

**JOB CREATION FOR THE EMPOWERMENT  
AND DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL WOMEN:  
THE ROLE OF THE WORKING FOR WATER  
PROGRAMME IN UMLAAS CATCHMENT  
AREA, KWAZULU-NATAL.**

**BY**

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## **CERTIFICATION**

This study is an original work by the researcher and has not been presented in any form to another University. Where the use was made of the works of others, it has been duly acknowledged and referenced in the text. This research was conducted in the Umlaas Catchment area of the Working for Water Project under the supervision of Dr. Lisa Bornstein, Department of Centre for Social and Development Studies, University of Natal.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
BHN	Basic Human Needs
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
GNU	Government of National Unity
SAFCOL	South African Forestry Company
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
WE	Women Employees
CM	Community member
C	Contractor
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a new Era
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
ICLEI	International Council on Local Environment Initiatives
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
FLS	Forward Looking Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
IWY	International Women's Year
ILO	International Labour Organization
WID	Women in Development
WAD	Women and Development
GAD	Gender and Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategies
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
WWF	World Wide Fund for nature
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EIC	Education Information Centre
UNDAW	United Nations Decade for the Advancement of Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
PSLSD	Project for the Statistics on Living Standards and Development

## ABSTRACT

The study focuses on job creation for the empowerment and development of women and assessed the role of State projects in the Umlaas Catchment area of the Working for Water Project in Kwazulu-Natal. The concepts of gender, households and rural development are defined from the socio-economic and geographical perspectives.

A brief review of the aims of the Working for Water Project, which sets out to increase water yield through the clearing of invasive alien plants with the main objective of employing and training people from the disadvantaged communities in order to enhance their social upliftment and empowerment is presented.

The data are collected from five stakeholders viz: the women employees, the contractors, the Project manager and the household members of the women employees of the working for Water Project as well as the community members from the six settlements in which the women employees are resident. In-depth interviews with the samples, which were tape-recorded, yielded a rich database. The data are subjected to qualitative and quantitative analyses to assess the extent to which job creation enhances the empowerment and development of the women employees of the Project. The analyses entail the level of involvement of women in the management of the Project, capacity building and acquisition of skills through training, the effects of income in power relation at home and community and the socio-economic impacts of the project on the empowerment of the rural women in the study area.

The analyses show that:

- (a) many of the women resort to work because of the pressing financial needs in their homes in order to alleviate the level of poverty. Also, the Working for Water Project has significantly helped the women

employees to meet their financial obligations toward themselves, their children and members of their households.

- (b) more women than men are employed by the Working for Water Project in keeping to its objective. However, few women occupy management positions. The Project draws on a range of age groups with almost all the women employees less than 50 years of age.
- (c) some of the women employees of the Project have acquired skills from the organized training and as such are more confident to manage resources not only in their primary assignment but in their life situations. However, while the Project has helped some of the women employees to organize themselves in budgeting and making choices regarding their lives, some are still constrained by traditions.
- (d) the men seem to be happy that their women are working since there is no evidence to support that the men did not want the women to work neither did any of the women indicate that their men raised an opposition.

Thereafter suggestions are offered to guide the policy makers and the Working for Water Project in achieving their set objectives of empowering and developing the rural women in order to stimulate a rapid transformation of the rural areas in South Africa.

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**“The objectives of the RDP will not have been realized until we see in visible and practical terms that the conditions of the women in our country have radically changed for the better, and that they have been empowered to intervene in all aspects of life as equals with any other member of the society”.**

**(President Nelson Mandela’s  
Inauguration speech quoted in  
The Sunday Tribune 6 August  
1995)**



## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the topic and questions addressed in this thesis as well as the disadvantaged state of women with regard to training and employment. It also discusses access and control of socio-economic resources. In addition, the objectives of the Working for Water Programme and those of this study will be reviewed. The theoretical framework for the study and the developmental approaches will be introduced.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Women are generally disadvantaged in relation to men of the same race and class in their access to training, labour, and employment and their access and control over economic and social resources (Bullock, 1994; Patel, 1996; Commission on Gender Equality, 1998). In many developing countries, women constitute the group at the bottom of the ladder with respect to employment, poverty, education, training and status (May, 1987; CGE, 1998; Mosaka-Wright, 1995). They also lack access to land on which most rural dwellers depend to feed their families and produce raw materials for the urban industries. Even where women gain access to land, their right to the land is limited as it depends on their link to a man: the community leader, husband, father or son. Although it is a generally accepted fact that women have the right to participate in political and economic decision-making and enjoy the fruit of social and economic progress (World Bank, 1990), they lack access to basic services, information, markets, power, status and participation in decision-making to develop their full capability for their own benefit in the home, society and nation at large (Small and Kompe, 1991; James and Ngcobo, 1997; Walker, 1997).

All over the world, rural communities have numerous basic needs, which have to

be addressed at regional, national or international levels. Most African countries are poor and the greatest burdens of the poverty are borne by women (Mosaka-Wright, 1995). Studies reveal that 75% of the poor in South Africa, of which women constitute 52.7%, live in the rural areas which are characterized by the absence of basic services such as health, education, potable water, electricity and sanitation (Makgetla, 1995; May et al, 1995 cited in Posel, 1997). Women are therefore forced to play a dual role and faced with the problem of meeting domestic and economic responsibilities. They have to work, survive, sustain and care for themselves and their families in rural areas. Also, women constitute 70% of the rural dwellers and about 57% of these areas are heads of their households due to migratory systems, which make men work in metropolitan areas (World Bank, 1990; Tshatsinde, 1993; Posel, 1997). This out-migration is a major factor in shaping women's lives and has placed constraints on their work and income earning opportunities.

