's interest in the problems and challenges experienced by rural people and the research in community participation arises from working with rural communities as a community development worker for a number of years. The researcher is keen to find out how the concept of participation is understood by the different role players and the extent to which this concept is applied in practice. Also to understand the challenges towards participation and how these challenges can be addressed so that meaningful participation of communities in their development may become a reality.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

The development of rural communities in South Africa is a national challenge since most of the unemployed and illiterate people in the country are found in these communities (South Africa, 2008). South Africa, like other African countries, is faced with several rural development challenges (South Africa, 2008). Numerous rural development initiatives have been undertaken in South Africa. These include policy developments, programs as well as strategies. The CRDP is one such program intended to improve the current status of poverty and unemployment in rural communities (CRDP report, 2011).

The CRDP was initiated in 2011. By October 2011 CRDP was implemented at 65 sites across the country South Africa. In each area where the CRDP is being implemented, a new vibrancy has been created around working together, involving communities, the three spheres of government and private sectors. An inclusive CRDP stakeholder participation model has been developed in the form of council of stakeholders, functioning as a partner in planning, implementation and monitoring of projects. The DRDLR in conjunction with fellow departments at national, provincial and local levels erected infrastructure such as housing, water, sanitation, pack-sheds, community halls, multipurpose centers, fencing, early childhood development centers and satellite police

stations, etc. The department also initiated a new youth development program and agricultural program.

The focus of this study was on community participation in rural development projects and highlights the problem that a lack of participation and/or poor participation in development projects disadvantages people in rural areas. There are many debates as to why rural development projects fail. A main reason is that, lack of community participation or decision making in development projects can lead to project failure or delay (SALGA, 2010).

While some such as SALGA (2010) and Rural Dialogue (2000) claim that a lack of community participation in these projects is the cause, others such as Phillips *et al* (2002:168-176) and Blenkowski (1989:99) refer to the lack of knowledge of the development agencies and officials of the diverse ways in which the poor secure their livelihoods. The lack of government commitment is also blamed for the failures (Akroyd, 2003:3). Another important factor is that rural communities often have low literacy levels and lack the understanding and knowledge of local government issues, and the benefits of their participation (Akroyd, 2003:3).

The broad aim of participation in development projects is to actively involve people and communities in identifying problems, formulating plans and implementing decisions over their own lives (DFID, 2002). And it is also about the identification of available resources for sustainable livelihoods of the community. The aim of the study was to evaluate the extent of community members' participation in rural development projects by utilizing the Mokgalwaneng community in the North West Province as a case study to highlight the significance of community participation in their own development, irrespective of the status of the community such as low literacy levels etc. The study highlights the challenges experienced in community participation and suggests how these challenges may be addressed by the relevant role players.

### 1.2.1 Research question

A research question according to Mouton (2001:53) serves as a means of focusing the research problem. Robson (2007:50) adds that the research problem directs the research aim to obtain answers.

This research focused on three primary research questions:

1. What are local people's perceptions and understanding of community participation in the context of rural development?
2. What is the nature and extent of community participation in community development projects in Mokgalwaneng village?
3. What community resources are utilized to address the community's needs?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The study had the following objectives:

1. To explore local people's perceptions and understanding of community participation in the context of rural development.
2. To determine the nature and extent of community participation in community development projects in Mokgalwaneng village.
3. To identify the community resources utilized to address the community's needs.

### **1.4 Research design and methodology**

The design and methodology that was employed in this study enabled the researcher to be able to look at development projects from the viewpoint or perspective of the research participants who are the community members and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform officials, in order to find out their perception about community participation in development projects in Mokgalwaneng.

#### **1.4.1 Research design**

A research design according to Cooper and Schindler (2003:146) is the plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain scientifically valid answers to research questions. In this study, the researcher primarily used the evaluative research design. According to Miller & Wolfe (1996:11), evaluative research design is a methodical procedure for determining the relative impact of individual program components, components combination, or the whole program on the targeted individuals or groups.

#### 1.4.2 Research methodology

The study sought both qualitative and quantitative information and therefore the research methodology adopted for this study was a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedure applied to a field of study (Khothari, 2004:1). It involves procedures of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena so as to solve a problem.

#### 1.4.3 Case study

Three villages were chosen as pilot projects by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform in the North West Province. Before choosing a village, the researcher attempted to become as familiar as possible with three villages by reading some official documents about each village. She then discussed and consulted with village officials so as to gain more background or inside information about the individual villages. After a thorough investigation, the researcher started to consider which village to choose as a case study.

It would have been extremely difficult for the researcher to carry out an intensive study in all three villages. Even though the villages share the same social, political and economic dimensions, the researcher chose Mokgalwaneng village from among the three villages and the reason for choosing Mokgalwaneng village was that the other two villages are small villages with few people and only two CRDP projects (sanitation and housing projects) being undertaken. And Mokgalwaneng is a big remote village with more than five projects taking place and according to the researcher it would provide a good field for the analysis of the study problem. Furthermore, Mokgalwaneng village is more information-accessible to the researcher and to base a study on a single case, information accessibility is of importance.

Working for the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and in CRDP projects allowed the researcher to contact and observe the Mokgalwaneng community's participation in the projects, which could make the information collected reliable. Furthermore, the researcher also observed that the majority of community members are not aware of government activities/projects taking place in their own village.

Case study research is suitable for studying phenomena which are poorly understood or little known (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:135; cited in Krauss, 2006:55). Stake (1994:244) suggests that a case study is useful when the opportunity to learn is of primary importance. A case study of this nature helped to investigate the expected outcomes of the research. Every case study is unique and generalizations cannot be made on the basis of a single case. However, as mentioned above, the opportunity to learn the importance of participation from a case study should not be lost.

## **1.5 Research techniques**

### **1.5.1 Data collection**

Data is defined as a group of facts (Webster, 1985). Cooper and Schindler (2001:135) classify data as a monitoring and communication process. In monitoring, the researcher does not need any response from subjects but inspects activities or nature of the material. In communicating the type of data collection, the researcher questions the subjects through interview or telephonic conversations, self-administered or self-reported instruments. Multiple sources of evidence and different data collections techniques are two of the several methods that Patton (1990) suggests to improve the quality of the data and research findings.

The researcher used semi-structured questionnaires as a guide for data collection. Two different questionnaires were developed for the two sample groups involved in the study. The semi-structured questionnaire method is very useful because it helps the researcher to know about the subject matter first hand (Rwegoshira, 2006; Singh, 2007). The questionnaires contained both open ended and closed questions which provided both descriptive and statistical information. With the community members, the questionnaires were administered in small groups and through individual interviews where respondents were unable to complete the questionnaire. Questionnaires for officials were mailed to them. Participants were provided with details such as the purpose of the study and relevant details of the researcher and they were assured of confidentiality of information provided.

### **1.5.2 Sampling**

The sampling method utilized by the researcher for the purpose of the study was purposive sampling. The sample was made up of local community members of Mokgalwaneng village involved in the CRDP development projects and Department of Rural Development and Land Reform officials. As the purposive sampling method was used, the selection of participants was also based on gender and age to ensure that participatory development related issues associated with both men and woman are captured. The researcher chose 5 CRDP projects namely the housing, brick making, livestock facilities and fencing, sanitation and gardening projects. The projects are discussed in Chapter 3 of this research.

### **1.5.3 Data analysis**

Data analysis is a very important stage in the research process. Data was analyzed through qualitative and quantitative techniques which incorporated the theoretical framework adopted by the study and levels of participation. Presentation of analysis was in the form of texts, tables and percentages

## **1.6 Limitations and challenges of the study**

There were limitations in the process of executing this study and they include the following:

- The community members initially thought that they were going to be paid for the study but after the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the importance of the validity of the study, the community members were willing to co-operate. However, some members refused to participate as they thought that the information they will provide might be used against them and that their names will be revealed to government officials.
- Accessing information from the officials about the projects was not easy because some of them chose not to respond, probably being suspicious that this might be

used against them. Some of the officials who agreed to participate in the study took longer than anticipated to complete the questionnaires.

- Questionnaires were in English but after testing was done on few randomly selected respondents and difficulties with English became apparent, the researcher then had to explain the questions in Setswana to some of the respondents who did not understand English, which consumed time.
- Challenges were also experienced in bringing small groups together since other projects were still on going and majority of community members were busy in their fields. Meetings had to be re-scheduled for the following days for those people who were not available.

Despite the limitations and challenges, the researcher is confident enough that lessons drawn from the study serve as a point of departure for other related research topics.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The study will enable the Mokgalwaneng community and other relevant role players in development projects to realize the importance of community participation; understand the barriers to community participation; advantages of community participation and necessary structures and improvements needed to ensure sustainable development and to increase community participation in the development projects. It will also contribute to better understanding of accountability and the realization of an alternative vision which argues that through participation, the community is enabled and can determine and control the allocation of development resources and not only merely influence its direction (Theron, 2005: 111). Furthermore, the results will be utilized to encourage and improve the participation of community in development projects, thereby contributing towards improving the quality of human lives. The study serves as an entry point for further research undertaking in areas of community participation and rural development projects.

## **1.8 Ethical considerations**

According to Driscoll and Brizee (2010), collecting data from people always raises ethical concerns; therefore in this study ethical issues were dealt in the following way:

- The researcher took care in the manner in which questions were asked to ensure that she does not cause any physical and/or emotional harm to the participants.
- Permission was sought from the potential participants of the study prior to conducting the research.

## **1.9 Chapter layout**

The study has been structured into five chapters:

- Chapter one outlines the background of the study and the problem statement. It also explains the objectives of the study, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, research design and methodology, sampling and data collection.
- Chapter two covers the literature reviewed. It includes all theoretical definitions of key concepts that are relevant to the study. It also presents the contribution of various theories, strategies and criticism that constitute the idea of participation.
- Chapter three covers the research process undertaken, design and methodology. This chapter includes the samples, location of the study, data collection methods, data analysis and shortcomings.
- Chapter four focuses on the findings of the study.
- Chapter five details the conclusion and recommendations based on the findings study.



# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

In this literature review chapter, various articles on community participation in development projects are discussed, views on the concept of development and participation, specifically in the context of projects is examined. Furthermore, this chapter presents definitions of concepts related to community participation.

In contemporary South Africa, in almost all spheres of public service, there is an acknowledgement of the need for transformation of existing development projects (South Africa, 2008). There is a widespread recognition that this process requires “community participation” in the planning and implementation of development projects. People are meant to participate in their own development and this happens most often through development projects. Community participation is important in developmental projects and it provides previously disadvantaged groups (in the case of South Africa) with the space to actively participate in development activities affecting them (South Africa. 2008).

The development of rural communities in South Africa is a national challenge since most of the unemployed and illiterate people in the country are found in these communities (South Africa, 2008). In a newly democratic country such as South Africa, community participation has become a central theme in the broad field of social development as a model for addressing and balancing the injustices of the past (Raniga & Simpson, 2002;36).

Furthermore, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), Section 152 of the Constitution articulates a vision of a developmental local government and sets out the objects of local government which include, providing democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensuring the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promoting social and economic development and encouraging

the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government. The South African government has the mandate to deliver service for all. In the South African model, local government has to play a role as the driver of development.

One of the key pillars of South African developmental local government has been the introduction of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The main purpose of Integrated Development Planning is to ensure that development planning is based on service delivery provision priorities, and is properly integrated with development initiatives that are sustainable in the longer term (SALGA, 2004:7). The IDP is part of an intergovernmental system and should provide a forum for community projects to access resources and work together with local authorities.

Local government as the South African government model has to play a crucial part in the development of the community (Jenkins, 1999:443). This is because community participation contributes to the development of appropriate policy, legislation and regulations while at the same time promoting democracy, as is applied through the Batho Pele (“People First”) principles employed in South Africa. Batho Pele principles were developed and designed to serve as acceptable policy and legislative framework regarding service delivery in the public service (South Africa, 2001). These principles are important because they place the people at the center of development. And the fact that community participation is lacking shows that the principles are not put into practice. Jenkins (1999:444) emphasizes that there is a great need for capacity-building and creation of space for on-going negotiation between the state, private sector and voluntary sectors and civil society.

## **2.2 Clarification of concepts.**

The concepts that are relevant for this study are development, rural development, community development, development projects, participation, community participation and community. Literature was reviewed in relation to these concepts because they

bring out a difference in emphasis and also help to focus the discussion by giving pointers to critical aspects of participation and development.

The study made use of two conceptual frameworks which is “development” and “participation”, both of which are explained below. Development generally and community development in particular, by their very nature are not without challenges, conceptually and practically. Definitions of participation helped to identify the types of participation employed by Mokgalwaneng community in the development projects, their influence on community participation, as well as examining the understanding of the notion of community participation and how it affects participation in development projects.

### 2.2.1 Development

Development is a complex issue, with many different and sometimes contentious definitions. Since development depends on values and on alternative conceptions of the good life, there is no uniform or unique answer (Kanbur, 2006: 5). Thomas (2004: 1) argues that development is ‘contested, complex and ambiguous’. According to Chambers, (1997: 1) development is ‘good change’. The World Development Report as cited in Todaro and Smith (2006:17) define development as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of poverty. Thomas (2000:773) refers to this meaning of development as a ‘process of historical change’.

Gegeo (1998:289) defines development as a process of growth springing from within, which involves a growing individual and collective self-reliance, and focuses not only on material and economic needs, but also on emotional, ethical, and political empowerment. Sen (1999:40) defined development as a freedom. Sen argued that development should encompass five different types of freedom: (1) political freedom, (2) economic facilities, (3) social opportunities, (4) transparency guarantees and (5) protective security.

According to Davids, Maphunye and Theron (2005: 24) development is a process of empowerment, which enables participants to assume greater control over their lives as individuals and as a member of society. Korten (1990:64) refers to development as a process by which the members of a society (communities) increase their potential and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justify distributed improvement in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations.

The World Bank (1991:34) defines development as a sustainable increase in living standards that encompasses material consumption, education, health, and environment protection. This means that where development is concerned, tools should be provided to the community to access such development, and this could be done through providing them with education about development and skills training.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) states that, development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about the active involvement and growing empowerment of the people in shaping their own environment and future. Active community participation representatives are key ingredients for the development of strong, effective and stable institutions (ANC.1994:5). An empowered community has the ability to influence decisions and changes in the larger social system.

In this study, development is considered as a process whereby human needs are satisfied and opportunities are created for future generations to enjoy the benefits.

#### 2.2.1.1 Rural development

The term rural development implies a process of increasing productivity and improving standards of living in rural areas. "Rural" is a location constituting a space where human settlement and infrastructure occupy only small patches of the landscapes, most of which is dominated of fields, pastures, woods, water, mountains and deserts (Ashley and Maxwell, 2001). Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group- the rural poor. It involves extending the benefit of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), 1975).

The Presidential Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (South Africa, 2000) refers to rural development as a dimension concept that focuses not only on poverty alleviation, but also on the change of rural environment. Kakumba and Nsingo (2008:110) state that rural development is used in schemes aimed at improving the countryside or peripheral areas, with a characteristics agrarian population.

Okiy (2005:1) says that rural development is a basic for economic development and information is an important ingredient in the development process. People in rural areas whether literate or not should have access to any kind of information which will help them to become capable and productive in their social and political obligation, to become better informed citizens generally. Rural development is a vital component of fighting poverty and eradicating dependency on communities.

In this study, rural development is referred as a process of increasing productivity and improving standards of living in rural areas.

#### 2.2.1.2 Community development

Roux (1995:29) defines community development as a process whereby people are enabled to mobilize and manage forces and resources in a community by creating opportunities for democratic decision-making, active participation and co-operation, self-help, development of leadership and utilization of education opportunities to promote the intrinsic potential and forces in the community as a whole. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:4) argue that community development is a method which brings about a “desired change”, a process in which local community groups could take the initiative to formulate objectives which involve change in their living conditions. Community development is a planned effort of residents to improve their quality of life.

Rothman (1979:26) defined community development as a specific model of, or approach to, community practice along with community organization, social planning and social action. He referred to this as locality development, which can be defined as a process to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community's initiative. According to Dunhan (1970:140) community development is an organized effort of people to improve the conditions of community life and the capacity of the people for participation, self-direction and integrated effort in community affairs.

Community development can, in the case of this research be taken as overall development of the quality of life in a community. This development of a quality life in a community context is implemented by government through different projects that are the initiative of the government.

Community development efforts seeks to unleash the productive potential of rural villages and communities through identification of felt needs, local organization and self-help, in the expectation that such activities would overcome the fatalism, powerlessness and traditional thought to characterize the lives of the rural poor (World Bank, 1991). Community development according to Ajayi (1995:17) is a social process by which human beings can become more competent to live with and gain some control over local conditions and changing world. Community development requires the involvement and participation of local residents in identifying the strategies they wish to use to improve their quality of life. Importantly, it relies on interaction between people and joint action, rather than individual activity – what some sociologists call “collective agency” (Flora and Flora, 1993:36).

The common aspects of all the definitions above are that they all indicate that community development is not just about helping people realize their own interests; it is about identifying assets that can help, developing the leadership to mobilize residents, building the capacity to act in the future and also promotes active participation of community members and that community participation is frequently driven more by practice than theory.

#### 2.2.2.3 Development project

A project by its nature is defined as a “package” filled by activities to be achieved within a time-limited framework and cost-effective budget (Cleaver, 1999:597; Botes & Rensburg, 2000:44). Arguing along the same line (Maylor, . 2003) claims that a project is an interrelated set of activities that has a definite starting and ending point and results in the accomplishment of a unique often major outcome. According to Wideman (2000:3) a project is a novel undertaking to create a new product or service, the delivery of which signal completion and begins when resources are dedicated to its specific goal. The World Bank defined “rural development project” as a “poverty-oriented project” in which

50% or more of the direct benefits accrue to the rural target group (IBRD, 1988:4). Projects make a vital contribution to industrialization and hence the growth of nation's economy.

Each development project is unique and faces different challenge (Kumar, 2002:25). Rural development projects were seen as important drivers of development, as they provide the inputs for industrial development and increase exports earnings, and contribute to food security (Kumar, 2002:25). Projects are being implemented but are failing the community because of very specific issues and one of them may be that development is a long term process and may not be achievable through projects. Projects can help individuals to develop their capacity and even move out of poverty, but the belief such small-scale developments could have any impact on social and economic structures has long been exposed as a mistake. Thus, all people, and not just the poor, have a role to play in poverty reduction (Warburton, 1998: 20-21).

### 2.2.2 Participation

The way participation is defined, depends upon the context and background in which participation is applied. With regard to rural community development, participation includes people's involvement in the decision making process, attending meetings, contributing to community projects and implementing programs. Participation may mean that communities are allowed direct and ultimate control in taking decisions concerning their affair (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998:6). Cahn and Camper (1968:211-224) stress that participation enhances the dignity of the participants, while at the same time utilizing local resources and knowledge.

Oakley (1991:5) defines participation as collaboration, in which people, voluntarily, or because of some persuasion or incentives, agrees to collaborate with an externally determined development project, often by contributing their labor and resources in return for some expected benefits. Munguti (1989:23) stresses that participation involves people who have a common problem that affects their lives, and helps them to be aware of why it is a problem and why it should be eradicated. Participation is seen as developmental, educative, and integrative and as a means of protecting freedom

(Roberts, 2004:24). One of the key assumptions of participation is that local residents will be more supportive of the project, and therefore increase the likelihood of its success, if residents have input in the decision-making process (Roberts, 2004:24).