Moreover, more women than men are among at least 8 million people without jobs. Although unemployment statistics are often difficult to obtain in developing countries and various South African surveys have come up with different figures, the most generally quoted figure of unemployment rate is 33% (Crowthers, 1998). Also, in Moller's Quality of Life Survey (1996) unemployment (36%) was seen as the most pressing issue for South Africa while jobs (46%) and better wages (35%) were the two top priorities which respondents wanted the government to address. It is estimated that at least seven million people who are of working age in South Africa are without jobs. Also, an estimated 56.4% of women who are 15 years or older are without any sort of income in South Africa because of the few available job opportunities (Education Information Centre, 1996). Trends show that women in particular are affected by the high rate of unemployment, hence they often contribute to the consequent poverty rate, which has been estimated to be about 65% among the black population in South Africa (May, 1987). This is due to their movement in and out of the labour force for domestic reasons, their relatively low levels of education and restricted

occupational and geographic mobility. Also, the differing industrial distribution of male and female labour makes women concentrate in the more cyclical and volatile sectors (Niemi, 1980 cited in Sloan, 1980). Charlton (1984) and Tshatsinde (1993) stress the need for job creation beyond agriculture, provision of basic infrastructures and programmes that are aimed at extending equal access to technical information and training in rural areas in order to increase women's access to income.

Although most of women's work has been considered 'invisible', 'under-remunerated' and 'undervalued', and not included in national income accounts, most societies would fall apart without it. Rural women contribute 20% of the average family income apart from their household and survival tasks on which they spend about 18 hours a day (Gwagwa, 1996; Tshatsinde, 1993). They toil long hours in the field, rear domestic livestock, keep vegetable garden, fetch water, cook and take care of the children, the aged and the sick. If women's work in and around the house were monetized, their collective contribution to the world economy would easily top \$4 trillion a year (Toth, 1997). In addition, they have the potential for developing themselves, the society and nation at large as economic development opens more opportunities for employment and they enter into formal labour force for increased earnings. Women's labour and earnings will therefore increase their quality of life, enhance economic independence, alleviate poverty, misery, and stagnant production and consequently improve the living conditions and health of members of the society, all of which are current pressing issues.

To this end, the Réconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was instituted following the victory of the African National Congress (ANC) at the 1994 general election. Consequent upon this, a declaration was made that the Government of National Unity would be committed to effectively address the problems of poverty and gross inequality evident in all aspects of South African society. The RDP was a programme to enhance the transformation of every

sector of South African society with the main objective of improving the quality of life of all South Africans, especially the poorest and most marginalized section of the society, through improved level of employment, housing, education and health. Noting that women are the majority of the poor in South Africa, it was declared that the RDP would ensure "a full and equal role for women in every aspect of our economy and society, we must unlock boundless energies and creativity suppressed by racism and discrimination" (RDP: 9).

This research therefore assesses the impacts of job creation as a means of empowering and developing rural women and identifies the challenges towards its attainment.

## 1.2. A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT

South Africa lies almost entirely within the temperate zone and experiences insufficient rainfall and drought over a wide area hence the general concern for water, vegetation, rehabilitation and conservation (DWAF, 1996). Against this background, the Working for Water Project was established in 1995 as part of the Government's strategy for Growth, Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) and its Reconstruction and Development Programme.

The Working for Water Project is a collaborative effort that was launched by Professor Kader Asmal (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry) in September 1995. It is an inter-Departmental initiative to cut down invasive alien plants such as wattles and pines, which strives to contribute to the reconstruction and development of South Africa (DWAF, 1996).

The programme is characterized by a partnership between the Department of Water and Forestry (DWAF), international (e.g. Dutch Government) and other governmental bodies, the private sector and the public, with all partners

contributing time, expertise, personnel and equipment. It started out as a R25 million Reconstruction and Development Programme and was supplemented by grants of R3 million from the Forest Owner's Association, R4 million from Sappi Ltd. and R1 million from the South African Forestry Company (SAFCOL) (DWAF, 1996).

### 1.3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT

Through the clearing of invasive alien plants, the Working for Water Programme is helping us to secure vital water supplies. It typifies the aspirations of the RDP. Already, it has brought hope and dignity to thousands of South Africans by creating jobs and business opportunities, and by empowering local communities to care for water and their natural environment.

The Working for Water Programme Annual Report 1995/1996: 3

The overall aim of the project is to increase water yield through the clearing and control of further spread of a suite of woody, invasive alien species. It also aims at employing and appropriately training people from the disadvantaged communities to clear the invasive alien plants in order to enhance their social upliftment and empowerment. The training aims to encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills among the labourers and supervisors so as to enable them to enter the job market with appropriate skills (The Working for Water Programme Annual Report 1996/97).

Furthermore, in line with the government's plan for the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the project intends to pay special attention to

social issues such as racial and gender equity in recruiting the workforce at all levels. In addition, it aims to employ women preferentially at all levels such that they constitute at least 60% of the workforce and wherever possible to employ the youths and disabled people. Other benefits include improved water runoff and ecological restoration (DWAF, 1996). In order to ensure that the programme is labour-intensive, it was stated that employees would only use hand tools like bows, saws, cane knives and hatchets and that training would be provided for chainsaw operators who would be employed by other sub-project agents.

Since a large number of women are and continue to remain in the rural areas for their livelihood, a closer examination of the initiatives taken to develop and empower women through job creation warrants closer study. Consequently, this research will be largely directed at addressing the principles in the development and empowerment of rural women through job creation in the Working for Water Project. These will include an evaluation of the major economic activities of the women, training and capacity building in the project and access to human and material resources in the household and the community.

## 1.4. RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.4.1. RESEARCH AIMS

The main aim of the study is to assess the level of involvement of women in the management of the Working for Water Project and the extent to which job creation can enhance the empowerment of rural women.

### 1.4.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- The main objective is to assess the extent to which job creation can

enhance the empowerment and development of rural women in Kwazulu-Natal based on the research in the Umlaas catchment area of the Working for water Project. Other related objectives are to:

- evaluate the major economic activities and the influence on the empowerment of women in the study area after their involvement in the Working for Water Project.
- assess the socio-economic activities and demographic profiles of women employees and the extent to which these women have been involved in the management of the Working for Water Project.
- assess the social and economic impacts of the project on the empowerment and development of the women in the study area.
- assess the impact of the social and cultural lives of women employees on their productivity in the Project.
- evaluate the extent to which job creation has been able to build capacity and empower the women in the study area in view of the entrenched structure of power relations and economic poverty of the society.
- assess the impacts of job creation by the project on decision-making and involvement in household chores.

## 1.5. HYPOTHESIS

- (i) The creation of jobs alone is not an indicator of the empowerment and development of rural women.

- (ii) Skill training does not change power relations in the home or community.
- (iii) Patriarchal relations in the home limit the benefits of development.

## 1.6. OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Umlaas Catchment area of the Working for Water Project in Kwazulu-Natal. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, relevant primary data were collected from five different stakeholders viz: 25 women employees of the project, the project manager, six contractors, 25 household members of the women employees and 10 community members in the area. The respondents were duly informed about the objectives of the study verbally and by means of consent letters. In view of the researcher being a non-Zulu speaker, two Zulu-speaking assistants were employed to conduct the interviews with the researcher. The research assistants were trained to create a friendly atmosphere with the respondents as well as observe their verbal and non-verbal behaviours. Questionnaires were administered to the respondents and they were subsequently interviewed based on the objectives of the study. Reflective summaries during and at the end of the interviews were used to ensure a proper representation of the respondents' views. Also, the reliability of the research was enhanced by triangulation obtained by comparing the data from the audio tapes, written notes and questionnaires.

Also, secondary data were obtained from published and unpublished texts, journals, government reports as well as articles from newspapers.

The data collected were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the perception of the various stakeholders on empowerment and development of the women under study.



## 1.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- (i) The study could not cover all the women employees of the Working for Water Project because of time and financial constraints, as the researcher could not secure sponsorship from any group or individual. However, simple randomization, using a percentage of the population concerned was deemed representative.
- (ii) The researcher could not communicate in isiZulu and had to depend on the interpretation of trained research assistants. Some of the respondents initially perceived us as spies especially because they were not familiar with the researcher and the assistants. However, this problem was overcome as the project leader informed the women employees through the contractors and led us to some of the houses.
- (iii) After the first series of interviews were conducted in April and May, 2000, the sudden death of one of the research assistants led to loss of some information. The researcher had to conduct some interviews a second time with members of the households of the women employees of the project.
- (iv) Some of the respondents initially declined to answer some sensitive questions or were reluctant to give some required information. This was adduced to the skepticism about what the information might be used for or the fear that they were appointed to work for the Working for Water Project by the Indunas (traditional authorities) who could exercise power to retain them or not. However, the questions were later re-visited by rephrasing them and information was gathered by reflective summary.
- (v) Empowerment is a new word in development discourse hence to get

the right word in isiZulu was a problem. The use of empowerment depends on the content in which one uses it. It could mean “ukuhlomisa”, “nkululeko”, “ukusimama”, “umdladla” or “umfutho”. Thus, when the women were asked about their perception of empowerment, the question had to be framed as “Yini oyaziyo ngenkululeko yamandla?” meaning “what do you understand by the term empowerment?”.

## 1.8. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. It stresses the state of rural women, reviews their contribution to the households in terms of care giving and earnings and recognizes their potential to develop themselves, the society and the nation at large. Furthermore, it gives a general overview of the Working for Water Programme and its aims and objectives in relation to training and employment in order to enhance the social upliftment and empowerment of the disadvantaged communities. Lastly, it describes the aims and scope of the thesis.

Chapter two explains the definitions of some fundamental concepts used to gain a deeper understanding of this study of women, empowerment and development.

Chapter three gives an overview of societal, national and global perceptions of women’s role in development over the past four decades and describes various programmes aimed at women’s participation in developing the society at local, national and international levels. In addition, it reviews some selected approaches to development in the contemporary society.

Chapter four shows the geographic description of the study area and outlines the methods used in the research as well as the sources of data collection. Also, it

describes the analytical framework employed to assess the empowerment of the women under study.

Chapter five presents the findings of the research in relation to the demographic profiles, and socio-economic and functional characteristics of the women employees. It also shows the social and economic impacts of the Working for Water Project on the women employees in terms of acquired skills, empowerment and power relation in the households and community.

Chapter six is an analysis of the findings of the study. Comparisons to previous studies on the subject of the empowerment and development of women are made.

Chapter seven is a review of the attainment of the set out objectives of the study. Thereafter, conclusion and recommendations are given based on the study in order to enhance the future of development and empowerment of rural women.

## CHAPTER TWO

### KEY CONCEPTS

The theme of this research is to assess the level of involvement of women in the management of the Working for Water Project and the extent to which job creation can enhance the empowerment of rural women. It examines women's social identities as they relate to their experience of power relations in the process of empowerment and efforts to strengthen capacity in order to promote development among rural women.

As noted in the preceding chapter, empowerment is an important guiding principle, which is central to human development process. It is a process of conscientisation or gaining control. It relates to the issue of power and it denotes a process whereby people start to gain control over their own lives and circumstances. Powerlessness weakens peoples' capacity to bargain for political and legal rights and access to basic services provided by governments (Habitat, 1996). Power relations are a central focus in social science, the knowledge of which can be useful in understanding the process of empowerment. Some people hold power over others. The focus is on people and their participation in the development process, which is capacity building and empowering. The effect of empowerment in individual people or community is seen as gaining control over social, political and economic factors, which influence peoples' daily lives.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of such a study, which examines gender bias in rural area and the extent to which job creation enhances empowerment, the understanding of some concepts is considered necessary. These are gender, rural development and household.

## 2.1. GENDER

The term gender has been a topical issue since the 1970s and began to be increasingly used in discussions of different roles of men and women in social process in the 1980s (Small and Kompe, 1992; Lolwana, 1993; Rathgeber, 1995). Gender is used to describe those characteristics of men and women, which are socially and culturally determined and carry with them responsibilities and expectations (Rathgeber, 1995; Bullock, 1994) whereas sex refers to those characteristics which are biologically determined. Also, gender is concerned with social roles and interaction of men and women rather than their biological characteristics. Kabeer (1991) states that it is a process by which individuals who are born into biological categories of male or female become the social categories of men and women through the acquisition of locally defined attributes of masculinity and femininity. Thus gender emphasizes everything men and women do and everything expected of them apart from their sexually distinct function such as impregnation, childbearing and breastfeeding.