Imparato and Ruster (2003:20) define participation in development program as a process in which people, and especially disadvantaged people, influence resource allocation and policy and program formulation or implementation; are involved at different levels and degree of intensity in the identification, timing, planning, design, implementation, evaluation, and post-implementation stages of development projects. Participation is also referred to by World Bank 1994 (as cited in Guimaraes, 2009:6) as a process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affects them. According to Dancer and Kamvounias (2005:445-454) participation can be seen as an active engagement process which can be sorted into five categories: (1) preparations, (2) contribution to discussion, (3) group skills, (4) community skills and (5) attendance.

There is no doubt that meaningful participation is about achieving power, which is the power to influence the decisions that affect one's livelihood. Community participation is viewed as an end if it becomes a long-term process, the purpose of which is to develop and strengthen the capabilities of people in order to participate directly in development initiatives (Kumar, 2002:26). Burkley (1993:58) points out that until recently the notion of participation as a means to achieve effective development, still dominate in rural development practice. But community participation as a means or end is an issue which has bothered both development thinkers and workers. This comparative analysis will be presented briefly below:

**Table 2.1: Comparative analysis: Participation as a means or an end (Kumar, 2002)**

<b>Participation as a means</b>	<b>Participation as an end</b>
Implies the use of participation to achieve some predetermined goal or objective	Attempts to empower people to take part in their own development



Attempts to utilize existing resources in order to achieve the objective of the project/program	Ensures increased role of people in development initiatives
Common in government program, specifically for mobilizing community to improve efficiency of delivery system	More favored by non- governmental organizations than by government
Stresses the achievement of the objective rather than the act of participation itself	Focuses on improving the ability of the people to participate rather than just achieve predetermined project objectives
Participation take a more passive form	It is relatively more active and dynamic

Therefore, based on these definitions of participation, one can realize that all definitions see participation as an important instrument of empowering people in the development process. In a simple way, participation gives power to the people. However, for the participation to be meaningful the action must be voluntary and not forced externally (Kumar. 2002:27). In order for the people to participate effectively, they must be willing to participate in development activities and education and awareness is very essential in influencing community participation.

In this study, participation has been referred to community contribution to the projects, involvement in decision-making, implementation, identifying priorities and broadly the ability to influence decisions and to object where different opinions regarding their community projects are held. It is argued that participation of the people who are affected by development in general is very important for achieving the goals of the projects.

#### 2.2.2.1 Community participation

The word community is a multidimensional and complex concept that is defined differently by different scholars. From a sociological point of view, community means a group of people who live in the same place, share same interests, a neighborhood or common set of circumstances (McMillian English Dictionary, 2007). According to van

Deventer and Kruger (2009: 256) community may also refer to a cultural or ethnic or language group or may refer to group of persons having the same or similar interest. The characteristics and behavior of communities differs from one community to another depending on the historical background. The main point is that community must share the same characteristics. According to Green and Mercer (2001: 1931) community can be defined as something that has a sense of place, boundary or belonging.

A community means interaction, equality and opportunity within the group and the possibility to grow in collective consciousness (Oakley *et al*, 1991:220). Community has been defined simply by Smith (2006:11) as residents of a geographical neighborhood or multi-neighborhood area- no matter how they relate to each other. Community is one of the central concepts in the social sciences, yet it frequently lacks a precise definition. Tshikwatamba (2004:257) defines community as a cluster of people living together and sharing common cultures and values. This author emphasizes the importance of culture and values as indicators of who will be accepted as a member of the community.

The above definitions of “community” suggest that community is a contingent phenomenon dependent on a number of conditions to achieve social interactions in pursuit of mutual interests. Simply living in the same place does not create community. The fact that most of the population had no political rights until 1994, demonstrates the total absence of participation of any sort. Tshabalala (2006: 46) point out that participation of local community in local government system in South Africa has its unique practice.

The World Bank cited in Mansuri and Rao (2004:10) describes community participation as the active involvement of a defined community in at least some aspects of project design and implementation. According to the article, participation is expected to lead to better designed projects, better targeted benefits and more cost-effective and timely delivery of project inputs. Simanowits (1997:28) defines community participation as something that happens in relation to something else. He mentions that, in most development projects, community participation relates to the involvement of a community in externally initiated development interventions. In this case, an external body initiates a project and the community participates.

Community participation is essential for concrete development in rural areas. Theron (2005:120) views community participation as a process to give communities an opportunity to determine their own destination. This means that provision of grassroots level with abilities, which could enable them to negotiate development delivery systems and be able to take informed decisions, in terms of their development needs and priorities (Theron, 2005: 119). Myers and Hirsch (1999:45) view community participation as an active process by which client groups or beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of the development program with a view of enhancing their well-being in terms of income, person growth, self-reliance, spiritual development and values they cherish.

According to Lyons et al (2001: 1233), community participation has become more and more important as a means of empowering the community and making physical improvements more sustainable. In a case where improvements are in a form of a building such as for example schools, health and shopping centers, the community will have to take care of that building and they will only do so if they were involved in the decision-making stage.

Involving community in rural development projects has the potential to boost their livelihoods. Oakley and Marsden (1984:18) states that community participation in the context of rural development is not concerned in the first instance with how to achieve a totally participatory society but it is more concerned with how to bring about some rural sector on the part of those who depend on that sector for a livelihood.

Leisner (1974) in Lombard (1992:256) contends that the purpose of community participation is to create opportunities for the community to take part in planning and policy making, allocation and distribution of resources and management of services. By allowing community to participate in the design, implementation and evaluation of rural development projects, local experience and knowledge could be incorporated in rural development projects enhancing not only the success of these projects, but commitment to them (Burkley 1993: 33)

The nature of community participation depends to a great extent on the nature of organization and mobilization at the grassroots level as well as the programmatic

purpose of such participation. As such, community participation is quite clearly not an unproblematic engagement of contesting power relations. On the contrary, community participation is often driven by specific socio-economic goals that seek to ensure a better life for all, especially for those who have historically been marginalized during the successive colonial-cum-apartheid regimes in South Africa.

Oakley et al. (1991:13-14) indicate that, the important issue to stress is that participation, whatever form or direction it might take, cannot be regarded simply as some kind of physical or tangible input into development project. Any form of participation occurs within a particular context and will be influenced by the economic and social forces that mould that context.

Based on the above definitions of community participation, it can be concluded that community participation is the involvement of the community in all stages of development projects affecting them and it also involves the establishment of decision making bodies that are represented by and accessible to the local communities.

### **2.3 Characteristics of participation**

**Decision making-** The community should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives. They should be included in the decision making process such as in initiation, planning, implementation and evaluation of the development projects.

**Planning-** Participation offers new opportunities for creative thinking and innovative planning and development. Participation is understood as giving a few influential people a voice in local decision-making and planning, whereas the most needy and deprived, who may be the majority of the community, are not even consulted, let alone given part in the process (Johnston, 1982:202). The community should therefore be involved in the planning stage of the development projects.

**Implementation-** The most important aspect of community involvement at the implementation stage is to develop the sense of ownership of the implemented activity for long-term sustainability. Community participation in the implementation stage of a project can also reduce costs and provide training and employment. It can also be used

as a means of exploiting the free labour of beneficiaries. In this form, participation is nothing more than “an ideologically-acceptable packaging for a theory of economic efficiency for the poorest” (Jaglin, 1994:113).

**Empowerment-** Empowerment increases the capabilities of the poor and holds accountable the institutions that provide them. To this end, empowerment attempts to give power and knowledge to rural communities to assist in creating a better quality of life, so that in the future they will have the skills to rely less on the external forces to provide vital services and infrastructure. Empowerment is usually seen as a key for good quality of life, increase human dignity, good governance, pro-poor growth, project effectiveness and improved service delivery (Narayan, 2002:8). Participation in development projects is a strong form of empowerment. It entails building capacity of the community so that they can make rational decisions and undertake meaningful input for natural benefits. It does not necessarily entail the equal sharing of power (Meshack, 2004:62).

**Mobilization-** Participation entails self-mobilization, self-reliance and empowerment of the development process. It is the series of interventions designed to increase the level of involvement of a community in the decision that affect its own development. Mobilization promotes community participation in control and decision making of all actions affecting community as whole. Participation of all members of a target community is essential to both poverty reduction and community development and strengthening.

**Evaluation-** It has been recognized that participation in evaluation is important but rarely carried out (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980:213-235). If direct methods of evaluation are not available, communities will invariably evaluate projects indirectly through using patterns of the facilities provided (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980:213-235).

**Effectiveness-** According to Breuer (1999:9), participation can help target the resources more effectively and efficiently. Participation promotes efficiency, effectiveness and equity in total process of development (Arora, 1999:68). Hence involving communities in decision making will lead to better decisions being made,

which are more appropriate and more sustainable because they are owned by the people themselves (Breuer, 1999:9). Participation can reduce the risk of project failure and the cost of the project.

**Skills and knowledge-** By participating, the community gains skills and knowledge and thus sustain the project. Community participation teaches communities how to solve conflicts and allows for different perspectives to be heard, enhances rural people's learning potential and the ability to access and handle information. It also entails improving thinking skills.

The people should be at the center of the development. Hoffman (1990: 159) supported this when he argued that, 'we must not speak on behalf of others who are able to speak in their own name". In this case, the local people should be allowed to contribute their knowledge, practice and innovations in the process of project sustainability for sustainable development.

In community development, members of community have the main role in the process of development and they are doing things for themselves. Participation is a process by which people are enabled to become actively and genuinely involved in defining the issue of concern to them, in decision-making about factors affecting their lives, in formulating and implementing policies, in planning, developing and delivering services and taking action to achieve change (Breuer, 1999:10).

Midgley *et al* (1986: 25) assert that participation requires the voluntary and democratic involvement of people in (1) contributing to the development efforts, (2) sharing equitably in the benefits derived there from and (3) decision making in respect of settling goals, formulating policies and planning and implanting economic and social development programs.

Oakley and Marsden (1984:23), state that there are two main vehicles for implementing the notion of participation; (1) community development programs which were aimed at preparing the rural population collaborate with government development plans and (2) the establishment of formal organizations (cooperatives, farmers association, etc.) which were to provide the structure through which the rural people could have some contact with, and voice in, development programs.

## **2.4 Importance of community participation**

The common believe is that involving community in rural development programs and empowering them, have the potential to boost their livelihood and foster development (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008: 107).

Community participation empowers the primary beneficiary of development programs or projects by helping them to break away from a dependency mentality (Burkey, 1993:53). Creighton (2005:19) also states that the community participation promotes self-confidence and self-awareness. Cooke and Khothari (2001:37) maintain that participation approaches can generally be viewed as having two broad objectives: first, the efficiency arguments that participation will yield better project outcomes; and second, the equity or empowerment arguments that participation is a process of promoting the capacity of people to improve their own lives.

Another importance of community participation is sustainability (Kumar, 2002: 23), who further stated that, through participation, resources available for development projects will be used more efficiently and fewer costs will be incurred if the people themselves are responsible for the project (Kumar, 2002: 27). Similarly, Hoddinott, et al (2001:98), basing their reasoning on their case study in South Africa, assert that participation of the beneficiaries is important because use of locally available information, unknown to outsiders, reduces the costs of intervention. Ghai and Vivian (1992:50) argue that even in sustainable development, participation is a key to the successful implementation of projects, because it may result in the sustainable management of local resources by the people.

According to Nampila (2005: 41), through participation, the community will be able to assess their own situation, organize themselves as a powerful group and work creatively towards changing society and building up a new world. Due to a diversity of opinions and perspectives from different role players, community participation helps to obtain a balanced perspective of key issues and to identify creative solutions to problems like for example, the partnership-in-planning approach.

Community participation can be seen as either an integral component of empowerment or as both a cause and an effect of empowerment (Perkins, Brown & Taylor, 1996: 86-87). Empowerment is a process through which people become strong enough to participate within, share in control of and influence events and institutions affecting their lives (Torres, 1986). It helps to achieve greater citizen's satisfaction with their communities and development at large and ensures sustainable development and continuity of the development processes.

## **2.5 Challenges of participation in rural development projects**

Participation is a costly exercise, and a time consuming process. It may necessitate the commitment of a wide range of an organization's staff members over a long period of time (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, 2001: 9-10). The International Institute for Sustainable Development (2000) notes that participatory approaches usually fail to sustain community participation after the implementing organization has withdrawn. This means that empowerment of the poor to the point where they can continue on their own is a big challenge.

Kumar (2002:28) mentions that community participation may lead to delay and slow progress in initial stages of the field work, thereby delaying the achievement of physical as well as financial targets. However, it should be remembered that obstacles to community participation are directly related to one's perspective of community participation (Oakley and Marsden, 1984:29). Kok and Gelderbloem (1994:45) state that community participation can bring latent conflicts to the surface and it can delay projects start up, while increasing the demands on project personnel and managers. Illiteracy is an inhibiting factor in community participation. This is because illiterate people may be marginalized by professional and technical communication during the community participation process (Theron, 2005:65).

Gruber and Tickett (cited in Laverack, 2001:13) argue that participation without a formal leader who takes responsibility for getting things done, dealing with conflict and providing a direction for the group often results in disorganization. A paper by Schafft and Greenwood mention that "power relations play a significant role in the success or



failure of a project. If leaders do not buy into the process then there is a strong possibility that the project will fail.

Lack of accountability by the community-in the light of encouraging communities to participate in decision making process, Pauw (in Houston *et al.*, 2000:83) states that this could create an “unfair” situation in that the community members cannot be held liable for the wrong decisions that they take. Contrary to this view, the researcher is of the opinion that it remains the responsibility of the government to guide and provide enough information to communities to ensure that their decision-making in development projects is informed and accountable.

The weak socio-economic position of the rural poor obstructs them from meaningful participation (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008:118). Gama (2000:3) and Hussein (2003:277) supports this statement and point out that socio-economic factors such as lack of effective civic education, illiteracy and poverty, which culminate in a tendency towards apathy, hamper community participation in development processes.

Musukwa (2001:20) and Hussein (2003:278) point out that citizens are reluctant to participate if they are frustrated by the rising cost of living and economic conditions that rob them of their peace of mind and desire to effectively participate. The weak financial position of local communities not only reduces the capacity of communities to participate in development projects, but also affect the whole process of rural development (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008:116). Having inadequate resources negatively impacts a rural community’s ability to effectively influence and develop policy compared to other players in the policymaking process.

Due to unpredictability of human behavior, problems may develop at any time despite good planning and good intentions. Stakeholders may use community participation as a platform to further their own agendas and they may raise old, unsolved issues that are extended to the current initiatives. The outcomes of participation process cannot be predetermined because people are unpredictable. The process must be flexible in order to adapt to unforeseen circumstances. It is not always possible to satisfy everyone,

which can result in some people not approving of the initiatives (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, 2001: 9-10).

Everatt (2001:33-34) indicates that “one of the principles of community participation is to involve the target group in the design and location of projects intended to benefit them”. Where the community feel that they are not part of the design, they are likely to lose interest and not assume ownership of the project.

These challenges should be taken into account whenever a development project is to be implemented in a particular community. This can contribute to the sustainability of the project. Project members not working in unity pose a threat to the success and sustainability of the project. Being aware of the challenges can help people to find ways to deal with such challenges and to minimize them in the future. Furthermore, if these challenges are not considered, this might lead to development project failure.

## **2.6 Levels, Ladder and Typology of Participation**

Levels of participation

Raniga and Simpson (2002:183) developed in their article, a framework on levels of participation which ranges from passive to interactive participation. Raniga and Simpson’s seven levels of participation are presented below:

- Passive participation-in passive participation, projects have been started but have not involved the primary stakeholders or end-users.
- Participation in information giving- people answer questions posed by an external organization which may or may not take the answers into account in their planning efforts.
- Participation by consultation- participation by consultation is described as usually involving external agents consulting with locals.
- Participation for material incentive- people participate by providing resources, for example, money, time and/labor, in return for material reward.

- Functional participation- people participate by taking part in joining needs assessment and planning as well as implementation.
- Interactive participation- this type of approach can be seen as being rooted in participatory rural appraisal or participatory learning.
- Spontaneous mobilization- is when a group of people decide to take action without initial outside intervention.

Johnston (1982:203) identified various levels of participation and they are as follows:

- Participation in response to an order or force

Participation in an activity in response to coercion by an authoritative figure as the lowest level of participation, whereby people have no share in decision-making and are merely complying with predetermined plans by providing material, labour, or even votes or acceptance of specific conditions.

- Voluntary participation prompted by a reward

This level is better than the abovementioned one, because people can at least use their discretion and make the choice of participating in the activity.

- Voluntary participation prompted by awareness

Here participation is a result of awareness of the need to participate, and is therefore more responsible than either of the previous two.

- Participation by suggestions and criticism aimed at the improvement of an activity

At this level, people have assumed a critical attitude and are prepared to make suggestions for improvements and changes, and given the opportunity, they are prepared to participate in a more responsible way.

- Participation by taking initiative

At this level, participants take the initiative to promote a new activity and assume responsibility for carrying it through successfully.

- Participation through initiative

Johnston (1982:203) calls this “the highest level of participation” attained through several years of experience, in which the participation of a group of people has involved defining their situation, determining priorities, and planning, implementing and evaluating development activities, projects and programs.

The following are ladder and typology of participation:

Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation is one of the best. Originally developed in the 1960s, it retains considerable contemporary relevance. Arnstein’s point of departure is the citizen on the receiving end of projects or program. The setting of objectives is constrained by the level of participation being allowed in any one process.

According to Arnstein (1969:66-75), the bottom rungs of the ladder are (1) manipulation and (2) therapy. These two rungs describe the levels of non-participation that have been contributed by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable power holders to educate or cure the participation. Rungs (3) informing and (4) consultation progress to levels of “tokenism” that allow the have-nots to hear and have a voice. But under this condition they lack the power to ensure that their views are heeded by the powerful.

Rung (5) placation is simply a higher level of tokenism because the ground rules allows the have-nots to advice, but retain for the power holders the continued right to decide. Further up the ladder are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision-making clout, citizens can enter into a (6) partnership that enables them to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional power holders. At the topmost rungs, (7) delegated power and (8) citizen control where have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power.

**Table 2.2: Arnstein's Ladder of Participation (Arnstein, 1969)**

<b>8</b>	<b>Citizen Control</b>	}	<b>Degrees of Citizen Power</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Delegated Power</b>		
<b>6</b>	<b>Partnership</b>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Placation</b>	}	<b>Degrees of Tokenism</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Consultation</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>Informing</b>		
<b>2</b>	<b>Therapy</b>	}	<b>Non- Participation</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Manipulation</b>		

The importance of Arnstein's ladder of participation is that three of these categories are divided into eight specific rungs and each describes a different degree of external involvement and local control and reflects the power relationship between.

Arnstein describes the first category non-participatory as tactics whose real objectives are to enable power holders to educate or cure participants. The ladder depicts participation as essentially a power struggle between citizens trying to move up the ladder and controlling organizations and institutions (intentionally or otherwise) limiting their ascent to the 'top' and barring citizen's ability to claim control or power for themselves.

While Arnstein ladder of participation is from the perspective of those on the receiving end, Jules Pretty's (1995) typology of participation speaks more to the user of the participatory approach. His typology is equally normative; going from 'bad' forms of participation to 'better' forms of participation (See Table 3).