11 People are born male and female but learn to be boys and girls who grow into men and women. During the process, they learn 'appropriate' behaviours and attitudes, roles and activities and relationships with other people. What is eventually learnt depends on societal values and relative poverty or wealth. These in the end determine the gender role and makes up the gender identity. An understanding of this gender identity helps to know that men and women possess different abilities and skills and that they are naturally suited to certain roles and tasks in the family, society and different occupations within the world of work. In addition, what is learnt can and does change over time according to changing and varying social and cultural factors as well as different historical periods (Pearson, 1992; Charles, 1993).

Generally, women are socialized as passive, dependent, conforming and emotional while men are considered as independent, aggressive, active, rational

and instrumental. However, these characteristics, rather than being inherent, are learnt through socialization and vary among different social classes, racial, religious and ethnic groups (Charles, 1993). Thus the roles of men and women in different cultures are determined by the cultural definition of sex-appropriate behaviour and not the biological characteristics. For instance, Archer and Llyod (1985) citing the result of Mead's (1950) study of three New Guinea tribes in West Africa noted that the Arapesh regarded both men and women as co-operative, non-aggressive and responsive to the needs of others (characteristics which are normally tagged feminine). The Mundugumors (both male and female) were found to be more aggressive, unresponsive and individualistic (characteristics, which are tagged masculine). However, among the Tchambuli, the women were dominant, impersonal and managing while men were emotionally dependent and less responsible than women. In addition, while women naturally rear children in many societies, some other societies set the task in the domain of men while some regard it as exclusive domain of trained experts such as nannies.

As pointed out in chapter one (1.1), women are generally disadvantaged in relation to men in their access to training, labour, employment and their access to and control over economic and social resources. The story is in no way different in South Africa as analysts reveal that South African women are literally barefoot, pregnant, absent from history books and scarce in leadership positions and in the kitchen with no control over their bodies (Mabandla cited in CGE, 1988: 14). The legal status revealed that until 1992, men had marital power over their wives in such a way that they (the wives) could neither transact any business nor appear in court without their husbands. Also, the majority of women depended on the guardianship of their fathers, son(s) or male relative. Moreover, women, consequent upon men leaving their households to look for jobs in the mines or death (CGE 1988), headed over 33% of all South African households.

In view of the above and to keep up with the central objectives of the

Reconstruction and Development Programme (section 1.3), women need basic facilities to function effectively, impact the children and care for the older members of their households. In addition, they need to gain mastery over their lives and available resources. This study therefore addresses gender bias and assesses the extent to which job creation enhances the empowerment and development of rural women in view of the entrenched structure of power relations and economic poverty in the study area.

## 2.2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The term development defies a single definition both in the world of academics and in politics. The concept is multifaceted and flexible. It thus depends on the views and policies of those in position of authority in national government and international agencies. Development is a balanced process, which should integrate human development with social, economic and political developments (Burkey, 1993). It is generally referred to as the central organizing concept of our time. Since the goal of any development programme is to improve the standard of living of the people and eliminate having extreme inequality within the society, development has become increasingly concerned with improving the environment in which the poor people of the world live. Each nation therefore defines development based on its human and natural resources and technical capabilities.

Development denotes the transformation of social, economic and political structure into those that are more responsive to the satisfaction of human needs. It goes beyond building houses and other concrete things into the development of people and the transformation of the society as a whole. Development is people-centred and in relation to this, Chambers (1988: 10) declares that:

development should be people-centred ... the poorer people coming

before the less poor. It is right to put the last first, to give priority to those who are more deprived - the poor, physically weak, vulnerable, isolated and powerless and to help them change those conditions.

McLaughlin (1970 cited in Moghadam, 1992) sees development as an integration of new technology into an already on-going socio-cultural process and should be viewed as a problem-solving strategy with improved technology. Moghadam (1992) points out that development is about creating a conducive environment for people individually and collectively to develop their full potential and to have a reasonable chance of leading productive and creative lives in accordance to their needs and interest.

Development is about the betterment of humankind through the alleviation of poverty and the realization of human potential. Therefore depending on the trend and the direction, development could be bad or good, under or over, autonomous, appropriate, gender conscious, sustainable or otherwise (Cowen and Shenton, 1995).

Staudt (1991 cited in Cowen and Shenton, 1995:28) in a development studies text defines development in several ways viz: a process of "enlarging people's choice", "enhancing participatory democratic process and the ability of people to have a say in the decision that shape their lives", "providing human beings with the opportunity to develop their fullest potential". Furthermore, he notes that the process involves "enabling the poor, women and 'free independent' peasants to organize for themselves and work together". He further states that it is a means to "carry out a nation's development goals" and to promote economic growth and national self-reliance (Staudt, 1991: 28-29 cited in Cowen and Shenton, 1995).

While development is seen as an action on one hand, it is also a goal of action on the other hand hence, it can occur as a result of decision and choice. Also it occurs in the context of many different cultures and on this note, the western



countries saw themselves as developed and contended that they could determine the process of development for the less developed ones in the nineteenth century.

Some other scholars, with the rural areas in mind have defined rural development in various ways. Lele (1975) sees rural development as a way of improving the standard of living of the low income people in the rural areas and making the process self-sustaining. In addition, the World Bank (1975) defines it as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural people. Also, Mabogunje (1980) sees rural development as the improvement of the living standard of the low income population in the rural areas on a self-sustaining basis through transforming the socio-political structures of their productive activities. Furthermore, Akinbode (1983:74) states that rural development 'entails the provision of social infrastructures, education for adults, good clothing and participation in decision-making which affect them and the satisfaction to remain in the rural village'. Adedayo (1983:112) also sees rural development as 'the improvement and transformation of the socio-economic and environmental condition of the rural space with a view to enhancing the quality of life of the inhabitants'.

From the above, rural development is concerned with the welfare of every rural dweller and therefore entails the provision and improvement of the physical, social, intellectual, emotional, economic, spiritual and material needs and conditions of the rural population in order to enhance their productive activities. This involves betterment of life through alleviation of poverty, improved productivity, increased employment opportunities, higher incomes and minimum acceptable level of food, shelter, education and health of the rural inhabitants.