**Table 2.3 Pretty's typology of participation (1995)**

<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Characteristics of each type</u></b>
Manipulative participation	Participation is simply a pretense, with 'people's' representatives on official boards, but who are un-elected and have no power
Passive participation	People participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcements and administration or project management without any listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.
Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information-gathering processes, and so control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
Participation for material Incentives	People participate by contributing resources; for example, labor, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Farmers may provide the fields and labor, but are involved in neither experimentation nor the process of learning. It is very common to see this 'called' participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging technologies or practices when the incentives end.
Functional participation	Participation seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduced costs. People may participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision-making, but tends to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents. At worst, local people may still only be co-opted to serve external goals.
Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systemic and structured learning processes. As groups take control over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
Self-mobilization	People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Self-mobilization can spread if government and NGOs provide an enabling framework of support. Such self-initiated mobilization may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power

What Pretty's typology helps make clear is that the motivation of those who adopt and practice participatory approaches is an important factor, if by no means the only one in the shaping of interventions. Both Arnstein's and Pretty's typologies describes a spectrum defined by a shift in control by authorities to control by the people or citizens. The end points are rather different.

## **2.7 Case studies on community participation in other parts of the World.**

According to the case of Marisa (1996:434) the degree of community involvement was found to vary widely from project to project in the United Kingdom (UK). Training elements appear frequently, particularly in the case of programmes that are initiated by a central government and which involve technical inputs, such as those to improve water supply and sanitation facilities. Most communities are expected to provide funds and labour for the projects that they undertake (and even for projects that are undertaken for them).

The case study by Robo & Absoud (2003:98) revealed that some rural development projects in Nandi District, Tanzania had stalled because of poor co-ordination, poor management, a diminishing teamwork spirit and a decline in commitment to community projects and activities. If the declining rural economy is to be revived, all officials at all levels must begin by informing the rural population of what is happening and by guiding them towards full participation in projects meant for their own welfare.

Actors have many personal and collective motivations for participation. In a case of community health committee in Melbourne, Australia (Boston, 1999:75), participants attended the committee meetings for a wide variety of reasons including to stay in contact, to meet new people, to check the use of health resources and to make Australia a true multicultural country.

The case study by Moyo (2012:104) indicated that the implementation of development projects in Bulilima and Mangwe district, Zimbabwe had left the community members in dissatisfaction. The people of Bulilima and Mangwe expressed that they were not fully

participating in the design, planning and decision making processes of the project cycle. Furthermore the beneficiaries were not at all given a platform to air out their views on the development projects they wanted to be implemented. Planning and decision making are the most crucial stages for local people to actively participate in. The study further revealed that in Bulilima and Mangwe district, community participation has not been adequately practiced so as to benefit local communities

Active community participation is essential to empower and bring about sustainable community development at the grassroots level. Research in the field (Chambers, 2007; De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998; Estralla et al., 2000; Green, 2007; Rahman, 1993) clearly indicates that participating communities achieve greater citizen satisfaction in their community.

Cheng (2012) in his study on community participation noted that there is little research on the impact of government regulation and according to Taylor, (2007) on understanding community participation portrays that previous studies of factors influencing the level of community participation have tended to take a general approach using a single theoretical framework to explain community participation and fails to explain why community participation have not improved over time.

## **2.8 Modernization theory**

As a theory that influenced and continues to influence community development and therefore community participation, modernization theory is based on the broad belief that society move from traditional to modern, through a series of stages. According to Davids et al (2005:9) “the essence of modernization is that if ‘less-developed’ countries are to become ‘developed’, they should follow the path taken by the developed countries over the past 100-200 years”. Modernization theory was actualised after the Second World War when the Bretton Woods Institutions were set up. The central idea of this theory is that the development logic of economic growth in general and industrialization, in particular, will impel societies towards a particular direction of change (Coetzee, 2002; De Beer & Swanepoel, 2000).



In the 1950s and early 1960s, development was viewed as a process consisting of stages of economic growth. It was expected that countries should go through these stages for modernisation to occur. These stages included the development of agriculture in rural areas with intense industrialisation in urban areas as well as expansion into the global markets (Smith, 2003). It was argued that underdeveloped economies should transform the focus of their economies from a heavy emphasis on traditional subsistence agriculture to a modern, urbanised, more industrially diverse manufacturing and service economy (Smith, 2003). Institutions offered financial assistance to developing countries through conditional grants and loan, for massive industrialisation and mechanisation to support the Green Revolution of that period (Smith, 2003).

The literature points out that the prerequisite for poor countries to modernise was that they should follow the development path of developed countries (Graaff, 2001). Poor countries were commonly urged to modernise for a number of reasons. First, the economies of many developing countries were too inward looking. In this respect, the import substitution industrialisation strategies that were common in the 1960s were perceived to be too state driven and did not allow these countries to compete in global markets (Williams, 2007). The logical consequence was that developing countries had to liberalise trade. Second, poor countries used traditional technologies (especially in agriculture) and adhered mainly to traditional norms. These traditional technologies and norms were considered stumbling blocks for development (Pavlich, 1988).

Among the criticisms laid against modernisation theory is that the theory assumes there is a single way to advancement, which is not the case. According to Fair (as cited by Swanepoel & De Beer, 1997:19), the theory assumes that all societies evolve from a common starting point of underdevelopment and transform along a reductionist continuum of economic and social change from traditional to modern society. This belief has been certainly proven wrong by the rise of the Asian Tigers as well as, most recently, the spectacular rise of China as a global power in the past few decades (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000). However, the emphasis on economic development as perpetuated by modernization theory still continues in most government initiated

community development at the expense of other aspects of community life such as cultural, psychological and spiritual development-a holistic approach to development.

## **2.9 The Importance of Development in Rural Communities**

Development increases choices, sustains attitude, improves the function of institutions and enhances quality of life. McClenaghan (2000:1) points out that community development is in general a social learning process, which serves to empower individuals and involve them as citizens in collective activities aimed at socioeconomic development. Roodt (2001: 478) argues that development is not just the provision of material goods such as housing, sewerage, water and electricity, and sports facilities, but importantly, entails the empowerment of people, that is, enhancing the capacity of people to take control of their own lives. Development reduces and eventually eliminates poverty, ignorance and diseases and expands the well-being and opportunity for all.

It is argued by Du Toit (1997: 598-599) that development is to be responsible to the needs of impoverished communities, and then it must be a participative, integrative and continuous process which acknowledges the linkages between all activities of development process. Community development has always had a diverse set of objectives: solving local problems (e.g., unemployment and poverty), addressing inequalities of wealth and power, promoting democracy, and building a sense of community (Rubin & Rubin, 1992).

Passmore (1971:9) affirms that community development is a process by which the efforts of the people themselves are used to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate the communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress. Dunham (1960:33) indicates that community development is an organized effort to improve the conditions of community life, and the capacity for community integration and self-direction.

De Beer and Swanepoel (1988:2) point out that the aim of community development is to bring back life in its completeness, making villagers self-reliant and self-respecting, acquainted with cultural traditions of their own country and competent to make effective use of modern resources for the fullest development of their physical, social, economic and intellectual conditions. Ferrinho (1980:49) points out that, as a philosophy and agent of change, community development aims at continuing modernization by creating an ongoing process in which change and conflict are real. Makumbe (1996:81) says that the aim of community development is to raise the standard of living of people by encouraging them to actively participate in various development-oriented activities.

Rural development is a crucial tool for contracting global poverty, disease, human slavery and inequality. It not only creates a new level of self-sufficient and satisfaction for members of a society who may have never experienced such development, but as a consequence of globalization and the new associated challenges in the developing world, rural development is more necessary and pressing than ever before (GAPS, 2007).

## **2.10 Role players in rural community development projects**

According to Csaki (2001:572) role-players in rural development projects are attempting to, in conjunction with the implementation of strategies, improve the monitoring of regional and global progress in rural development. These role players play an important part in the development of rural community. Their role is to ensure that the rural areas are developed according to the needs of the community members. With the assistance of each other, these role players can ensure a successful development project.

### **2.10.1 Government**

Governments are expected to play a major role in enhancing the development of rural communities. There are three spheres of government namely the national government, provincial government and local government (municipalities).

#### 2.10.1.1 National government

This sphere of government can simply be termed as the law matter. IDASA (2004), states that laws and policies are passed by national government for the better operation and uniformity for the two lower spheres of government.

#### 2.10.1.2 Provincial government

According to IDASA (2004:3), this sphere of government has the primary responsibility for social services delivery. In other words, they plan development activities and implement them in their communities.

#### 2.10.1.3 Local government (Municipalities)

Municipalities in their mandate are seen as having the role of creating employment and economic growth in their areas and reducing poverty amongst their local residents (Oldfield and Parnel, 1998). This new role entailed giving priority to the basic needs and promoting social and economic development. According to IDASA (2004:3) municipality (local government) is responsible for a variety of municipal functions and some may be shared with provincial government, for instance, municipal planning, budgeting relations and municipal public transport amongst others.

The Municipal System Act 2000 sets up municipalities IDPs as points of managing and evaluating performances, budgeting and allocating resources, and changing organizations. Also it makes community participation compulsory, in the content of IDP, as well as in the process by which they are drafted.

#### 2.10.2 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

NGOs play an important role in ensuring that rural areas develop. They do that by developing programs that transform communities from a deprived to human dignity state. Their intent is to emphasize self-reliance and popular participation in their activities (Olujide, 2006:120). According to IDASA (2004:3), NGOs are independent bodies which in many cases have unbiased interest in the operation of government. Most often NGOs at whatever level and discipline do impact lives of communities positively.

### 2.10.3 Community

The local community plays an important role in development programs and projects. When the community participates in development projects taking place in their own area, it assists them in identifying key issues of concern that needs to be considered which helps towards making the development project a success.

## **2.11 South African government developmental initiatives for rural communities**

The South African government has launched some developmental initiatives such as mentioned below:

### 2.11.1 National Public Works Program (NPWP)

This program was established in 1995 to assist in addressing the plight of rural people (South Africa, 1995). This program was intended to provide, among others, education and training to unemployed people, especially women, the youth and rural dwellers, to increase their chances of becoming self-employed and/or entering the formal economy (Hercules, Anderson & Dangor, 1997).

Adato and Haddad (2002:31) consider South Africa's Public Works' program as being among the most innovative internationally, with multiple objectives that include, not only job creation, poverty reduction and infrastructure development; but, simultaneously job training and community capacity building.

### 2.11.2 Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS)

The government also initiated this program which aimed at, among others, maximizing the potential of the people of South Africa, through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to work productively and competitively in order to achieve a raising quality of life (South Africa, 2001).

### 2.11.3 Expanded Public Works Program (EPWP)

This program was launched in April 2004 to promote economic growth and create sustainable development. It aimed at providing poverty and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed, thus according them an opportunity to carry out socially useful activities (Department of Public Works, 2005). This program targeted especially the poor from rural communities.

#### 2.11.4 Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity

This program was developed in 1995, and it was aimed at responding to what were perceived as the five aspects of rural reality, namely poverty, agricultural dualism, new local government, poor support service and spatial chaos (South Africa, 1995).

#### 2.11.5 The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP)

The RDP was a second prime government policy document during South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994. Its central theme was the need to reduce poverty afflicting the country's 40 million people, thereby redressing inequalities and injustice of the past. Access to water, jobs, land and healthcare were among the priorities highlighted in the RDP (Aliber, 2003:476).

The RDP states that democracy requires all South African's to have access to power and the right to exercise their power which will ensure that all people participate in the process of reconstructing the country (ANC, 1994: 120)

#### 2.11.6 The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS)

In 2001, government introduced the fourth key policy strategy in its endeavor to fight poverty, one element of which is the Integrated Sustainable and Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS). According to Coleman (2001) poverty targeting and alleviation is an explicit objective of this program.

Government project initiatives that are designed to improve the community's social (and otherwise) wellbeing should be respected by the communities and the community can do this by taking care of developmental resources that are provided by the government.

#### 2.11.7 Rural Development and Land Reform

This is the very latest established development program of the South African government (South Africa, 2009). The creation of a dedicated ministry for rural development shows the level of commitment of government to uplift the living standards of people in rural communities.

The Land Reform program is one of South Africa's most ambitious tools of transforming society. The South African version of land reform has three broad programs namely; the land redistribution, land restitution, and land tenure reform.

#### 2.11.7.1 Land Redistribution

The purpose of the land redistribution program is to provide the poor with access to land for residential and productive uses, in order to improve their quality of life and their income. The program aims to assist the poor, labor tenants, farm workers, women, as well as emergent farmers.

#### 2.11.7.2 Land Restitution

This program covers cases of forced removals which took place after 1913. They are being dealt with by a Land Claims Court and Commission, established under the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 22 of 1994.

#### 2.11.7.3 Land Tenure Reform

This program is being addressed through a review of present land policy, administration and legislation to improve the tenure security of all South Africans and to accommodate diverse forms of land tenure, including types of communal tenure (DRDLR, 2009).

### **2.12 Factors contributing to rural development project failure**

A study by Rohe, Bratt and Biswas (2003: 2) defined failure of a community development project as a corporation that simply went out of business regardless of the fact that it accomplished its intended objectives and benefited its target population. Failure can refer to an unsuccessful project that fails to perform a duty or expected action, non-occurrence or non-performance. Rural development efforts fail for many reasons but the lack of community participation and inadequate communication between projects and the people have been cited as root causes. Below are some of the common reasons why rural development project fails:

- Poor planning.

Many rural development projects fail because the so-called beneficiaries do not truly participate in the assessment of needs and identification of problems to be addressed by such efforts. Rural people are thus regarded as mere recipients, rather than actual creators of change and progress. Poor project planning was rated as one of major causes of project failure (Pieterse, 2001: 60). Pieterse

(2001: 60) further indicated that planning the project consists of determining which tasks need to be completed to achieve project objective and allows the project manager to draw the project plan. The project plan is the roadmap for execution (Richman, 2012: 119).

- Ineffective training methods and lack of skills.

Training methods used in rural development projects frequently do not effectively transfer knowledge and skills to rural people who have low levels of literacy and proficiency in formal education processes. According to Shonhiwa (2006: 94), lack of management skills leads to deficiency in management. Low productivity may go unnoticed for a long time if management does not have the skills or ability to detect it. It is common knowledge that if project members do not possess the necessary skills then this affects project sustainability and eventually leads to project failing. According to Carlos (2012), the success or failure of a project depends on the expertise of the project manager and the team, but in most cases the burden of the project failure falls on the project manager.

- Rural community's low sense of power.

Some rural people, especially women, the oppressed and the very poor, usually feel powerless to steer development policies, priorities, technology, programs and agenda. They believe that development is controlled and decided almost entirely by outsiders and they cannot influence this process. This sense of powerlessness can be due to non-inclusion of the people in creating development programs.

- Inadequate promotion and communication

Many development workers who are in charge with promotion are inadequately trained in appropriate ways to identify, gather and packaging information, ideas and knowledge. Information, ideas and knowledge are often poorly identified and packaged for the social-cultural context of rural development. According to Kerzner (1992: 264) the project leader should devote considerable time



communicating with individual team members about their needs and concerns. Effective communication is crucial for desirable and sustainable results, as poor communication often leads to chaos and uncertainty (Muavha, 2008: 45).

- Lack of access to information

Rural citizens have indicated that they feel there is a lack of access to information about government programs and services. Information that is available on policy, government programs and services is difficult for the community to obtain and interpret. There is a desire to learn about and access to information about government programs and services that are understandable, concise and timely (Rural Dialogue, 2000).

- The relationship between rural communities and government.

The relationship between rural communities and government is strained by the community perception that government do not understand rural issues and impose policies and programs that negatively affect rural communities. Sometimes there is a lack of agreement among key policy makers that circumstances in rural communities are problematic and deserving government actions (Doern and Phidd, 1988). Rural community members often perceive government priorities and programs as detrimental to their community's health and sustainability. These perceptions create a barrier to community involvement in development projects and it can lead to project failure.

Research studies investigating the reasons why projects fail, has been ongoing for years, with various researchers, organization and project management institutions, providing lists of reasons, which they believe are thus the cause of project failure. However, despite these lists projects continue to fail (Atkinson, 1999:337). A project may fail as result of the way that it is managed, bearing in mind that, a project may fail because of factors that are not related to management but to circumstances that surround the project. A study of Ravhura (2010: 87) indicates that poor management of community development projects, has reached unacceptable proportions and

recommended the good management would contribute greatly to poverty, alleviation of poverty in rural areas and job creation.

Phillips *et al* (2002:168-173) cite the main reasons for project failure, which are listed below:

- Lack of common clear vision;
- Changing direction in mid project;
- Conflicting priorities;
- Unrealistic expectations;
- Not enough resource (time, money equipment, knowledge or expertise);
- Poor communication;
- Unmet customer expectations;
- Poor planning or no planning;
- No clear methodology;
- No clear understanding of what needs to be done (who is going to do it, by when, and at what price);
- Scope change;
- No buy-in and support from the key stake holders ; and
- Poor leadership.

According to Phillips *et al* (2002:168), all projects are constrained by inherent risks. Knowledge of these risks will play an important role in achieving success and avoiding failure. Usually project consists of three stages consisting of the approval, execution and evaluation stages. If any of these stages is not managed properly it may result in failure of the entire project.

Pinto and Mantel (1990:269-279) carried out a research on the causes of project failure and revealed a good explanation that encompasses both internal efficiency and external effectiveness. They stated project failure is a vague concept, which has evoked much as to its definition, as the case with the definition of project success.

Blenkowski (1989:99) identified ten factors that can lead to project failure and they are:

- Lack of change management- happens when there is no method to handle or recognize change.
- Communication- causes a delay or even failure since team members do not have the information they needed. Project report is sluggish.
- Inadequate resources- task takes longer than expected to complete, deadlines and milestones get missed.
- No one is in control, not even the project manager, who is assigned for the project but not given the free hand to manage the project.
- Project lacks structure caused by things such as critical tasks being under rated.
- Inaccurate estimation. A top-down plan causes constraints on the prediction of the cost of the project.
- Poor risk management. The project initiation stage is not properly planned.
- Insufficient or non-resources are allocated to project-the right resources should be made available for that project to succeed.
- Incompetent project management skills.
- Project changes from its origin objectives and goals. This can occur due to additional requirement from the communities.

The basic fault in the conventional approach is that the rural poor are rarely consulted in development planning and usually have no active role in development activities. This is because the vast majority of the poor have no organizational structure to represent their interests (Pinto and Mantel 1990:269-279). Furthermore, project fails because of inability to plan and estimate correctly, or fail to implement the task according to plan or failure caused by human factors (Pinto and Mantel 1990:279).

According to Symonds (2011) it is possible to avoid unnecessary project failure by properly defining the project scope and properly creating a risk plan to be able to manage uncertainties as they arise. As the project progresses it is also vital to identify the key assumption at every stage of the project life cycle in order to be able to make well informed decision when the need arises.

### **2.13 Community learning and training in development projects.**

Community participation teaches communities how to solve conflicts and allows for different perspectives to be heard. In this instance, learning is promoted and people will be able to help themselves (Baum, 1999 in Nampila, 2005:14). Learning is a process of active engagement with experience (Louw & Butcher, 2005:213). Education enhances rural people's learning potential and the ability to access and handle information. It also entails improving thinking skills, and using the modern educational delivery technologies and tools to provide new learning for people wherever they are (McQuid, Lindsay & Greig, 2004:364-388). Effective learning will lead to a desire to learn more and thus contribute to human development.

According to the Department of Community Development's integrated community development policy (2007), community learning involves members having access to information, skills and ideas, both new and traditional. This helps the members to improve the development of human capital. The community learning approach uses learning as a major tool to empower people to participate in their community's social and economic development. This approach also emphasizes lifelong learning and sustainable development. In the policy, community learning is based on the view that all community members should have the opportunity to develop their potential. They should be enabled to gain skills and knowledge necessary to their productive lives, care for themselves and their facilities and participate in the affairs of their communities and the country as a whole. Community development always has a learning aspect through which people develop their skills, knowledge and ideas and applies these to addressing issues for the benefit of their communities.

Nampila (2005:41) states that through learning, the community will be able to assess themselves as a powerful group and work creatively towards changing society and building a new world. The low educational attainment levels among rural adults and youths constrain both present and future development opportunities. Therefore learning has a major contributory role in the development of rural communities.

According to James (1995:3-9) training is a fundamental right. Training provides the basic elements of growing a successful business (Martorana, 1996:34). Therefore, the

provision of training should intend to develop the cognitive ability of people and thus improve their attitude towards self-development (Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001:755). Government has an important part to play in understanding and creating the conditions for a true lifelong learning society, particularly in rural areas, so that the nation will prosper economically and mentally.

The training is linked to sustainability, because once participants have completed training then it is assumed that the projects are likely to be sustainable since project members will be applying knowledge gained from training. The skills provided also benefits the project members beyond project implementation where they are able to utilize it.

## **2.14 Summary**

This chapter demonstrated the often different perspectives embedded in the idea of “community participation”. In attempt to obtain more information about community participation, various theories and strategies were considered. Furthermore, the chapter covered the actual strategies that South Africa has decided to adopt, as well as a general outline of how the South African government plans to implement its current rural development strategy- CRDP.

Overall, the nature of this study was rooted in the desire to evaluate community participation in rural development projects; the understanding of the concept of community participation; the extent to which the community was participating in the projects and the community resources utilized to address the community’s needs. Consequently, the research utilized both qualitative and quantitative research approaches as discussed in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 3

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

The title of the study is evaluating community participation in rural development projects: the case of Mokgalwaneng village. This chapter covers the details of the research design and methodology adopted by the study. The research process undertaken incorporates the location of the study, the sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis process and ethical considerations.

The study asks the following questions: What is the nature and extent of community participation in rural community development projects; what are the challenges to community participation in rural community development projects and how can community resources be used to address some of the challenges?

The objectives of the study are:

- To explore local people's perceptions and understanding of community participation in the context of rural development.
- To determine the nature and extent of community participation in community development projects in Mokgalwaneng village.
- To identify the community resources utilized to address the community's needs.

### 3.2 Research design

The research design plays a major task in defining the research problem. Frankfort-Nachmias (2004:98) mentions that research design stands for advance planning of methods to be adopted in collecting the relevant data. Research design is both plan and structure-focused. This means that the design should provide the outline and the configuration of the complete process to be followed during the entire research

The study focused on evaluating community participation in rural development projects: a case of Mokgalwaneng community and therefore the most suitable design for the study was the evaluative design. According to Hopkins (1989: 16), evaluation is designed to help the project, to confirm its directions, to influence or help to change them. It is more than monitoring or scrutinizing, it serves a positive feedback function (Hopkins, 1989:16).

The researcher employed two types of evaluative design which are summative and formative. Summative means evaluating while formative means improving and developing (Hazing, 1994:200). Summative evaluation focused on the big picture and sought to understand the outcomes or effect of the project. It answered questions such as: How is the community participating in development projects? Are the people empowered by the development project? Formative evaluation design is used to strengthen or improve the person or thing. Formative evaluation in this study focused on the process of how community participation could be improved, sustain and lead to successful project. Both types of evaluative research are equally important.

### **3.3 Research methodology and methods**

According to Wideman (2005:2) methodology is a process that outlines all the steps and procedures, which bring about the successful completion of a project. Khothari (2004:36) defines research methodology as the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedures applied to a field of study. It involves procedures of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena so as to solve a problem.

Since the study wanted to obtain in-depth information about phenomena, the researcher used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to obtain data from the community members and DRDLR officials in order to achieve the goal of the study. Creswell (2009:4) argues that “the use of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data, it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of the study is enhanced.

Qualitative methodology is essential in the sense that it emphasizes the participation of stakeholders, mutual learning and sharing of experiences. Qualitative methodology was used by the researcher to design, collect and analyze data. The goal of this methodology is defined as describing and understanding rather than explanation and prediction of human behavior (Babbie, 2001:270). Qualitative data gathering method included small group discussions.

The quantitative methodology was useful in obtaining information from the respondents on the effectiveness of community participation in development projects. Being deductive and particularistic, quantitative research methodology is based upon formulating the research hypothesis and verifying them empirically on a specific set of data (Bailey,1994:2) while qualitative research methodology involves an in-depth understanding of human behavior. Questionnaires were given to the participants in the area under the study. Quantitative data gathering method involved reaching inferences through looking at relationships and patterns and expressing these patterns with numbers. The variables include age, gender, marital status social and economic characteristics and livelihoods.

A combination of both methodologies had advantages such as being able to tackle the multiple purposes of evaluation research, bringing new insights that either approach alone may not be able to provide and overcoming biases. Therefore, the two methodologies are considered complementary rather than antagonistic.

The study employed a case study method. According to Henning et al (2004:41), a case study method is concerned with the process and not the outcome. In this study the researcher's focus was on development projects implemented in the Mokgalwaneng village to determine the nature and extent of community participation in the projects. An important characteristic and key strength of the case study research is the fact that data is collected from multiple sources (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:66).

Taking note that this is a study of interaction between actors and the environment and that the research strategy chosen is explanatory, it is therefore indicative that, adopting a case study was appropriate for this study. The one downside of case study research is that it is not universally applicable and therefore cannot be easily transferred to other

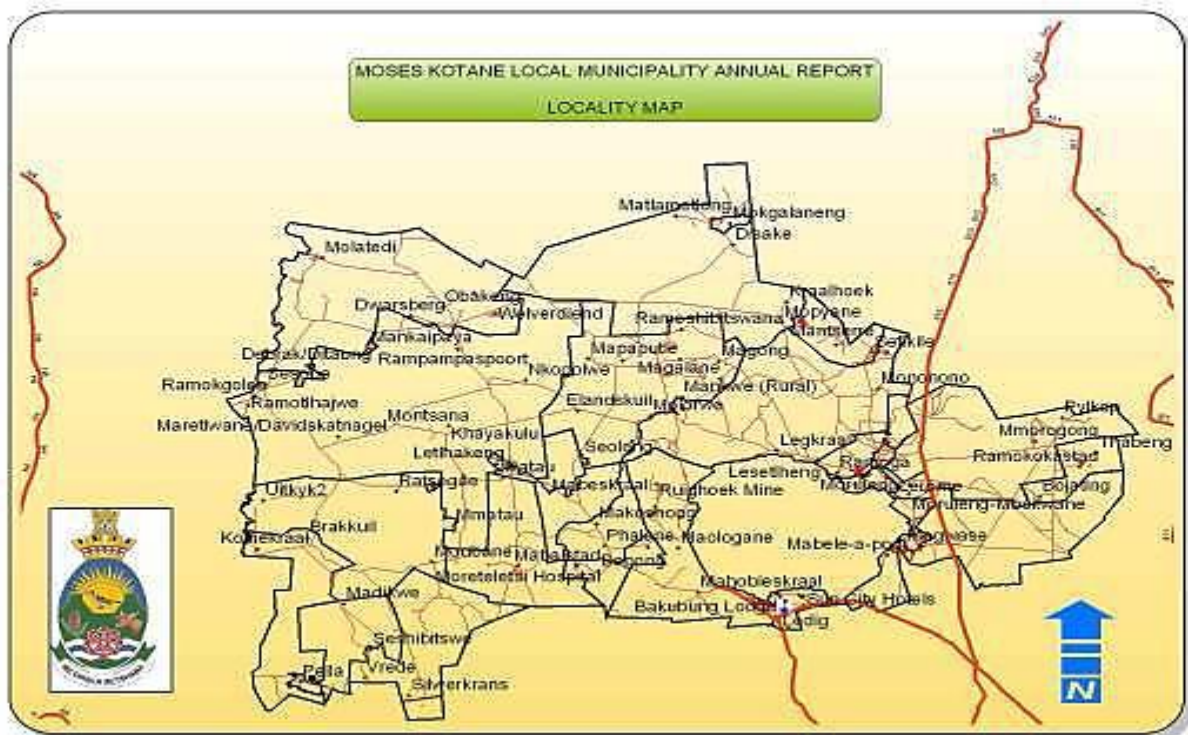


contexts (Malterud, 2001:483). The use of case study research as a methodology further enhances the ability to learn and analyze complex social situations and provides a stage from which conclusions about a specific content can be drawn (Olivier, 2009).

### 3.4 The research process

The researcher developed an interest in the research topic when she was working as a Project Officer at the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, in the North West Province, where she was also part of the team designated to work on development projects at Mokgalwaneng village. The curiosity of the researcher was raised when she observed that most of the community members were not participating in the development projects. The researcher was motivated to conduct this study from her experience of working as a project officer.

#### 3.4.1 Location of the study area



**Figure 3.1:** Map of Moses Kotane Municipality showing Mokgalwaneng village.

**Mokgalwaneng village** is located in Mankwe under Moses Kotane Municipality, in the North West province, South Africa. It is located 100 km from Rustenburg in Bojanala

district. The area is mildly densely populated with 107 people per km<sup>2</sup> (CRDP report, 2011).

Mokgalwaneng village is a remote area where most of the people are poor. The rate of unemployment is very high especially for the youth. Most of the youth have relocated to other places for greener pastures. Most of the houses are built in mud or are shacks and because of poverty and unemployment, most of the people have no formal education, hence the low level of education. The lives of literate people now depend on the mines bordering them, where 90% of the population is employed (CRDP report, 2011).

The area is typically rural with compromised service delivery and lack of resources. Most people in that area seemingly relied on livestock and other natural resources for their livelihoods. The area has very large trees which are essential for firewood and may be used for other carpentry tasks. Animal farming plays a prominent role in the community and cultivation of land (CRDP report, 2011).

#### 3.4.2 Sample and sample selection techniques

Ideally one wants to study the entire population. However, usually it is impossible or unfeasible to do so and therefore one must settle for a sample. According to Webster (1985:108) sampling is defined as a finite part of a statistical population properties studied to gain information about the whole. Strydom and Venter (2002:198) describe sampling as the process of taking a portion of a population as a representatives of that population and a sample as a small portion of the total set of objectives, events or persons that together comprise the subject of the study.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate community participation in rural development projects. The study employed the purposive sampling method which is used in special situations where the sampling is done with specific purpose in mind (Maree, 2007:178). The purpose of sampling is to select cases whose study will illuminate the questions under the study (Patton, 1990:169). Merriam (1988:77) states that the selection of a purposeful sample is not based on the number of respondents but rather on the potential of each person to contribute to the development of insight and understanding of the phenomenon. A limitation of purposive sampling is that, it is the responsibility of

the researcher to choose participants and there is a possibility that the researcher could be wrong in choosing suitable participants for the study (Gilliam, 2000:62). Purposive sampling procedure was used for the purpose of drawing a representative sample, from whose findings generalizations to the bigger population can be made. The snowball method of sampling also took effect at Mokgalwaneng for people who took part in development projects but were not available at the project sites.

Five projects were chosen from the CRDP. They were housing, brickmaking, sanitation, livestock facilities and fencing and gardening projects. Ten participants representing the community and two participants representing the DRDLR officials were selected in each project.

- **Housing project (CRDP)**

Most of the houses in Mokgalwaneng village are built in mud and are temporary structures. The DRDLR constructed 200 housing units measuring 45 square meters in Mokgalwaneng village. Majority of the community members now have homes.

- **Brick making project (CRDP)**

This is one of the successful projects in Mokgalwaneng which is still ongoing and has provided employment to the community members. The bricks made on this project are used for building houses and roads for the community. This project supplies paving bricks to other projects and employs 22 people.

- **Livestock facilities and fencing project (CRDP)**

A livestock handling facility is currently under construction. Livestock is a prized possession in rural areas. These facilities will amongst others, curb stock theft, improve subsistence farming and improve livelihoods in the area. For the fencing project 127 farmers are beneficiaries and the project has employed 30 people.

- **Gardening project (CRDP)**

The vegetable gardening project is a part of subsistence farming in the area. The project has contributed to job creation as well as household food security for the benefit of the community. There are 100 household food gardens established.

- **Sanitation project (CRDP)**

This project involves the building and connection of water tanks, sanitation sewage and construction of 300 toilets for the 200 houses that are already built. To date only 99 toilets have been constructed, but it is expected that the project will be finalized at the end of this year.

The total sample size of community members was fifty (50) comprising twenty five (25) males and twenty five (25) females of 18 years and above. The sample size of government officials was ten (10) making a total sample size of sixty (60). The sample therefore comprised two groups namely community members and DRDLR officials. The researcher chose these different sample groups because the community members are the main beneficiaries and the DRDLR officials are the initiators of the projects. (See Table 3.1 below)

**Table 3.1: Study sample**

<b>SAMPLE</b>	<b>HOUSING PROJECT</b>	<b>BRICK MAKING PROJECT</b>	<b>SANITATION PROJECT</b>	<b>LIVESTOCK FACILITIES AND FENCING PROJECT</b>	<b>GARDENING PROJECT</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Community members	10	10	10	10	10	<b>50</b>
DRDLR officials	02	02	02	02	02	<b>10</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>60</b>

Table 3.2 below shows that the selection of respondents was also based on gender and age to ensure that the participatory development related issues associated with men and women are captured. The researcher selected respondents who were involved in the development projects at Mokgalwaneng.

**Table 3.2: Age and Gender sample**

SAMPLE	AGE				GENDER	
	18-25	26-35	36-45	45 & above	Females	Males
Community members	09	12	07	22	25	25
DRDLR officials	03	04	02	01	04	06

### 3.4.3 Data collection methods

Data collection took place in the month of May 2014, for a week at Mokgalwaneng village. The nature and purpose of the research guided the method used (Blankenship & Breen, 1993:122).

The methods of data collection depend upon the sources of data collection including primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data is original information and secondary data is information or data collected from sources such as journals, periodical books, and reports (Leedy & Ormord, 2005:88). Cooper and Schindler (2003:162) write that secondary data provides background information and direction for research.

For this study both primary and secondary data were required and used. The primary data was collected through semi-structured questionnaires which were administered by the researcher with the help of a research assistant. Secondary data was collected through document analysis of other works done by other people such as books, journals and other documents such as the DRDLR and government documents.

Semi-structured questionnaires were deemed appropriate for the data gathering process among the community members because, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 291), it allows for an open interview that enables the subject to speak freely and allows for flexibility. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:156) define questionnaires as “an instrument of data collection consisting of a standardized series of questions relating to the research topic to be answered in writing by participants. The questionnaires comprised questions which sought answers related to the objectives of this study. The questions were both closed to enhance uniformity and open-ended to ensure maximum data was obtained (Babbie and Mouton, 2006:233).

Collecting data using the questionnaire method assisted the researcher to obtain more information from both the illiterate and educated people. The researcher spent a week interacting with the community members to interview those who were relevant for the study. Questionnaires were distributed to DRDLR officials involved in the projects for completion.

Individual and small groups interviews were undertaken to collect data to provide an understanding of how the community understands participation, levels of participation and how they participated in the projects. Interviews were held at different sites where projects were still ongoing and with community members who were involved in projects which ceased to operate or are completed. The interviews were conducted in Tswana, a language most spoken at the location of the study and in which the researcher is fluent. On average, individual interviews were 20 minutes in duration.

Each interview was conducted at a meeting place identified by the participants as convenient, usually home, on site, or in public meeting area. The researcher’s role during the completion of questionnaires by the community members was to facilitate discussions in order to enable production of rich data, to keep respondents focused on the topic and to ensure that other people were not dominated by particular individuals. (Neuman, 2000:274).

The following explains how data was collected from the community respondents on each project:

- For livestock facilities and fencing project and brick making project.

The participants were taken through the questionnaire as a group. Each member then completed the schedule on his\her own. The research assistant provided guidance when required. The group comprised twenty (20) participants.

- For gardening project.

Members of this project were busy working and it was not possible to meet with the participants. Therefore, the participants were given questionnaires individually by the researcher and research assistant, and explanation was given to the participants were required. Ten (10) individuals participated in this project.

- For sanitation and housing projects.

These projects were completed at the time of the study. However, with the help of the traditional leader and other members of the community, the researcher managed to locate the relevant people to participate in the study. Appointments to interview the participants were scheduled telephonically. Twenty (20) members were given questionnaires to complete.

In all the above projects, the researcher and research assistant entered the responses of community members who were unable to fill the schedules on their own because of illiteracy and inability to write. Before data was collected, the researcher briefed the research assistant about the process and discussed all the questions on the schedule to ensure that the research assistant understood them critically. The research assistant was chosen by the researcher to assist her because of her qualification background in research and data collection.

For DRDLR officials, a questionnaire schedule was sent to them to complete. Questionnaires were self-administered and easy to complete with those who understood them. Further clarity or communication between the researcher and officials were done telephonically and by e-mails. The questionnaires intended to solicit the officials' views on community participation in the development projects. Information

from the officials was very important to get the outline of what the government has done and doing in supporting the community to participate in rural development projects.

Some of the questions specific to community members included the following questions; what do you understand by community participation? What are the department and community goals on the project? To what extent did you participate in the project? How often do you attend meetings? Were you given a chance to identify and prioritize the project? Was there any training provided? How did the project empower you? What do you think are the main contributing factors for the success/failure of the project? What challenges do you face in participating in the project? Do you have the necessary human resources skills?

Questions for the DRDLR officials included: the main goal of the Department, how the community is participating/participated in the project, the selection of community members to be involved in the project, the effect that the participation of the community had on the project, challenges and the solutions to the challenges.

#### 3.4.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is a crucial component of research. According to De Vos (2002:340) data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the collected data. In data analysis both qualitative and quantitative methods were featured for providing interpretation of the responses.

Data collected from the semi-structured questionnaires were transcribed and provided in the form of texts, tables and percentages to give a clear picture on how the participants responded to questions. Data was loaded in a Microsoft excel to be validated. This means a descriptive statistical analysis was used in the study. Descriptive statistics refers to a “set of concepts and methods used in organizing, summarizing, tabulating, depicting and describing collections of data” (Shavelson, 2003:8). As the definition implies, the researcher used a type of statistical analysis to describe the data set that was collected from the sample. Descriptive statistics were very useful to summarize, simply and describe the data in a study.



According to Babbie (2007) coding is a process whereby raw data are transformed into standardized form suitable for machine processing and analyzing. As pointed earlier, two set of data were collected namely qualitative and quantitative data. The data from both individuals and small groups were coded, processed and analyzed using excel and presented in the form of tables, graphs and frequencies. The explanation and responses from the participants have been grouped in themes and patterns in order to answer the different research questions under the study and this involved in summarizing the key findings, explaining and interpreting the findings (Kombo & Trompo, 2006). The analysis was based on the comparison and discussion thereof.