In South Africa, it has been estimated that 75% of those who are illiterate are women and the percentage is higher in some rural areas (CGE, 1998). It was also noted that about 67% of self-employed African women earn less than R500

a month (CGE, 1998). Therefore to improve the living conditions of the rural dwellers and especially women on whom the majority of the rural population depend, there is the need for a paradigm shift. This will mean moving from pure technological development to addressing basic human needs, integrated rural development, empowering rural women and sustaining indigenous technology which are less capital-intensive, available, accessible, attainable and appropriate for their environment. This study will therefore assess the impact of the Working for Water Project on the empowerment and development of women employees in Umlaas catchment area.

### 2.3. HOUSEHOLD

The term household does not have a straightforward or formal definition. A typical definition describes a household as consisting of a man, the wife (wives) and their children. The male breadwinner is recognized as the head of the household and is usually charged with the responsibility of supporting the family. On the other hand, the wife (wives) is (are) responsible for keeping the house, caring for the children, the elderly and other members of the household and is (are) sometimes engaged in paid work outside the home either on full-time or part-time for supplementary income. However, this definition may not apply to other households due to socio-cultural beliefs. In view of this, Spiro (1981) defines a household as consisting of a woman or a group of women with or without a husband (husbands) or children living in a house, eating and sleeping there with financial or service commitment to the members. Also, this definition is not comprehensive as it excludes men's membership in households. A household may also consist of a single man with or without a wife (wives) or children either because of death of spouse or by choice. An improvement on Spiro's definition was given in the notes to the Project for the Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD) survey in 1994 in which a household was defined as a group of people who contribute to or share in a common resource

pool. In addition, it can be said to be a group of people living in the same house, eating and sleeping and participating in productive economic activities (paid or unpaid) within or outside the home.

As a unit, the potential and welfare of the members of the household are maximized such that each member is engaged in productive activities in which he or she has a comparative advantage in order to generate a livelihood. Each member therefore contributes different resources and services in order to ensure maximum productivity and effective functioning of the household (Lipton and Lipton, 1993; May, 1998).

There are usually identifiable groupings in which people live in every society. These groupings are recognized as the basic building blocks of the society. They are usually based on some kind of family or kinship relationships. Also, family or kinship varies in meaning between different cultures and across different social groups. Essentially, the households take different forms in different parts of the world and have been classified using different criteria depending on two types of population structure. These are:

- (i) urban or rural household
- (ii) elderly or young household
- (iii) male or female-headed household
- (iv) one family or single-parented household

In addition, households occur in different shapes and sizes. This ranges from aged widows living on their own (common in Britain) to large family groups consisting of a male head, his junior brothers and their wives, an unmarried adult male, his daughters, a woman given pawn with one or more daughters as in Kusasi household in Ghana (Whitehead, 1981). In Senegal, households are essentially based on residence and consumption hence the number in households varies between two and thirty-seven people. In Britain, the

monogamous household of four members and more in third world countries may be ideal but the reality in many settings is usually depicted by the divorce rates, re-marriage rates and incidence of single parenting.

Social relations in the households are affected by a number of factors such as age and gender. These factors affect access to, control over and the use of resources (land, tool and labour) as well as expenditure. In addition people's responsibilities, activities and daily life experiences are affected by age and gender especially as divisions of labour are often based on both characteristics.

Although outdated, Tinker (1976) estimates that one quarter or one third of the world's households are headed de facto by women in the third world countries while Buvnic and Youssef (1978) also suggest that about one sixth of all households is headed by women. However, Malatsi (1991) estimates that 57% of the rural households are headed by women. Earlier, Mack and Lansley (1985) had asserted that if women would not work, 40% of households would fall below the poverty line.

Some households are female-headed as a result of out-migration of male heads in search of urban waged labour or death of the male heads while others are naturally female-headed because other wives live in other houses or settlements. Some are also female-headed because the woman has no permanent partner or that she decides to remain single (Archer and Llyod, 1985).

There is however a general consensus that female-headed households tend to be the poorest, especially in developing countries (Tinker, 1990; Bullock, 1994; Mosaka-Wright, 1995). Poverty in female-headed households has been attributed to women being marginalized, most of who are mothers, working full- or part-time and engaging in unpaid work at home without labour-saving devices (Pearson, 1992; Ministry of the Office of the President, 1995; Fonseca, 1991 cited in Chant, 1997). Although Lipton (1983) challenges this assertion by

claiming that such households are not at more risk of poverty, all other things being equal, the poverty is adduced to the social disadvantage of widowhood rather than the sex of the household-head. While Boulding (1979) also claims that women and children are the seriously poor and destitute in the Third World, Lipton (1983) maintains that females are only slightly more than males among the poor. He blames the assertion on the paucity of data on women and the definition used. He notes that it is more difficult for poor women to escape poverty than men and those women suffer more severe and less remediable effects of poverty. Chant (1997) argues that female-headed households have been tagged 'the poorest' because only one adult earns wage as opposed to two working adults in male-headed households. She also stresses that in most cases, these female heads lack financial support from the state or the fathers of their children and as such they bear the burden of caring for their families. However, she maintains that women in female-headed households tend to be more economically active than wives in male-headed units. She concluded that women cannot therefore be tagged necessarily as 'poverty-ridden sector' of the society. This study will examine the roles played by men, women and the state in the process of empowering women and the extent to which this has enhanced stability in the household and community through job creation in the Working for Water Project in the study area.

The concepts of gender, household and rural development are pertinent to this study. However, the concepts vary in their definition from one community to another since they are affected by socio-cultural variables. The definitions have therefore been presented in order to have a common understanding of the terminologies used in the study. Since this research is based in a rural environment and concerns women, it will attempt to identify the types of households and examine the roles played by women employees of the Working for Water Project in their households and the Project in the process of empowering them. It will also assess the extent to which the Working for Water Project has enhanced stability in the household and community through job

creation in the study area.

## CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter reviews the change in development literature's views of women over the past four decades from passive, unproductive and vulnerable housekeepers to active participants in decision-making, planning and implementation of development programmes.