Smith (1995: 17) asserts that each project creates the appropriate manner for the employment of thematic analysis. In the study, the researcher purposively constructed instruments for data collection according to the themes that have assisted with achieving the objectives of the study. The main themes were community participation in development projects and project resources.

### **3.5 Ethical issues**

Ethical guidelines serve as a standard, and a basis upon which each researcher ought to evaluate his own conduct. It is essential that the researcher follows and abide by ethical guidelines throughout the research process (Hinckely, 2006) and ensures that the entire research study is completed in an ethically correct manner (Strydom, 2005:63).The researcher abided by the ethical guidelines that sought to avoid harm to the respondents. Seiber (1998:128) suggests that an understanding of the cultural values of the participants and their community early in the process of research design is important to avoid violating their rights.

To request for permission, a letter was sent by the researcher to the traditional leader and tribal office of the Mokgalwaneng village and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, indicating the purpose of the study, goals and objectives and the need to collect data from the community members, as well as how information obtained

will be used. The researcher obtained an approval letter from the traditional leader and the tribal office to conduct her research.

The respondents were identified by the researcher and a thorough explanation was given to them and they were requested to participate in the study. The respondents were not forced to participate in the study; participation was voluntary. Those who agreed and granted their permission were requested to sign a consent form. Each consent form was also signed by two witnesses from the community. Henning et al (2004:73) mention that participants informed consent is required at two levels namely; the utilization of the research findings and their privacy and sensitivity and how these will be protected. In order to ensure that the researcher's actions are deemed ethical, subjects must provide informed consent to participate (Henning et al, 2004:43).

The researcher also used another key ethical consideration which is crucial, and that is 'confidentiality'. Mouton (2001:243) states that research is the collection of information and material that is provided to the researcher on the basis of trust and confidentiality, and it is vital that the participant's feelings, interests and rights are protected at all times. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. To ensure confidentiality, Babbie (1998:441) recommends that the researcher should undertake not to reveal information that might expose the identity of a respondent. This means that information might have names attached to it but that the researcher holds it in confidence or keeps it a secret, away from the public.

### **3.6 Anticipated problems**

During data collection process the researcher had to search, by referral, for other community members around the area who also participated in the projects and this was time consuming. Some of the community members are illiterate and others were very slow to answer questions, and this caused the researcher to explain further the questions to them individually which was also time consuming. And furthermore, the officials from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform who agreed to participate in the study took more than a month to complete their questionnaires and

they were not always available when the researcher tried to reach them. Nevertheless, all data was collected.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter presented the details of the research design and methodology adopted by the study. The research process undertaken incorporated the location of the study, the sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis process and ethical considerations.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the presentation of the findings and discussions. As discussed in chapter 1, the objectives of the study are to explore local people's perceptions and understanding of community participation in the context of rural development; to determine the nature and extent of community participation in community development projects in Mokgalwaneng village and to identify the community resources utilized to address the community's needs. Based on the structure of the questionnaires, content was categorized into two themes (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2); the themes were categorized as follows; participation in development projects and project resources.

### **4.2 Results and discussions**

The results are presented in the following way: responses from the community members first followed by the responses from the DRDLR officials where necessary and relevant. It should also be noted that, where there is only one set of responses presented, the results should be regarded and read as the responses from the community members.

## Demographic information

### 4.2.1 Age of respondents

Figure 4.1 Age distribution of respondents

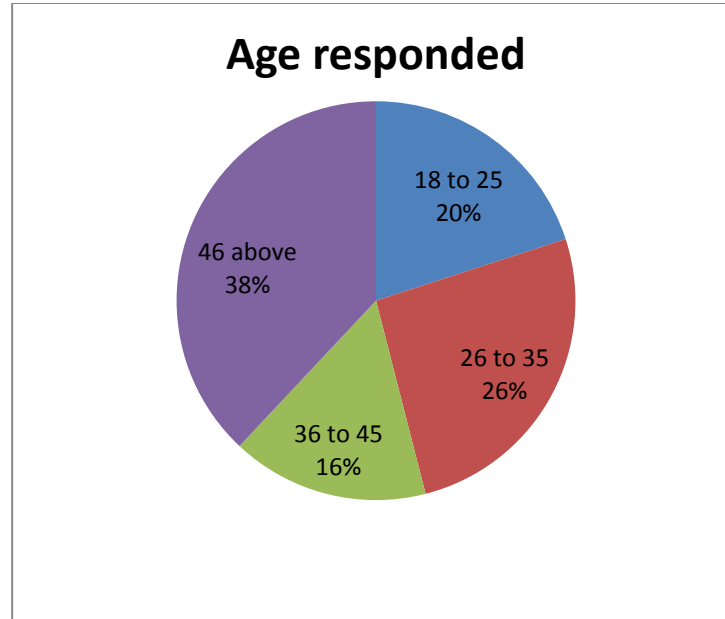


Figure 4.1 above shows that 38% of respondents are over 46 years old, 28% are between 18 and 25 years old, 26% are between the age of 26 and 35 years and 16% are between 36 and 45 years. This shows that the majority of the respondents are older people who do not fall into the official age of the youth (18 to 25 years).

Actively engaging youth in the community development projects can implicitly acknowledge youth as viable and efficient members of the community and has the potential to result in deeper rooted and more sustainable community change (Robinson & Green, 2010). Therefore, there is a need for young people to actively take part in the development projects.

Young people are in great need of skill, knowledge and different personal and social characteristics (Robinson & Green, 2010). This means that participation of youth should be given more serious consideration in development projects. If more people participate in the development of their area, more skills, experience and knowledge will be gained and will be easily transferred to the new generation.

#### 4.2.2 Gender of respondents.

Figure 4.2 Gender distributions of respondents.

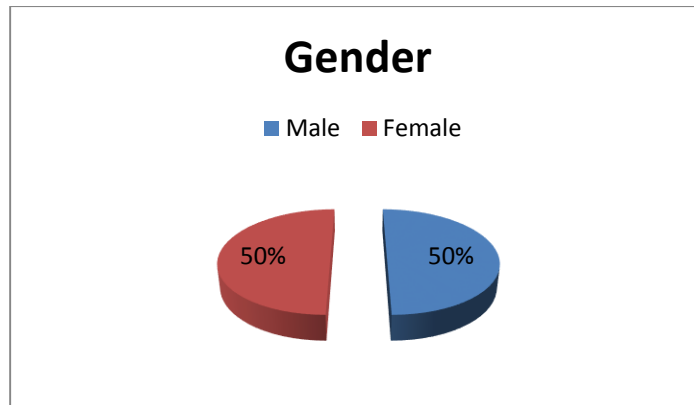


Figure 4.2 above shows that there was gender equality as 50% of males and 50% of females were selected to participate in the study. The distribution of gender is equal in these projects, thus adding credibility towards the government goal of gender equality and economic empowerment to women. Previously women were eliminated in projects of construction and agricultural activities which limited their potential and restrained their economic gain. However in the rural development projects gender equality is highly considered to ensure equal opportunity of skill, knowledge and economic gain to all genders.

#### 4.2.3 Marital statuses of the respondents.

Figure 4.3 Marital statuses of the respondents

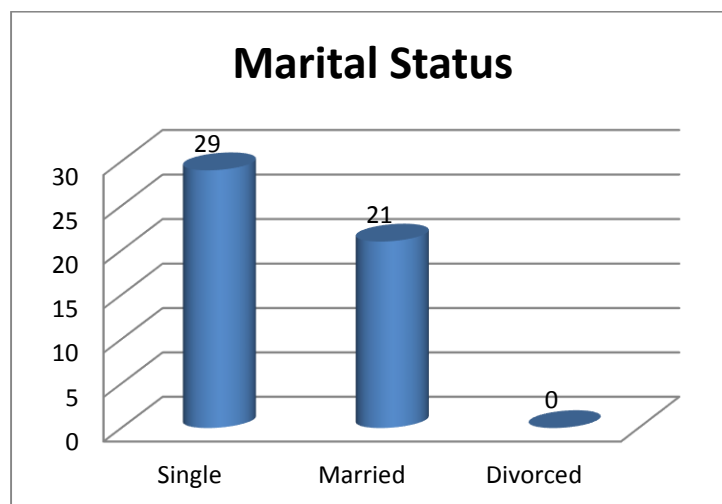


Figure 4.3 above shows that 42% of the respondents are married and 58% of the respondents are single. Unemployment rate is high in the country and this may be a reason many people delay marriage and start their own families.

#### 4.2.4 Level of qualifications for respondents

Figure 4.4 Level of qualification of respondents

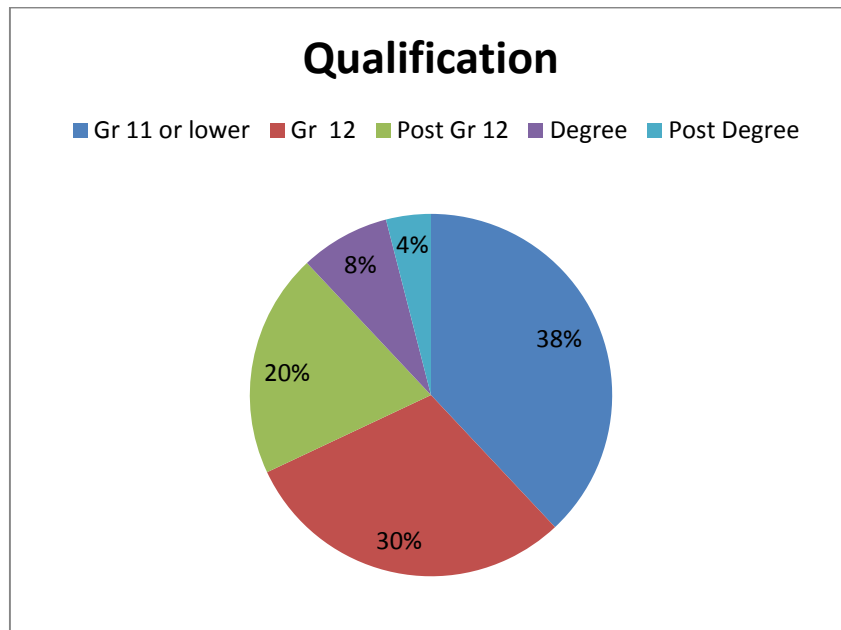


Figure 4.4 above shows that 38% of the respondents have Grade 11 or lower qualification, 30% have Grade 12 (matric) qualification, 20% have post-matric certificates, 8% have Bachelor's Degrees and 4% of the respondents have Post-Degree qualifications. This implies that the majority (62%) of the people are able to read and write. Unlike the literature by Akroyd (2003:3), this sample group had a high level of participants with education qualifications of Grade 12 (Matric) and above and the participants were able to complete the questionnaires on their own. However, the 38% with Grade 11 and below required assistance with writing their responses and this was provided by the researcher and research assistant. What this finding shows clearly is that there is a high level of unemployment for those who have completed grade 12 and above and therefore they participated in these projects.

Having 38% of the people as illiterate, gives a particular perspectives about what they recognize as “community participation” as well as the issues they see as obstacles to participate in development projects. Consequently, this impacted on their participation. This finding concurs with Theron’s (2005:65) view that illiteracy is an inhibiting factor in community participation. Nevertheless, rural community development projects are very useful to empower people with skill and knowledge while allowing for economic activity. Wiggins (2003:23-24) in his categorization of the poor and vulnerable of the rural areas, includes those who lack formal education and skills that offer a chance to secure non-farms jobs.

**Theme A: Participation in community development projects.**

This section focuses on the level and the extent of community participation in the rural development projects at Mokgalwaneng village.

4.2.5 Understanding of the concept of participation in community projects

4.2.5.1 Community members response

Figure 4.5 Understanding of community participation.

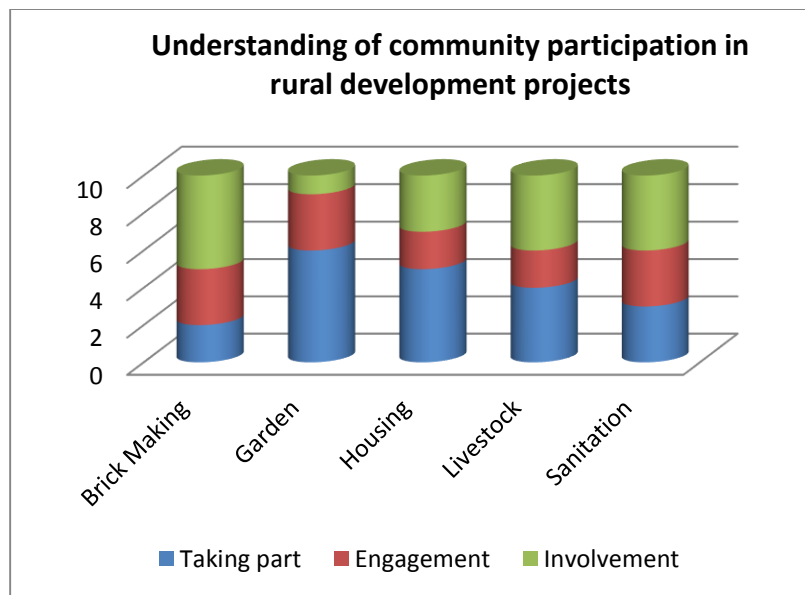


Figure 4.5 above shows how members from different projects understand what it means to participate in rural development projects.



The understanding and definition of community participation is complex and tends to confuse many people. Each individual may have his/her own way of understanding the meaning of the concept. All (100%) of the respondents gave a general definition of the concept of community participation. The majority of the respondents mentioned elements of participation as “involvement”, “engagement” and “taking part” indicating that community members to some extent do understand what is meant by community participation given that participation means different things to different people.

Some respondents cited an incident where they had to bring bricks to the site during construction in one project. In their opinion, this was participation. This may be seen as participation “as a means”, to get certain activities accomplished using cheap labor and materials from community members.

This finding has also been observed by Burkey (1993:58) who points out that until recently the notion of participation as a means to achieve effective development, still dominate in rural development practice. Effective participation aims at “participation as an end” to empower the community members to take charge of their own development. Furthermore, labor does not constitute participation because as mentioned in chapter 2 by Imparato and Ruster (2003:20) participation in development programs is a process in which people, and especially disadvantaged people are involved at different levels and degree of intensity in the identification, timing, planning, design, implementation, evaluation, and post-implementation stages of development projects

#### 4.2.5.2 Officials response

DRDLR officials’ response to understanding community participation in development projects were as follows:

- The elimination of the top down approach and allows the community to play an active role.
- The promotion of people centered approach.
- Engaging the community in the decision making of the development projects in their area.
- The community/people taking part in all stages and activities of the project.

- Some degree of involvement in an organization by the community to ensure the success of the project.
- People given a chance to prioritize the project.

The above explanations of community participation in development projects by the DRDLR officials concurs with those of Mansuri and Rao (2004:10); Theron (2005:120) and Leisner (1974) in Lombard (1992:256) (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.1). In summary, these authors describe participation as an active involvement of community members in all stages of the project and as a process to give communities an opportunity to determine their own destination.

Based on the above findings and explanation of community participation by the respondents, the study shows that the officials do understand the meaning of community participation and its importance, unlike the community members. And this might be because majority of the community members who responded are older, illiterate and/or have a low level of qualification (see Figure 4.2.1 and 4.2.4). However, community members, albeit in a more summarized form also showed an understanding of the concept of community participation.

#### 4.2.6 Attendance of initiation meetings at the concept and onset of projects.

Figure 4.6 Initiation meetings attendance.

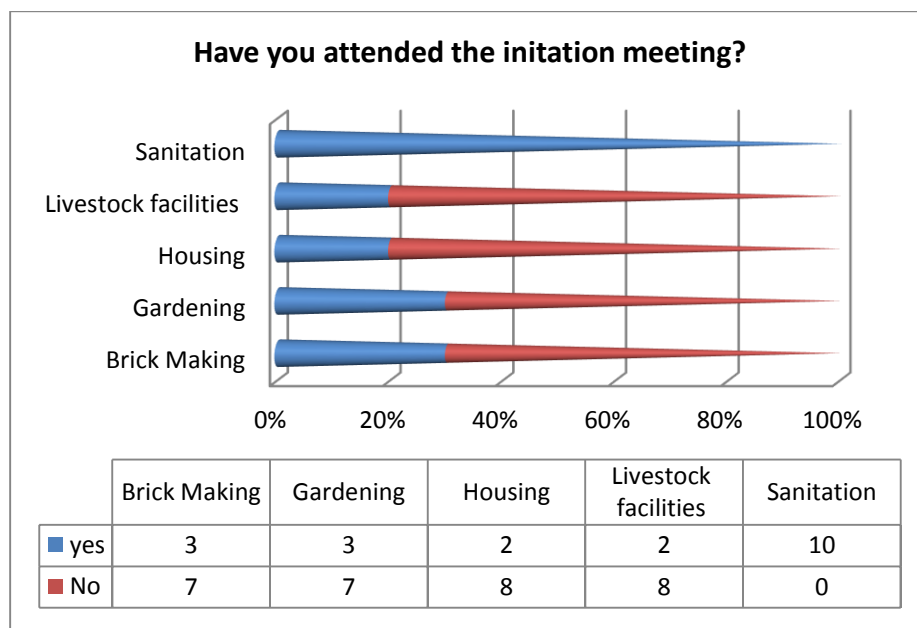


Figure 4.6 above shows that 30% of the people in the brick making project did attend initiation meetings and 70% did not, 30% attendance in the gardening project and 70% did not, 20% attendance in the housing project and 80% did not, 20% attendance in the livestock facilities project and 80% did not and lastly 100% attendance in the sanitation project. The majority of people who did not attend the initiation meetings said they were not aware and not informed about the meetings. This finding has also been observed by Johnston (1982:202) who notes that the most needy and deprived, who may be the majority of the community, are not even consulted, let alone given part in the process.

Non-attendance of initiation meetings means that the objectives were set in the beginning with the exclusion of the community. This may create problems where communities feel that they have been excluded from the design of the project (Everatt, 2001:33). As a result, people tend to reject or accept only half-heartedly plans made for themselves and therefore will be more committed to support their own planning.

Initiation meetings are very important as it is where projects are discussed, and the community can make inputs and comments about the projects. In the initiation meetings people are given the chance to prioritize the goals of projects. Community members are the ones who know what their needs are, therefore, if they are not part of the initiation meetings, it is unlikely the projects will be sustained.

Most respondents did not attend the initiation meeting; therefore they did not receive important information about the projects including that of project objectives. This shows that there was communication breakdown between the community and government at initiation stage. One respondent mentioned that their participation would have made the process more meaningful to them, if they were involved in the initiation stages. He said:

*“If only we were involved in the beginning of the project, we would have taken part and that would have made a difference in the project and meaningful to us”*

Initial participation in the project would have improved collective group esteem of the community and increase support for the project and its likely success as they would have input in the decision-making process.

#### 4.2.7 Frequency of meetings.

Figure 4.7 Frequency of the meetings.