### 3.1. AN OVERVIEW

Until the past three decades, most studies in developing countries have concentrated largely on men as factory workers, community or society members, holders of important posts in political scenes, farmers, or as young men in youth cultures (Goldthorpe et al, 1968; Mc Robbie and Garber, 1976 cited in Charles 1993). On the other hand, African rural women were uneducated, lived in a media-free environment, were generally viewed as farmer's wives, housekeepers, cooks, child bearers, and were politically underrepresented. While it was generally perceived that their potential was only utilized in and around the home, the women were not portrayed to be productive in the world of the market and active in the political arena. Hence, they were only peripherally mentioned in statistics and national planning as participating in agriculture or engaged in the marketing of crops (Simmons, 1976; Charles 1993).

During the colonial period, the colonial officials, missionaries and the settlers represented the third world women in various ways consequent upon a combination of information, self-interest and prejudice. Women were thus seen as "mindless members of harem, pre-occupied with petty domestic rivalries rather than with artistic and political affairs of their times" (Enloe, 1989: 53 cited in Chowdry, 1995: 27). In addition, they were perceived as inferior beings, 'sex objects that are subjugated and not allowed to speak and ...are deeply bound by tradition, which prevent them from entering into the modern world (Chowdry,

1995; Parpart, 1995: 257). Furthermore, they are portrayed as victims of modernization, of an undifferentiated patriarchy and of male domination.

In the 1950s and 1960s, women were seen as passive beneficiaries of social and health services as their tasks were neither seen as contributing to the welfare of the community nor the economic development of the society. Development plans were therefore designed on the assumption that men were entirely responsible for productive work, and women were only involved in domestic activities and production of future labourers. It was also envisaged that women would adapt to modernization process once the third world men were taught to organize their societies along modern lines (Afshar, 1991 cited in Parpart, 1995). Women were therefore included in programmes for the vulnerable groups and were made part of relief aid. The donor agencies directed their funds towards maternal and child healthcare, family planning programmes and home economics projects (Townsend, 1993). In addition, most international and national development projects in agricultural productivity were targeted at men and the benefits of the development went to them (Charles, 1993). Even where women were engaged in development projects, men designed such projects and women did not necessarily enjoy the benefits. Although for a long time it was assumed that any benefit to a society would automatically trickle down to all members of the society, development planning was male biased and reference was made to 'he' or 'they' (Charles, 1993). Little attention was paid to the sexual division of labour and distribution of income in the society.

However, in the late 1960s, it became obvious that the envisaged development by the planners was not achieved and this raised concerns about the continuing underdevelopment of third world women. The early 1970s witnessed a new era in development studies as women and gender increasingly became a topical issue (Small and Kompe, 1992; Charles, 1993). Much of the studies on women and gender were stimulated by the publication of Ester Boserup's work on "Women's role in economic development" in 1970. The work directed attention to different



aspects of women in the third world and their economic contributions. It further revealed that development schemes often deprived third world women of economic opportunities and status, and that women's work is confined to undervalued and grossly underpaid sectors of production. Boserup laments that modernization has displaced women from their traditional productive functions, especially in agriculture and appeals to development planners and policy makers to take cognizance of women's roles in development. Many studies of women in scientific papers, research, fieldwork and conference reports of the 1970s, attempt to expose the reality of women's contribution to regional and national development and the effects of development projects on women (Charlton, 1984; Kandiyoti, 1990; Tshatsinde, 1993). This idea of women's input dominated debates in academic forum and in consequence of this, 1975 was declared the International Women's Year (IWY). The United Nations followed this up in Mexico where the United Nations Decade for the Advancement of Women (1976-1985) was inaugurated with the theme "Development, Peace and Equality". It was then argued that development policies by governments, donor agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) had ignored the needs of poor women in third world countries. Hence, the integration of women into development process and the setting up of a women's department to enhance the integration of women by third world governments were encouraged (Brydon and Chant, 1989 cited in Charles, 1993).

During the years 1976-1985, research resulted in a number of publications and attempts by governments to 'include' women in development projects (Wallace and March, 1991 cited in Charles, 1993). In addition, the United Nations Secretariat collected statistical information on women's living conditions. One of the reports stated that:

As a group, women have access to much fewer resources than men.  
They put in two thirds of the total number of working hours;  
they are registered as constituting one third of the total labour force

and receive one tenth of the total remuneration. They own only one percent of the world's material goods and their right to ownership is often far less than those of men.

(Tickner, 1994 cited in Hudson, 1998: 40)

In view of the discrimination, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 'Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women' (CEDAW) in 1979. The decade for Women helped in the development of strategies for the advancement of women especially the so called Forward-Looking Strategies (FLS). The FLS stresses that economic growth does not automatically trickle down to benefit women and their needs cannot be met by welfare services. Consequently, the application of FLS emphasizes the need to link women's empowerment with economic participation, self-reliance and equal employment opportunities. The second world conference on women held in Copenhagen in 1980 was a follow-up of the earlier conference in which a programme of action for the second half of the decade was adopted. This was followed by a third conference, which was held in Nairobi in 1985 to review the progress of the Women Decade. The conference provided a springboard for north-south linkages among women and the creation of Development Alternatives with Women for a New era (DAWN). This emphasized the importance of listening to and learning from women's diverse experiences and knowledge and a commitment to breaking down the structures of inequity between genders, classes and nations. To this end, FLS for women's advancement was adopted. The fourth conference took place in Beijing, China, for an evaluation of the implementation of the FLS as well as the programme of action of women's advancement.

Post-apartheid South Africa has reached a point in its history where the need to create jobs for the disadvantaged groups (the majority of whom are women) has become crucial in the development process. In light of this, the Government of National Unity (GNU) on coming into power in May 1994 promised a better life for the people of South Africa. The Reconstruction and Development Programme

(RDP) was launched as a Government Policy aimed at improving the quality of life of all its citizens, especially the poorest and most marginalized sections of the communities.

Although the RDP was replaced by GEAR, the programme under study was designed under the RDP. It is therefore important to understand how the RDP outlined its objectives, programmes and project strategies for the empowerment of women.

The RDP Base Document on which the RDP White Paper is based states that:

The central objective of our RDP is to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, and in particular the poorest and most marginalized sections of our community.... This objective should be realized through a process of empowerment which gives the poor control over their own lives and increase their ability to mobilize sufficient resources, including from the democratic government where necessary.