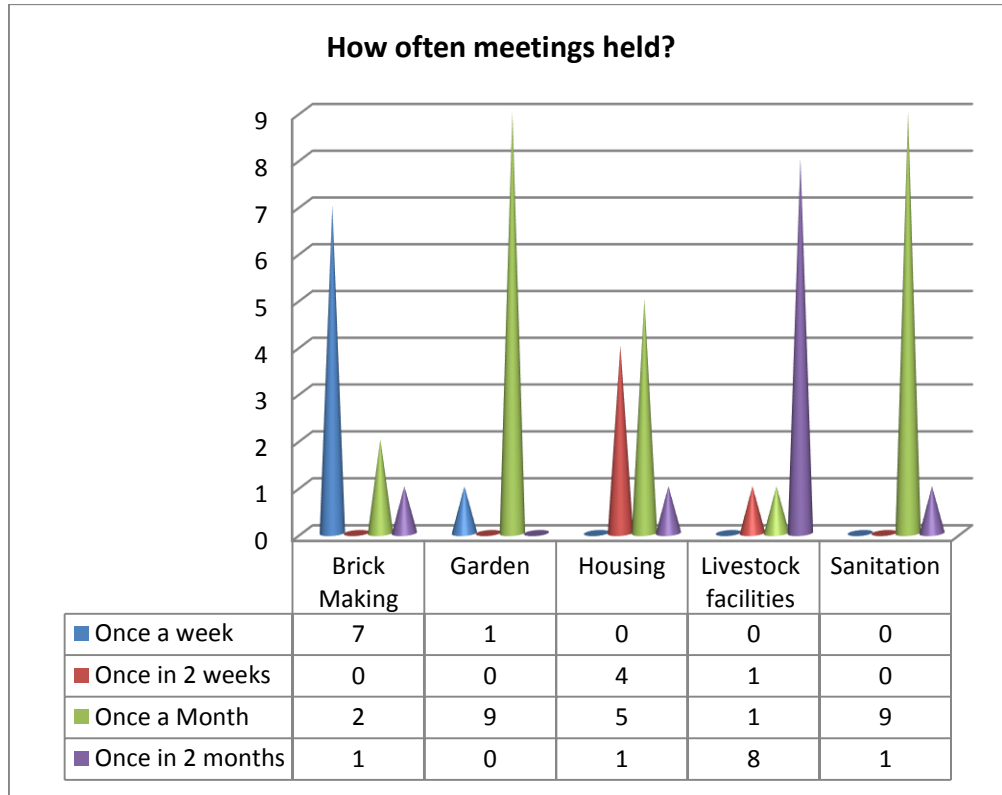
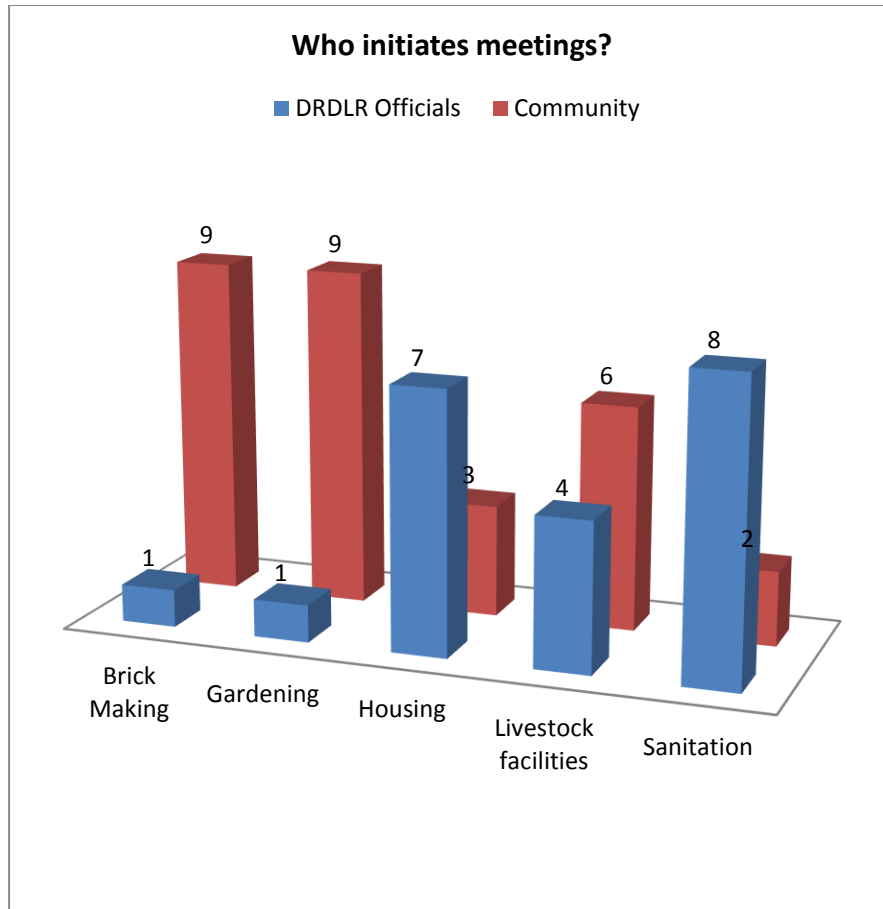


Figure 4.7 above shows, most of the projects holds meetings once a month to discuss the progress of the projects, whereas others said they hold meetings once in two weeks and a minority said once a week and once in two weeks. Meetings can be used as an important tool towards the sustainability of projects. Meeting often indicates the signal of problems and opportunities for the projects or business at an early stage. Therefore the formal meeting is fundamental for the sustainability of community projects to review the implemented strategy and the actual output versus the set output. The frequency of meetings based on this finding was adequate.

#### 4.2.8 Initiators of meetings.

Figure 4.8 Initiators of meetings.



Based on Figure 4.8, in brick making making, gardening and livestock facilities projects, the community members are the ones who initiates the meetings. On the other hand, for housing and sanittation projects the DRDLR officials are the initiators of the meetings. The results clearly show that the community members are the ones who are initiators of meetings.

The researcher asked this question to check who initiates the meeting between the community and the officials and to check if the community members were interested in meetings and knowing the status of their respective projects. The respondents from the community indicated that they initiate meetings to know the status and progress of the projects. This was one way of finding out the level of participation by the community members. And the finding shows that the community members took initiatives in initiating meetings.

#### 4.2.9 Attendance of the meetings by community members

Figure 4.9 How often do community attend meetings.

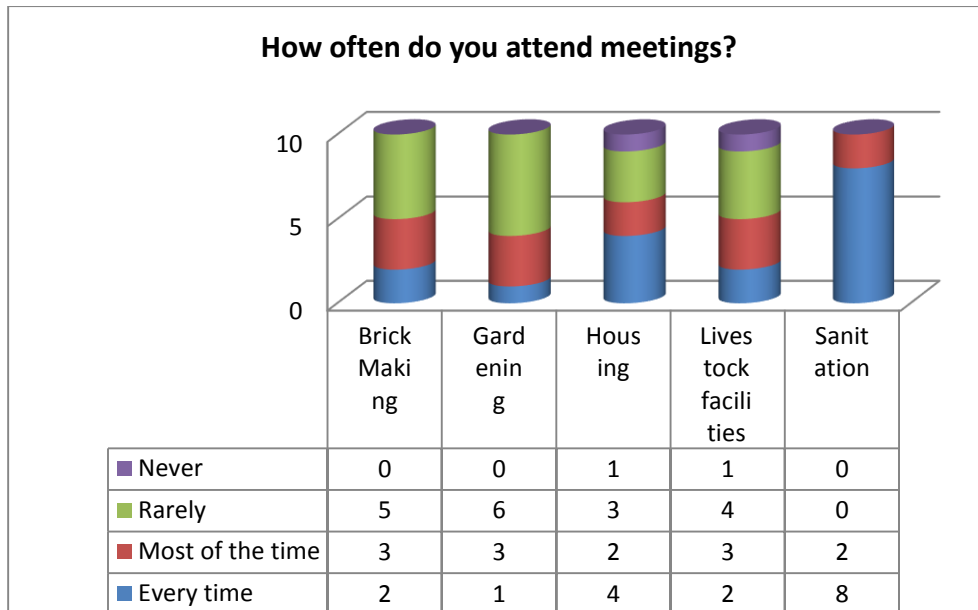


Figure 4.9 above shows, in the brick making project 50% of the respondents rarely attend meeting, whereas 30% attend most of the time and 20% attend every time. In the gardening project, 60% attend rarely, 30% attend most of the time and 10% attend every time. In the housing project, 10% never attend meetings, 30% rarely attend, 20% attend most of the time and 40% attend every time. Lastly, in the sanitation project, 20% of the respondents said they attend meetings most of the time and 80% said they attend every time.

However, majority of the respondents said they attended meetings rarely. The reasons given by the same respondents are that they were not aware and not informed about the meetings. Poor communication about the meetings lead to lack of attendance. Meetings are very vital and are regarded as a forum for planning, learning, exchange of views and ideas, and electing leaders, among other things.

According to Clearly (2008:379) meetings involve a group of people spreading information, reaching decisions or resolving a particular problem through discussion. Meetings create spaces for community members to identify their problems and to decide on priority problems to be addressed. Project meetings are the construction forum to manage and communicate project between stakeholders, thus project

meetings are important for the success of the project (Burker& Barron, 2007:349; Miners, 1969:37). Gorse and Emmitt (2003:234) recognize that project meetings play an important part in the development and maintenance of relationships that ultimately influence and control a project.

Some of the respondents suggested that since they have representatives who are responsible for attending meetings and talk on their behalf, it was not necessary for them to attend meetings. The following quote confirms this finding:

*“I do not see any importance of attending a meeting because we as the community have committee members who attends meetings, listens and talks on our behalf”*

According to Makumbe (1996:57-58) problems such as lack of funding and relevant skills, lack of relevant training programs, lack of allowances remain perennial problems and one of the major setbacks is the fall in the number of villagers attending meetings.

#### 4.2.10 Knowledge about the committee

The majority of the respondents were aware of the current committee members, who they are and how they were elected. The respondents confirmed that the committees were elected in a meeting by raise of hands. The committee in each project consisted of a chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, deputy secretary and two additional members of the community. The minority of respondents who confirmed that they were not aware of the committee said they were not told about the elections and the committee had not yet been introduced to them. This finding is confirmed by the following quotes:

*“I do not know who the committee members are and how they were elected”*

*“I was never told about the elections”*

Project committees are regarded as the bodies responsible for implementing projects. However, other respondents argued that their committee/body have not been representing the community interests and not transparent or accountable (Gikonyo, 2008). As a result, this has affected the participation of the community members negatively.

#### 4.2.11 Identifying and prioritizing the projects by the community.

Participants were asked if they were given a chance to identify and prioritize the projects (Appendix 1, question 19). Majority of the respondents (76%) indicated that they were not given a chance to identify and prioritize the project. Participants mentioned that they were only told about the project and believe that the project had already been decided upon by somebody else. This is referred to by Pretty (1995) in his typologies of participation as “passive participation”, people participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. The following quotes confirm this finding:

*“By the time we were called for the meeting, the project had already kick started. We were only told that there is a certain project in progress. And those of us, who asked questions about how the project was initiated, never got answers.”*

*“Because the project had already been discussed and decisions taken, those of us who had necessary skills and knowledge about the project were requested to submit their names for the implementation of the project”*

Community participation is conceptualized as a process by which members of the community, individually or collectively assume increased responsibility for assessment of their own needs, and once these needs are agreed upon, identifying potential situations to problems, and plan strategies by which these solutions may be realized (Bermejo & Bekui, 1993:1145-1150). DFID (2002) stresses that; the broad aim of participation in development is to actively involve people and the communities in identifying problems, formulating plans and implementing decisions over their own lives.

According to a study done by Kinyoda (2008) there is a low level of community participation in development projects. Her study revealed that people have not been completely involved in decision-making, selection, identification and prioritization of the projects. For example in Mokgalwaneng community, 76 % of the respondents under the study indicated that they were not given a chance to identify and prioritize the project. The level of participation was also low where majority of the people did not attend initiation meetings (see Figure 4.6), only 36% fully participated in the projects (see

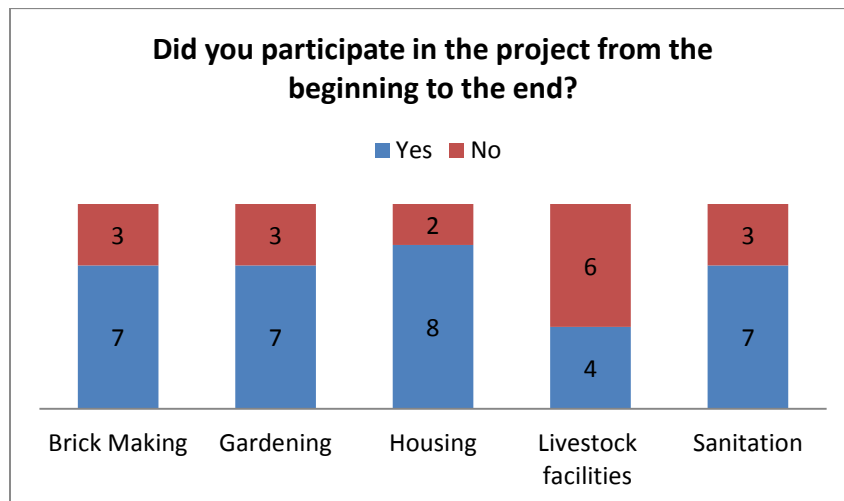


Figure 4.11), and 76% of the respondents were not satisfied with the operations of the government and the way the DRDLR officials managed the projects (see Figure 4.15).

Brett (2003:5) argues that participation is an empowering process in which “people, in partnership with each other and those able to assist them, identify problems and needs, mobilize resources, assume responsibility to plan, manage, control and assess the individual and collective actions that they themselves decide upon. As a process of empowerment, participation is concerned with development of skills and abilities to enable the rural people to manage better and have a say or in negotiate with the existing development systems (Oakley, 1991:9). Participation as empowerment can therefore help to amplify acknowledged voices by enabling rural people to decide upon and take the actions which they believe are essential to their development (Oakley, 1991; Slocum et al, 1995). Swick (2001:264) stresses that the “voice” of every person is important in creating strong people and communities.

#### 4.2.12 Participation from the beginning to the end of the project.

Figure 4.10 Respondents participation from the beginning to the end of the project.



The Figure 4.10 above shows that the majority of respondents did participate from the beginning to the end of the project. However, not all projects were completed hence the respondents said they participated to where the project ended.

The respondents who did not participate from the beginning to the end of the project mentioned that the projects they were involved in had insufficient funds and materials. They further stated that there was a lack of communication and sustainability in the project hence the project ceased to operate. This implies that based on the reasons provided by the respondents, the project failed either because of lack of resources, poor leadership or lack of communication. This finding is further confirmed by Blenkowski (1989:99) and Phillips et al (2002:168-173) who in their lists of factors contributing to project failure have mentioned among others lack of resources, lack of communication and poor leadership.

Community participation can be successful in cases where the community has genuinely been part of the process of the project (Marais et al, 2007:13; Mansuri and Rao, 2004:11; Simanowits, 1997:128). The process involves equality in decision making throughout the project cycle, (Simanowits, 1997;128). Korten (1991:5) points out that local people should be involved in the development process, as their participation allows them as beneficiaries to discover the possibilities of exercising choice and thereby becoming capable of managing their own future.

#### 4.2.13 Stages respondents participated in

Table 4.1 Stages in which respondents participated in.

Stages	Total number of respondents	Total number of respondents participated	Percentages
1. Initiation	50	11	15%
2. Planning	50	18	25%
3. Implementation	50	39	53%
4. Evaluation	50	05	7%

Table 4.1 shows that 53% of the respondent participated in the implementation stage of their projects, 25% in planning stage, 15% in initiation stage and lastly 7% in evaluation stage. It must be noted there are other respondents who participated in more than one stage.

According to the findings most of the respondents (53%) participated in the implementation stage. This implies majority of the community were only given a chance to implement the project. Most of the respondents confirmed that they were not involved in the other stages of the project. This means that the respondents participated in projects already decided upon by someone else. This is what Raniga and Simpson (2002:183) referred to as “passive participation”- in passive participation, projects are started but have not involved the primary stakeholders or end-users from the beginning.

The study revealed that only 15% of the respondents participated in the initiation of the project. This is a smaller number which proves that there was very little or no community involvement or participation at this stage. Respondents argued that most of the decisions were already made on their behalf and they were not given a chance to prioritize projects. If the community feel that they are not genuinely participating in the projects, it is unlikely that they will take an interest in it.

The study also shows that only 25%of the respondents took part in the planning stage of the projects. However, the respondents mentioned that they were only told about the projects, how they were going to function, when it will start and other related issues. Some respondents said they were at least given a chance to ask questions and inputs when necessary. This finding is confirmed by the following quote:

*“We were asked by raise of hands to ask question or comment about the project”*

In the evaluation stage, only 7% of the respondents were involved. This indicates that a very small number of the respondents took part in the evaluation stage. This finding further confirms the view expressed by Cohen and Uphoff (1980:213-235) that community participation in evaluation is important but rarely carried out. Mokgalwaneng is a very remote area with majority of the population being illiterate. It is therefore, believed that the majority of the people only participated in the implementation stage of the project because of their level of qualifications, training and illiteracy. However, most respondents said that most of the decisions were made by the top operation management or leaders of the projects. The findings therefore, reveal that the community members were not fully participating in the initiation, planning and evaluation stages of their projects. And this is regarded as low level of participation. The literature

reviewed in section 2.6 of chapter 2 by Johnston (1982:203) confirms this finding that where people have no share in decision making and merely complying with predetermined plans by providing material, labor or even votes or acceptance of specific conditions, is regarded as the lowest level of participation.

According to Fintsternbusch and Van Wicklin III (1989:573), participation is a contribution to the decision or work involved in the projects. The authors note that participation occurs through stages and manifests varying degrees in project development. Moningka (2000) adds that community participation can be seen as a process in which community members are involved at different stages and degrees of intensity in the project cycle with the objective to build the capacity of the community, to maintain services created during the project after the facilitating organizations have left. Participation throughout the whole project, from project design and implementation to evaluation, ensures the reflection of community priorities and needs in the activities of the project. This motivates the community into maintaining operating project activities after the project is completed.

#### 4.2.14 Level of participation by community members

Figure 4.11 Level of participation

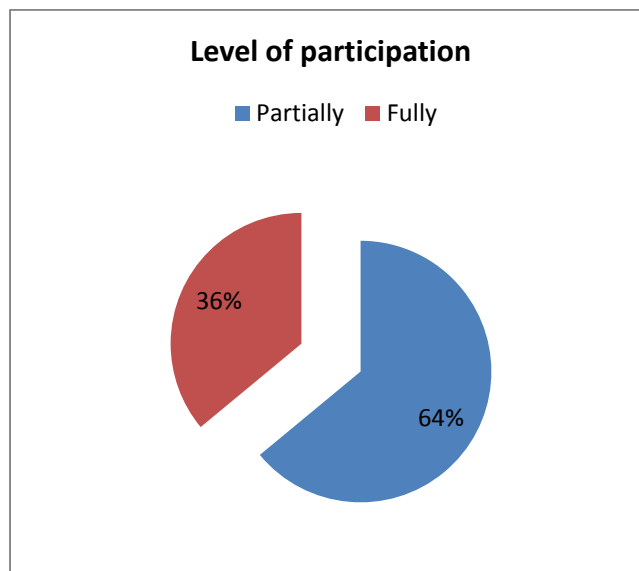


Figure 4.11 above shows that 36% of the respondents fully participated in the projects whereas 64% of the respondents partially participated.