(RDP Base document 1994: 15).

The five key programmes envisaged in the RDP Base document are: meeting the basic needs of the people, developing human resources, building the economy, democratizing the state and society and implementing the RDP (RDP White Paper: 8)

The implementation of the RDP focuses on people and their involvement in sustainable development through a process that is empowering and builds capacity (Sections 1.3.3, 1.4.3, 1.4.4, 1.4.5, 1.4.6, 1.4.7 of RDP White Paper). In addition, there are aspects of the strategy, which recognize the marginalized groups in South Africa; these are women, children and the disabled (The RDP Programme: 14; RDP White Paper: 1.3.4). Women constitute the majority of this

group (The RDP Programme: 14). Consequently at the inception of the Working for Water Project a declaration was made to employ and train people from the disadvantaged communities with a workforce of at least 60% women in order to enhance their social upliftment and empowerment.

The effect of empowerment in individual people or community is depicted as gaining control over the social, political and economic factors, which influence peoples' daily lives. This process should involve the analysis of poverty traps. In recognition of this poverty and the commitment to address it, the African National Congress (ANC) states that:

It is not merely the lack of income, which determines poverty. An enormous proportion of basic needs is presently unmet. In attacking poverty, the RDP aims to set South Africa firmly on the road to eliminating hunger, providing land and housing to all people, providing access to safe water and sanitation for all, ensuring availability of affordable and sustainable energy source, eliminating illiteracy, raising the quality of education and training all ...  
(ANC, 1994:126 ).

One of the projects planned for addressing unemployment was the Working for Water Project, which is the focus of the current study. It is aimed at assessing the involvement of women in the Project and the extent of empowerment and development of rural women through job creation in the study area.

### 3.2. APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Development theories form the fulcrum on which empowerment and development are pivoted. Several approaches to development thinking have emerged since the 1960s. However, because expert planners in the south and

on development thinking formulated these theories rather than the supposed beneficiaries themselves being incorporated in the planning, the planners did not take full cognizance of socio-cultural, racial, educational, and technological variables that prevail with the beneficiaries (although similar assumptions might have been made even if the beneficiaries were involved in the planning). Thus, the seemingly successful application of these theories could not attain the desired expectation. Since this study examines gender bias in rural areas, the following section reviews selected approaches and assesses their relevance to the Working for Water Programme's effort to empower rural women through job creation.

- (a) The Basic Human Needs Approach
- (b) Women in Development Approach
- (c) Women and Development Approach
- (d) Gender and Development Approach
- (e) Empowerment Approach
- (f) Liberal Feminist theory and
- (g) Non-interventionist Approach

Each of these approaches has implications for the understanding of gender differences. The more explicitly feminist approaches over the decades have been devoted to the identification and explanation of gender inequalities and subsequently finding ways of alleviating the inequality in the short term and its complete removal in the long term through social change (Rathgeber, 1995).

### **3.2.1. BASIC HUMAN NEEDS APPROACH**

This approach emerged in the mid 1970s as a result of widespread disillusionment with the previous approaches (modernization and redistribution approaches) of national and international development (Ghai et al, 1977; Lisk,

1985; Krige, 1989). Moreover, there was a continued widening income gap in the developing countries in spite of the increasing Gross National Product per capita (Krige, 1989). The previous policies on rural development had focused on economic growth as a means of eliminating poverty, both for developed and the developing countries. It was believed that the benefits of economic growth would have a trickle-down effect on the poor. However, the envisaged growth was unevenly distributed both within and across nations, as income and other associated benefits of economic growth did not trickle down. The poverty group was still impoverished, hence, the consequent rural-urban migration (Ghai, 1977). The disenchantment with these weaknesses led to the upsurge of the basic human needs approach.

The basic human needs approach was adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1976 and focuses on meeting the basic needs of the poor people in the shortest possible time through an effective use of local resources and small-scale labour-intensive technologies (Ghai, 1977). The approach is aimed at the removal of mass deprivation and improving the quality of life of the poor. The approach contended that every human being is entitled to adequate consumption goods and infrastructure. Priority is given to certain goods and services which are essential for human survival and active incorporation into his culture such as: food, clothing, safe drinking water, shelter, sanitation, public transport, health and educational services and targeted for the poor masses (Krige, 1989; Burkey, 1993). In an attempt to combat poverty, a symptomatic factor of underdevelopment, the approach encourages the redistribution of income and wealth, employment of the poor, educating and training of people, community participation in development process and empowerment with emphasis on 'bottom-up' management style. In addition, more social services to be paid for through taxation and the creation and support for the institutions promoting social development are stressed (Friedman, 1989).

The approach emphasizes the significance of eradicating dependency and

promoting autonomous control by empowering communities. Nevertheless, the basic needs approach could not achieve these goals, since development planners decide and design projects for the communities in question, without a deep understanding of the situation and the needs of the people for whom the projects are designed.

This study therefore reviews the basic needs approach in view of the central of the objectives of the RDP to improve the quality of life of South African citizens especially the poorest and most marginalized section of the society (RDP Base Document: 15) and making the programme labour-intensive by using local technology (see section 1.3).

### 3.2.2. WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH (WID)

The Women in Development approach emerged in the 1970s when poverty and overpopulation were on the increase, and the expected trickle-down effect of development programmes could not be accomplished. The approach draws from the experience of white middle-class women in the north and plays a key role in development. It was built on the premise that in spite of the important role that women play in population control, they have been disproportionately represented. They were regarded as the poorest of the poor, helpless victims who are bound by tradition and incompetence in an endless cycle of poverty and despair (Parpart, 1995) and thus excluded from development. Third world women therefore became objects of concern for development planners and policy makers. This same approach draws the attention of international development agencies, academics, policy makers and multinational companies. It also emphasizes reaching women through development projects and integrating them fully into male-defined and male-dominated social and economic power structures so as to spread the benefits of development to women and improve their situation. Moreover, the approach focuses on women's equality through

improved access to resources such as education, employment and material benefits like land and credit facilities and appropriate technology (Townsend, 1993; Parpart, 1995) as well as the recognition of the full range of women's work (Bullock, 1994). The approach also advocated for income-generating projects for women and their integration in development programmes. Based on this approach, the United Nations declared 1976-1986 the Decade for Women's Advancement. In addition, women were put on development agenda and constraints to women's productivity and development were identified.