The respondents believe that the reasons why they partially participated in the projects are because they were not informed of the meetings. Thus lack of communication lead to project failure. Some of the respondents reported that they are confused as to what is happening with their projects. The fact that they did not attend significant training, impacted negatively on their ability to participate fully in the project. The following quote confirms the finding:

*“I believe that if I was trained for this project I could have had interest in taking part, as I would have gained skills and knowledge about the project. But because I know nothing and was never trained for the project, I see no reason for me to participate”*

Hussein (2003) stresses the need for motivation, training and civic education in order for people to participate intelligently in local development issues/projects.

36% of the respondents reported that they fully participated in the projects and this has given them a sense of belonging. They felt a sense of ownership of the projects whereby each member ensured that the project succeeded for the benefit of the community. Others said the participation in the projects particularly meetings has offered them an opportunity to express their personal views. This finding is in line with Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation, rungs (3) informing and (4) consultation that allow the have-nots to have a voice.

The view of one official was that “the community lacks the competence to appreciate and engage in full participation. Unless this competence is built among the people, participation remains rhetorical. His opinion was that “level of participation, especially in meetings, heavily depends on the competence and expertise of the committee to facilitate the process”.

#### 4.2.15 The ways in which community benefitted from the project.

Figure 4.12 Community benefit of project.

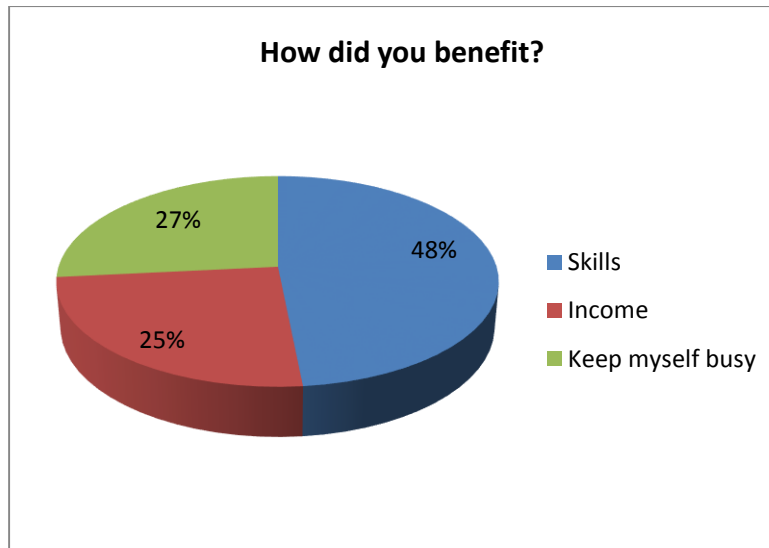


Figure 4.12 above indicates that by participating in the projects 48% of the respondents gained skills and 25% gained income and the remaining 27% said that they only kept themselves busy. Some respondents mentioned that they benefitted from the project as they got temporary employment. Temporary employment goes hand in hand with reward for the employment. The reward can be measured by monetary value and goods that can be exchanged for money to buy food for the household. Figure 4.12 indicates the 75% of the community members are not benefiting any income from the projects. This threaten the sustainability of project and also the government loses its invested money because projects turn to be non resourceful.

Narayan (1995:7) points out that participation is the notion of contributing, influencing or redistribution of power and of control, resources, benefitting, knowledge and skills to be gained through beneficiary involvemnet in the decision making process of the project. The finding therefore indicates that 75% of the respondents are non-earners. And as a result, this affected their participation in the projects.

One official mentioned that the reason why most people are not receiving any income from the projects is that some of the community members are either not qualified or do not have any experience. As a result they participate in the projects to gain knowledge, skills and experience. Arguing along the same line, another official mentioned that the

purpose of the DRDLR through CRDP is to provide disadvantaged people with skills and knowledge, so that they can use them to gain income either from the contractors, government or NGOs.

#### 4.2.16 The value of income.

Figure 4.13 Value of income.

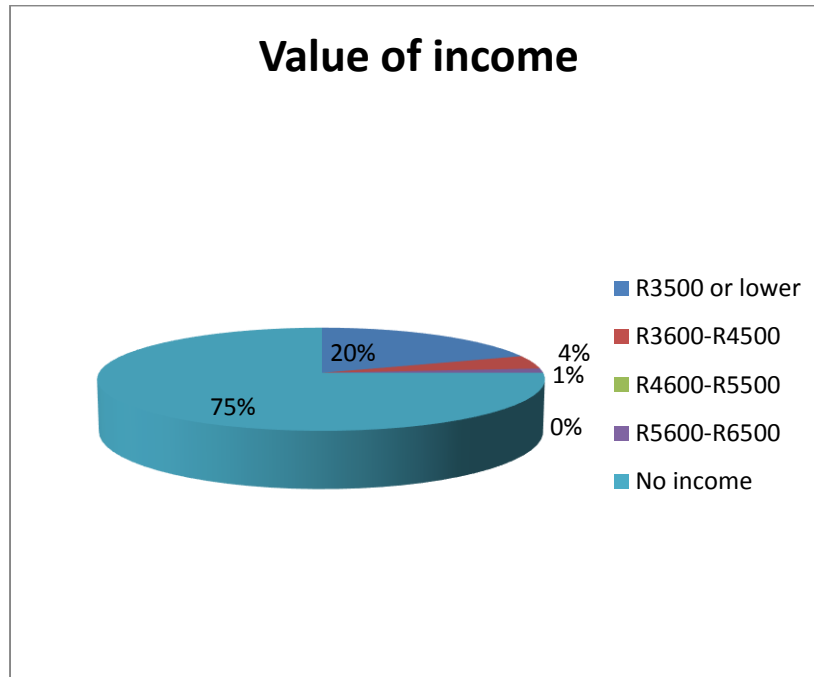


Figure 4.13 shows that 75% of the respondents did not earn anything while 20% earned an income of R3500 or lower; 4% of beneficiaries earned between R3600 and R4500 with 1% earned between R5600-R6500. No-one earned between R4 600 to R 5 500.

The 75% of non earners can be correlated to the lack of sustainability and poor progress of the projects and also lack of participation. 20% are those who earned R 3500 or less and the combination of the two figures shows that the majority of beneficiaries are under financial difficulties despite their participation in community development projects. It is clear that members motivation to participate progressively decreases because of lack of income. The study established that 1% of those who earned R 5 600 to R6500 and 4% of those who earned R3600 to R4500 were supervisors who managed and monitored the projects.

The respondents were unhappy with the lack of income and low income and further mentioned that their standard of living has not improved. They cannot afford essential goods and to pay their debts. Some respondents who had no earnings are contemplating not participating as they have not been rewarded. It is clearly difficult for non earners and the low income earners to continue participating in the projects, as per the findings of the study. This finding concur with Kakumba and Nsingo's (2008:116) view that weak financial position of local communities reduces the capacity of communities to participate in development projects, and also affects the whole process of rural development .

#### 4.2.17 Empowerment

Figure 4.14 Empowerment of community.

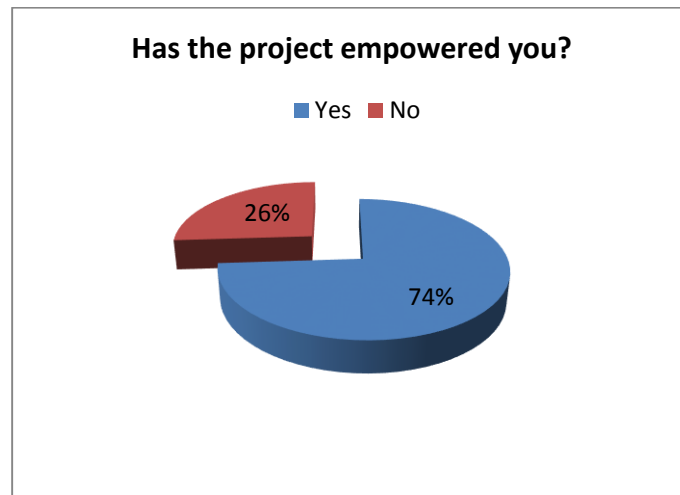


Figure 4.14 above shows that 26% of the respondents said that the projects have not empowered them in any way and 74% said the projects have empowered them. The respondents mentioned that they have gained skills, knowledge and income while taking part in the projects. One of the reasons the 26% of the respondents provided is that the project failed before it started. Those who feel empowered may not have gained in cash but benefitted in other ways. Some respondents said because of their participation in projects, group meetings and training, they feel empowered to make decisions regarding the projects in their own area.

They further mentioned that they are now empowered to demand services from government. Empowerment is associated with development of community skills in



relation to the project (Marais & Krige, cited in Raniga & Simpson, 2002; 183). According to Robert (2006:125), empowerment is defined as having a real say in decision making that affect the project development.

According to Narayan's (1995:26) any development activity that leads to increased access and control over resources and to acquisition of new skills and confidence, enables people to initiate action on their own. This allow the aquisition of leadership skills that can be seen as human development. Empowerment is essentially a political concept that measures more equal sharing or redistribution of power and resources with those who previously lacked power (Narayan, 1995:26).

Some respondents who hold leadership positions said they have gained organizational and leadership skills, and they have learned how to be good examples to others. Brett (2002) supports this statement by arguing that paticipation strenghthens managerial competence, motivation and performance of workers, social solidarity and relative position of poor and marginal groups in the society.

It was discovered in the Mokgalwaneng community, that initially empowerment was not an absolute concept. Although most people did not receive training, they became empowered. An important aspect in assessing whether the project has empowered the community is to distinguish between empowerment through the process and products. In other words, there is empowerment that comes about through the provision of the products such as training and empowerment that is facilitated through the development process itself. In this case, empowerment was as a result of the provision of products which may not be as significant as empowerment through the development process, but is nevertheless of some value to individuals members of the community.

#### 4.2.18 Community participation challenges and how they can be addressed

Challenges in participation can result in project failure and demotivate the community members from participating in the development projects.

The main challenge raised by respondents affecting their participation is low income or no income at all. Hussein (2003:271-282) argues that there is no way that participation can be realized in a situation of high cost of living, poor economic conditions and reduced peace of mind among citizenry. In this case the community needs some incentives. More studies have established that low-income communities have not participated in both decision-making and development processes of the project. It is reported that people (community members) are often less likely to participate due to tenure, income, gender age or politics, than less diverse community. (Botes & Rensburg, 2000:48).

Lack of resources in project plays a significant role in the community not participating. Dube (2004:22) indicates that most of the projects tend to operate in isolation and are challenged by lack of resources and networking.

Respondents mentioned fights/conflicts and distrust as another challenge of participation. If the environment is not conducive, it is impossible for effective participation to take place. Furthermore, if people do not trust each other it may lead to conflicts resulting in demotivation of members. This finding confirms the views of Oakely, et al (1991:13) who mentioned that, rural people may share their poverty but there may be many factors which divide them and breed mutual distrust which might lead to lack of participation.

Lack of community participation at the beginning of the projects is also a challenge. The respondents argued that they were not involved in the beginning of the project and therefore, did not feel the need to take part while decisions have already being made on their behalf. Everatt (2001:33) gives credence to this finding and mentions that some projects experience problems where community members do not want to participate at later stages because the community was excluded during the design and planning stages.

The respondents further stated that there is a lack of information and transparency regarding the projects. This also plays a crucial role in the declining of community participation. Respondents argued that they are sometimes surprised with what happens in the projects as they are not kept informed. They further mentioned that the

committee sometimes does not transfer information to them. This means information is known by leaders only. Marais (2007:25) refers to this as 'capacities and processes'. Raniga & Simpson's (2002:186) research revealed that the community felt that there had not been adequate community participation, as there was a feeling that there was a lack of transparency and lack of information regarding how the project was identified in the first place.

Travelling costs and distance from work to home and long working hours are also major challenges to community participation. Respondents clearly indicated that some community members ceased to participate for this reason.

Other respondents argued that there is a form of favoritism by leaders or the committee; people are not treated equally, resulting in a decline of participation.

Mokgalwaneng is a remote area with a majority of illiterate people, which is a critical challenge of participation. Respondents indicated that the issue of illiteracy leads to low self-esteem. It is common knowledge that if project members do not possess the necessary skills then this affects project sustainability and eventually leads to project failure.

Some respondents expressed fear and disinterest in participating. They noted that involving politicians or political issues in the implementation of the projects jeopardizes the process of the project because politicians use it as a campaign tool for the ruling party, something that is likely to make supporters of the opposition parties lose interest in the project. Observations by Hussein (2003:278); Ngubane (1999:16); Somanje (2001) and Dube and Gonclaves (2004) indicates that political factors can deter participation in political processes and community participation and development activities have been confirmed in this study. Ngubane (1999:22) points out that the political factors renders people ineffective and unwilling to participate in community development activities. Hussein (2003:278) concludes that political and social economic factors at a local level that negatively affect community development have to be pragmatically addressed through measures such as capacity building, civic education and training and development programs at all levels, to promote effective community participation in development.

As a result of the above mentioned challenges, the community has initiated the involvement of other stakeholders such as the local and district municipality. They also decided to take charge of these challenges or problems and requested that they should be consulted and provided with feedback on the progress of the projects. The above challenges are an indication of huge administrative and financial management problems that the DRDLR has to address.

The DRDLR officials' response on the challenges of participation concurs with most of those mentioned by the community members. Nevertheless, the following responses from officials indicate on how these challenges of participation can be addressed:

*“By improving better services and project coordination from government”*

*“Establishing proper communication channels to understand the community needs and intended plans to address those community needs”*

*“Giving the community members the chance to prioritize the projects”*

*“It is important to establish the correct project plan in business format that is aligned to community needs and government plans”*

The above quotes from the DRDLR official indicate that the officials are aware of the some of the challenges of participation and have solutions on how these challenges can be addressed. However, what is clearly lacking in these responses is the understanding that the community has to practically participate in the decision making process from the beginning, starting with identification of the projects to be initiated in accordance with community needs. This is the most critical challenge that confronts government officials who may understand the notion of participation theoretically only but not implement it in practice. It is therefore assumed that if all of these challenges are taken into consideration, addressed and implemented accordingly, then an effective and efficient participation by the community is guaranteed.

#### 4.2.19 Satisfaction with project facilitation of DRDLR

Figure 4.15 How the DRDLR is handling the projects.

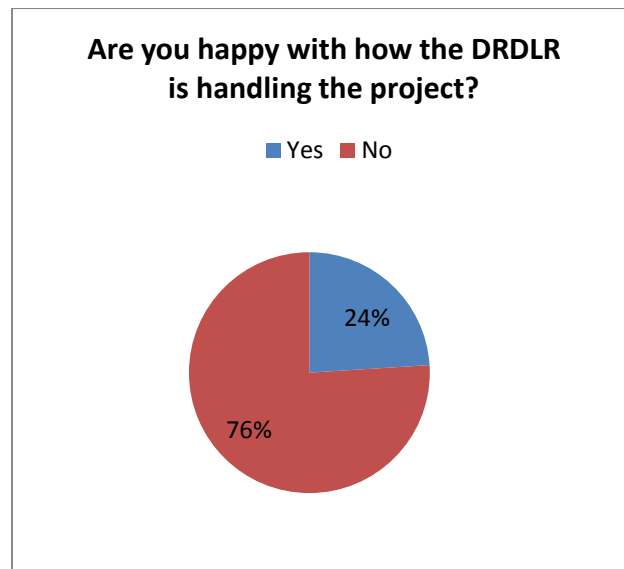


Figure 4.15 above shows 76% of the respondents said that they are not happy about how the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform is handling the project and 24% of the respondents said they are happy. The respondents said the government should intervene and provide solution to the problems and challenges they are facing as the community. This tallies with the statement put forward by Makumbe (1996:4) which is that government can use all its arms to ensure a peaceful environment in which development activities can prevail without disruptions.

In contrary to that, respondents, especially from housing projects are satisfied with how the government is handling their project. This showed that training was provided and resources were available and the housing was doing exceptionally well. The following quotes confirm this finding:

*"At least most of the houses which were promised have been built and most people now have homes"*

*"I might not be happy with the progress of other projects but as for the housing project I am very happy as most of us did not have houses but today we have shelters and our kids have a place to call home"*

Generally, all respondents were pessimistic about the operations of the government and particularly the DRDLR. As a result, participation is declining drastically. Furthermore, respondents argue that they no longer make decisions but just operate on directives from above thereby making them mere recipients of development. This justifies the argument put forward by (Vincent, 2004), against participation which is that outsiders tend to retain for themselves the right to guide the process and decide who participates, how and what gets funded.

It was found that almost 76% of the respondents who said that they are unhappy argued that the service delivery by the Government is totally unsatisfactory, some projects usually ceased to operate without any explanation given to them. In all levels, government should support the community to ensure a strong commitment to participate in development projects.

In relation to the issue of projects that ceased to operate, officials provided some reasons as to why this has happened.

*“One of the challenges we are facing as the Government, is the issue of contractors who come and go. They are appointed and fail to perform and leave the project half way”*

*“There was a shortage of funds and lack of resources, which lead to the project ceasing to operate”*

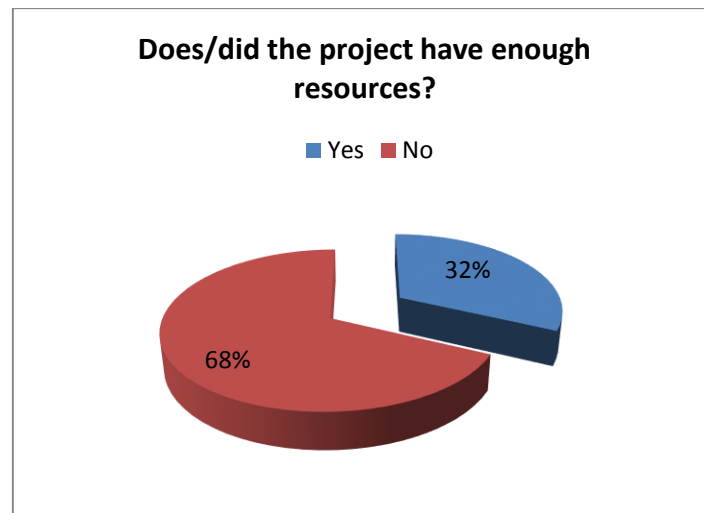
Everatt (2001:1) points out that development projects have to be designed, budgeted and piloted. Therefore, in this regard it can be assumed that the projects were not properly designed, budgeted and piloted.

Everatt & Gwagwa (2005:23) further mention that development projects very rarely move at the pace demanded by financial calendars (especially when the state is involved). This places a huge challenge on those in charge of development projects. Many people are angry, frustrated and upset about low commodity prices, eroding rural infrastructure, cutbacks in services, and the deterioration of communities and perceived lack of government attention (Pritchard & McManus, 2000).

## Theme B: Project Resources

### 4.2.20 Availability of resources

Figure 4.16 Availability of resources



Based on figure 4.16 above, 68% of the respondents indicated that the projects they participated in had insufficient resources and 32% indicated the projects they participated in had enough resources. The unavailability of resources can lead to project failure, lack of community participation and development of an area.

The study revealed that most of the projects that ceased to operate are because of lack of resources. Lack of resources such as money, material, training, equipment to name a few.

Respondents indicated that they could not continue taking part in the projects with lack of resources. The following quotes confirm this finding:

*"There is no way that we can continue taking part in a project that does not have materials and money. We are not being paid and there are no resources"*

*"I stopped attending meetings because of no progress in the project due to lack of resources"*

The availability of resources leads to the success of the projects and also promotes employment and community participation. Community empowerment can be firmly established as an essential tool to enable marginalised groups to claim rights for access and control of resources through existing and altered institutions (Nunan, 2006:1316).

In order for the rural communities to play an active role in the development projects, the study reveals that it is necessary for their members to have access to resources. These resources include, funding, government training programs, education, amongst others.

#### 4.2.21 Human Resources skills

Figure 4.17 Human resources skills of the respondents.

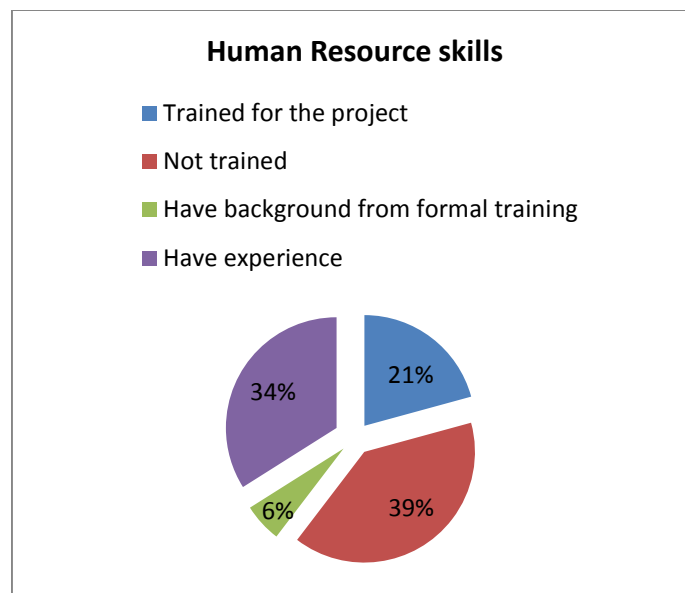


Figure 4.17 shows that 21% of the respondents were trained for the projects, 39% are not trained, 34% have experience and the remaining 6% of the respondents said they have background from formal training.

One of the officials mentioned that he found the community to be competent, although there was no actual training undertaken. This was confirmed by another official of the DRDLR by telephonic conversation with the researcher.



Lack of employment can force one to opt for any work just to make a living, hence the 39% of the untrained people or lacking in experience. However, skills can be transferred easily to the 39% who are not trained by those who were trained and have experience. Respondents mentioned that they did not receive training prior to the commencement of the projects. They mostly contributed their knowledge.

While other respondents have been trained and have transferable skills, they still felt that the lack of training in community development projects in particular, remains a serious hindrance.

#### 4.2.22 Summary

In summary, this chapter covered the findings and analysis of the data collected from the community members of Mokgalwaneng village (as main respondents) and the DRDLR officials. The chapter also covered the profile of respondents who participated in the study, community participation context and issues and community resources utilized to address the community's needs.

Generally respondents indicated that they were not involved in the conception of the projects. Some of them indicated that they were involved in the planning stage when majority indicated that they were involved in the implementation of the projects.

Small group discussions revealed deep-rooted structural hierarchical decision-making processes. Ordinary community members do not freely take part in the development projects as sometimes political allegiance plays a huge role.

The next chapter summarizes the findings and suggests answers to the research questions posed in chapter 1. It also addresses the main challenges of participation and offers recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises key findings and presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

The research asked the questions: *What are local people's perceptions and understanding of community participation in the context of rural development, what is the nature and extent of community participation in community development projects in Mokgalwaneng village and what community resources are utilized to address the community's needs?*. Central to this research is the conceptualization, extent and level of community participation in development projects.

Generally the findings of the study have indicated that the community participated partially in the projects at Mokgalwaneng village. The majority of respondents indicated that they were only involved in the implementation stage, where they contributed their labour.

#### 5.2 Summary of key findings

The study revealed that community members have a degree of understanding of the concept of community participation. They defined participation in development projects as a form of "taking part", "involvement" and "encouragement". The officials, on the other hand showed more theoretical understanding of the concept of community participation in development projects. They defined it as a form of action or taking part in the decision making of the projects, as well as a process of empowerment. This clearly shows that, unlike the community members, the officials do understand in theory, what is meant by community participation and its importance.

76% of the respondents claimed to have not been given a chance to identify and prioritize the projects. Only a minority (15%) attended initiation meetings and others rarely attended meetings, as they felt that the projects were already decided by somebody else. Lack of information and transparency about the projects was also revealed by this study. The study confirmed that there is partial participation as the majority (64%) of the respondents indicated that they participated partially in the projects, and most indicated that they only participated in the implementation stage of the project and were not involved in the initiation, planning and evaluation stages of the projects (Table 4.1).

Evidence from the field showed that lack of resources, politics, low-income, illiteracy, lack of information and transparency, lack of commitment, long travelling distance, costs and long working hours are the challenges of participation. These challenges play a very crucial role in the participation of the community and affect their level of participation.

The study also revealed that 76% of the respondents said that they are unhappy about the service delivery by the Government and that is totally unsatisfactory. Some projects usually ceased to operate without any explanation given to them. Effective service delivery is tantamount to the provision of opportunities to collective decision-making. It is imperative that the government goes a little further in reaching out to its consistency by having more frequent community participatory meetings regarding the projects and funds. Furthermore, although the dependence of the government on external funders for projects is not commendable, the government would do well to facilitate the continuation of the projects through additional sponsors such as private businesses who would understand the value of giving the people of Mokgalwaneng village a decent salary for the work they do and provide the required equipment and resources.

Majority of the respondents expressed lack of information about the criteria used in the process of development projects and any other issues related to the projects. They felt they were not empowered in the decision making process but were empowered in other ways. They further stated that they are engaged in the projects because they have no other alternatives.

The findings of this study revealed that there is no sustainability and poor progress in community projects due to the failure of members to review strategic implementation or project operation. Meetings are very vital and are regarded as forum for planning, learning, exchange of views and ideas, and electing leaders among other things. Furthermore, evidence from the research revealed that community meetings where participatory planning was supposed to take place and where most decisions are made are rarely held. The poor members of the minority group and people with disabilities hardly attended meetings and when they do, they hardly speak in such meetings.

The study showed that Mokgalwaneng village is undoubtedly a no income and low-income community because 75% of the respondents earned no income from participating in the projects and a 20% of the respondents earned R3500 or lower. It is assumed that if the community gets a satisfactory income, then the effectiveness of community participation in development projects will be immensely enhanced. The 75% of non earners who do not benefit from projects can be correlated to the lack of sustainability and poor progress of the projects. This is clearly indicating that the community project beneficiaries are losing when measuring the output versus the input. While participation is a useful concept in theory, it has associated financial costs, for example transport and feeding costs. This study revealed that many of the respondents cannot afford these costs.

During data collection period, the researcher noticed that most of the people were only interested in developing the area where they lived and generating an income. Of course, on the surface it could be seen as a lack of commitment, although there could have been deeper underlying issues. Development does not happen overnight. Commitment also means that participants have to give up their own personal time to be part of the development.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Community participation plays an important role in rural development or any form of development. The involvement of the community in the projects should begin in the

early stages of the development project, and continue throughout the project. According to Narayan (1995:7), the central argument for participation process is that involvement of the community in decision-making lets people exercise choice and voice more broadly in their lives, as well as in the more immediate context of development programs that benefit them. And participation is always associated with empowerment of the participants (Smith, 2006).

Government officials should not impose their ideas on rural communities. It is important for government officials to assess the strength and needs in their own work with rural communities. The assumption is that as government comes closer to the people, more people will participate and will have a meaningful role in development projects that affect them (Blair, 2000:22-23). Furthermore, lack of service delivery to the community by the government plays a huge role in the participation of the people. The availability of service is strongly correlated with quality of government regulations (Mamba, 2008). This suggests that, failure to provide public services can be attributed, at least in part, to low accountability environments.

The challenges confronting development is a result of poor communication and coordination between the DRDLR and community. This is the main challenge that has led to lack of understanding of the goals of community projects and project operation whereby members were not aware of meetings on many occasions. Participation exists in a wide variety of forms, ranging from government involvement in community development activities to people's participation in government –directed management functions. These approaches are in no way exclusive and often take place at the same time (ADB, 2006).The initiations of community development projects are mainly focused on poverty elimination by emphasizing food security for the majority especially the beneficiaries of projects. The failure of projects to address these set objectives leads to negative impact of the government's develop plan.

The study has indicated that 75% of beneficiaries do not get any reward from the project thereby clearly indicating the lack of project alignment to its main objective of poverty alleviation of communities. While development holds potential benefits for the

community, it is unlikely that the community will have any influence as long as they lack “political tools” such as money, power, information and literacy.

For well-informed participation to occur, it is argued that transparency is necessary. It has been argued that those most affected by a decision should have the most say while those least affected should have the least say. Involving rural community members in their own projects will also empower them to control development processes, especially the decision making process.

If the community fully participates in the development projects, participation will cease to be mere question of “who speaks” but a genuine involvement of people in deciding and affecting their own development. Hussein (2003) stresses the need for motivation and civic education in order for people to participate intelligently in local development issues/projects. Cohen and Uphoff (1997:213-235) believe that participation is a means of developing aims, ideologies and a behavior resembling equality and democracy. They believe that people must have the opportunity of participation in all development processes, whatever they may be, planning, implementation and or evaluation. It is the people themselves who decide about the direction, change in, and trend of development programs and projects.

In Mokgalwaneng village, it was discovered that when the level of participation was high (like in the housing project) then the project was successful, and if the community distanced themselves from the project (taking the livestock facilities and fencing project as an example) then the project failed dismally. So basically, one would say that all projects which failed, failed mainly because of lack of community participation. However, the geographic position of these projects is also a challenge since the projects are located in deep rural areas. As a result, the costs of providing a basic infrastructure package can be twice as much as in other developing areas (Dorosh et al, 2008).

There is a need to strengthen empowerment strategies through promotions of literacy, socio-economic livelihoods, social mobilization and advocacy as necessary pre-conditions for making participation in development projects a reality.

It is assumed that if training is provided from the beginning to the end of the project then the project will be successful and it will also be easier for the community members to participate fully in the projects. This will also allow members to gain soft skills such as communication and conflict resolution skills and linked to the foundation laid in the beginning. Moreover, it is also assumed that training is an empowerment tool. The training is linked to sustainability; because once participants have completed training then it is assumed that the projects are likely to be sustainable since project members will be applying gained knowledge from training. The skills can also be transferred to other aspects of community life.

The study set out to evaluate the extent to which rural communities participate in community development projects. This study concludes that community members do not authentically participate in their own development because they are not included in the projects from the beginning of the process. The study also highlighted the challenges to community participation and how these challenges may be addressed. The following are the summary of the suggestions put forward by the respondents (both the community and officials):

- The DRDLR officials' mentioned that these challenges can be addressed by improving better services and project coordination from government; establishing proper communication channels to understand the community needs and intended plans to address those community needs; giving the community members the chance to prioritize the projects and establish the correct project plan in business format that is aligned to community needs and government plans.
- The community has initiated the involvement of other stakeholders such as the local and district municipality; be involved in all stages of the project; be provided with proper training, good leadership and resources. And further requested that, they should be consulted and provided feedback on the progress of the projects.

## 5.4 Recommendations

From the findings of the research, a number of recommendations are made which intend to contribute towards the achievement of community participation in rural development projects and also the understanding of the concept of community participation and its importance. This may be applicable not only in the projects taking place at Mokgalwaneng village, but in other rural development projects as well:

- Government should support the community to ensure a strong commitment to participation in development projects. Hussein (2003:276) says that the role of the government is to spread the idea about the bottom-up approach to development; orientate its staff to the participatory approach and to practically involve the community in decision making processes during the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the project.
- The formal meetings are important for the sustainability of community projects to review the implemented strategy and the actual output versus the set output. The current study reveals that lack of meetings is associated with poor performance of the projects. Therefore to overcome such findings of the study, it is recommended the regular formal meetings at the interval of two weeks be held in all community projects.
- Another important element crucial to the success of community participation is the degree to which the community has been trained and empowered to take charge of the project. The community should be trained, educated and have awareness on the importance of their participation for their wellbeing. Thus, proper training is recommended.
- The community and not the officials should own the project so that they can take responsibility in terms of sustaining the project and ensuring participation. Information regarding the project should be transparent to the community.



- There is need to improve service delivery especially on the coordination and facilitation of community development projects. Incentives should be introduced for members who participate in the projects so that they can be motivated to continue participating in the development projects, improve their standard of living and level of participation.
- In order to facilitate a meaningful and effective participation by the community, especially the poor, there is a need to build the capacity of the people at all levels; popularize and encourage community participation in rural development projects; reduce long working hours and consider the issue of no income and low-income.

This study has been premised on a case study which looked at evaluating community participation in rural development projects. It is hoped that the study will contribute to the ongoing debate around community participation in rural development projects, and should in one way or the other inform policies and strategies which would create a climate conducive to community participation in rural development projects. And most importantly, it is also hoped that the study will encourage and promote community participation in development projects.

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## APPENDICES

### QUESTIONNAIRESCHEDULES

#### APPENDIX 1: A guide for community members

##### Section A- Demography

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. Age

18-25		26-35		36-45		46 & above	
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3. Marital status

Single		Married		Divorced	
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4. Home language

Tswana		Zulu		Xhosa		Sotho		Other (specify)	
--------	--	------	--	-------	--	-------	--	--------------------	--

5. Qualifications

Grade 11 or lower	
Grade 12 (matric)	
Post-matric diploma or certificate	
Baccalaureate degree (s)	
Post-graduate degree (s)	

##### Section B- Participation in community development projects

6. What do you understand by community participation in rural development projects?

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7. Which project are you participating/participated in?

Housing project	
Brick making project	
Livestock facilities & fencing project	
Gardening project	
Sanitation project	

8. Do you know the government's goals for this project?  
If yes, please list the goals

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9. What are your goals as a community for this project?

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10. Have you attended the project initiation meetings?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If no, then please explain why not?

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11. What processes were followed to initiate this project?

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12. Do you have a steering committee?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, then how was the steering committee formed?

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And were you part of the steering committee formation/elections process?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Please elaborate on your answer above

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13. How often are meetings held with regards to the project?

Once a week	
Once in two weeks	
Once a month	
Once in two months	
Other (specify)	

14. Who initiates the meeting?

The community		DRDLR Officials	
---------------	--	-----------------	--

15. How often do you attend community meetings?

Every time		Most of the time		Rarely		Never	
------------	--	------------------	--	--------	--	-------	--

16. Did you participate in the project from its beginning to the end?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If no, please explain why not?

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17. Please indicate at which stage did you participate in this project?

Initiation stage	
Planning stage	
Implementation stage	
Evaluation stage	
Not at all	

18. To what extent did you participate in this project?

Fully participated	
Partially participated	

If partial then please elaborate on why your participation was partial?

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19. Were you as a community member given any chance to identify and prioritize the project?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, how was this done?

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If no, please explain why not?

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20. How did you benefit from your participation in the project?

Skills		Income		Keep myself busy		Other benefits, specify	
--------	--	--------	--	------------------	--	-------------------------	--

Please elaborate on your answer

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21. What is the value of your income generated from the project?

R3500 or lower	
R3600-R4500	
R4600-R5500	
R5600-R6500	
R6600 and above	
No income	

22. Does your income satisfy your livelihoods requirements?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If no, please explain why not

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23. What is your understanding of the concept of sustainability?

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24. Do you see any sustainability in the project?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, please indicate what steps have been undertaken for sustainability of the project.

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And if no, please explain why not

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25. What is your understanding of the word empowerment?

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26. Do you think that the project has empowered you?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, then how did it empower you?

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If no, please explain why not

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27. What challenges did you face in participating in the project? *(please answer this question if you have participated in the stages of the project)*

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28. In your own opinion how do you think that these challenges can be overcome or addressed?

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29. Are you happy with how the department of Rural Development and land reform is handling this project?

Yes		No	
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Motivate your answer

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30. What do you think should be improved?

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### Section C- Project Resources

31. What resources were needed for this project?

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32. Does\Did your project have sufficient resources

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, please elaborate

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If no, please list the resources that are needed?

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33. Can the project manage to sustain its resources expenses?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, please elaborate

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If no, then what do you think can be the solution to non-sustainability?

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34. Do you have the necessary human resource skills for the project? (please select)

Trained for the project	
Not trained	
Have background from formal training	
Have experience	

Other responses \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your participation!!!**

## APPENDIX 2: A guide for DRDLR officials

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. How long have you been employed in Department of Rural Development and Land Reform?

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3. What is your job title or designation?

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4. Which community development projects are you facilitating or have facilitated?

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5. Do you have any community development qualifications or experience of the project you are leading?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

6. What do you understand by community participation in development projects?

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7. What are the department's goals for the projects at Mokgalwaneng? (List)

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8. Is this project working towards government's goal?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Motivate your answer

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9. What are the community's goals for this project? (List).

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10. Is the project working towards community's goal?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Please motivate your answer

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11. To what extent did the community members participate in the following stages? (*Please select from fully participated, partially participated, never participated*)

Initiation stage	
Planning stage	
Implementation stage	
Evaluation stage	

12. How was community members selected to participate in the project?

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13. Does the project have a steering committee?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please explain what steps were undertaken or how the steering committee was formed.

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14. What is the progress of the project?

Going according to plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not working towards the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Achieved set goals	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please elaborate on the above answer

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15. How often do you visit/meet with the community to check on the progress of the project?

Once a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once in two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once in two months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. How is the community benefiting from this project?

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17. Is monitoring taking place against the set objectives/goals of the project?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Please elaborate on the above answer



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18. Was there any training provided for the community in preparation for this project?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

If yes, what training and if no, please explain why not?

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19. Did the community participate in identifying and prioritizing the project?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Please explain your answer

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20. If community is participating in the project, what effect has it had on the project's performance?

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21. What is your understanding of the concept of empowerment?

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22. In your own opinion, do you think that the project has empowered the community in anyway, and if so how?

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23. In your own opinion, what would you say have been the main contributing factors for the success of this project?

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24. How do you measure success of the project?

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25. Who sets up the measurements for success?

The community	<input type="checkbox"/>	DRDLR Officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jointly	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------	--------------------------	-----------------	--------------------------	---------	--------------------------

26. In your own opinion, what would you say have been the main contributing factors to any challenges of this project?

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27. How can the challenges you mentioned on number 27 be overcome?

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28. In your own opinion, do you think that the project have people with the required skills to operate/run the project?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Please elaborate on the above answer

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29. What is the skills capacity of the community?

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30. Does the project have sufficient resources?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, please elaborate

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If no, then what resources are lacking?

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31. What is your understanding of sustainability?

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32. Do you see sustainability in this project?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If no, please explain why not

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If yes, then what steps have been undertaken for sustainability of the project?

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33. What do you consider as challenges for community members participating in the project?

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34. What suggestions do you have to enhance community participation in rural development

projects?

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICPATION!!!**