Since one of the objectives of the Working for Water Project is to pay attention to gender equity by employing women preferentially at all levels (see section 1.3), this study has incorporated the review of WID approach to assess the level of involvement of women and gender division of labour in the Programme.

### 3. 2.3. WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT APPROACH (WAD)

WAD is an alternative development approach, which originated in the second half of the 1970's. This approach focuses on analyzing the roles, activities, rights and responsibility of women in and outside the home. These activities include household, survival and income generating tasks, which take most of their time for the day. It blames underdevelopment in the South on the experts, who were mainly men. The approach asserted that since the planners were men they could not differentiate between men's and women's needs in development projects. The approach sees women as a homogenous group and therefore called for small-scale projects, which would consist of only women in an attempt to avoid male domination, which had been perpetrated in the previous projects. This in essence would make women self-reliant. The Non-Governmental organizations saw the approach as a way of developing third world women and thereby gained much support in their programmes (Parpart, 1993, 1995; Rathgeber, 1995).



Efforts were concentrated on meeting women's basic needs in health, education and training. It was projected that the provision of the basic needs in these spheres would enhance women's welfare, effectiveness and productivity; reduce fertility rate and eventual economic development. The planners appealed for more credit, access to land, legal reform and involvement of women in development planning in order to reduce the constraints in productivity. However, the approach could not achieve its set objectives because "it fails to undertake a full-scale analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production, and women subordination and oppression" (Rathgeber, 1990: 493).

In the 1980s, it became obvious that neither of the approaches (WID and WAD) had achieved the desired results in the third world countries due to the following weaknesses: Firstly, neither approach addressed the underlying problems of class, gender and inequality especially between the north and the south. Secondly, the different underlying causes of poverty, discrimination and subordination of women in the different cultures within the society were not addressed. Thirdly, the large-scale income generating projects did not take into account the effects of the time burden on women. There is also the need for people to have access to resources, and to contribute to project choices, planning and implementation. To this end, the need for women to take the forefront in decisions and projects that affect them was emphasized (Bullock, 1994). The consideration for gender differences, patriarchal structures and attitudes led to the emergence of the gender and development approach in the 1980's.

WAD approach is reviewed in this study in view of the objective of the RDP to empower the poor to gain control over their lives and mobilize sufficient resources (RDP Base Document: 15). This study will attempt to assess the extent to which the basic needs of the women employees are met and they are empowered to take forefront roles in the Project.

### 3. 2.4. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT APPROACH (GAD)

The term 'gender' became increasingly used in feminist writing on development issues relating to men and women's roles in development process in the 1980s. The GAD approach built on and refined the WID approach. The approach argues that the basis of the social assignment of gender roles that contribute to the exploitation of women (and men) must first be questioned. It is committed to issues of equity. Thus, Rathgeber (1990: 494) states that:

GAD is not concerned with women per se but with the social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations of women and men. In contrast to the emphasis on exclusively female solidarity that is highly prized by radical feminists, the GAD approach welcomes the potential contribution of men who share a concern for issues of equity and social justice.

GAD focuses on gender roles and the gender division of labour in different societies, particularly the 'hidden' aspects of women's productive work and the relation between the labour patterns and other aspects of gender inequality. This implies changes for both men and women in their relationships as regards their rights and responsibilities in the home and society. Furthermore, it establishes the "full personhood of women" and considers women as agents of change rather than as mere recipients of development assistance or selfless "channels" of development. Although it addresses men's issue, the focus is more on women in view of the discrimination against them. Thus, it stresses the need for women to organize themselves for effective political voice (Rathgeber, 1995). It also focuses on providing more access to education, credit and technology, and improving the health and legal status of women. Writers within GAD emphasize that opportunities and life chances should not depend on sexes but that men and women should be empowered to influence and participate in decision-making

that affects the society and challenge the structures and ideas that maintain gender hierarchies (Kabeer, 1991).

The Gender and development approach was not universally accepted. As much as it sought equality and development for women, it failed to address the issue of the empowerment of women. For this reason, the late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed the upsurge of the empowerment approach to development.

The Working for Water Project is a development programme which aims at alleviating poverty by integrating women in generating income and making them participants in rural development. The GAD approach is therefore reviewed to assess the level of women integration in the Project and their roles in the households for livelihood.

### 3. 2.5. EMPOWERMENT APPROACH

Development theory forms the background on which the empowerment approach is built. This approach emerged in view of the concerns by feminists for the inequality of life benefit experienced by third world women within the private, political and economic spheres. These feminists were also concerned with correcting the image of women as victims and men as beneficiaries of modernization (Antrobus, 1989; Gallin, et al, 1989). Empowerment is an important guiding principle in social work and it is central to development process. It is a process of conscientisation or gaining control. Empowerment relates to the issue of power and denotes a process whereby people start to gain control over their own lives and circumstances. Powerlessness weakens peoples' capacity to bargain for political and legal rights and access to basic services provided by governments (Habitat, 1996). The focus is on people and their participation in the development process, which is capacity building and empowering.

The approach took a conspicuous hold among development experts in the late 1980s up to the present and has assumed a central place on the agenda for change in an attempt to counter gender bias and other inequalities in development (Ferguson et al, 1989). The concept has become official jargon of government policy pronouncements and has been used in several contexts with meaning linked to different visions in political, economic, academic and private spheres to the extent that its meaning has either been diluted or distorted (Davies, 1993; Cook, 1995). For instance, observation reveals that while some women perceive empowerment as 'women ruling the domains of women', 'the right for all' and 'freedom to engage in productive activity', others see it as 'rubbing shoulders with men' in the public sphere rather than just being 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' (Holy Bible, Joshua Chapter 9 Verse 27). This implies that women should be equipped to gain access to better quality of life and attain to their desired level in all spheres without prejudice to sex or gender.

Empowerment originates from the above-described theories of development and the changing policies that address the problem of poverty among third world countries. The main objective is to empower women in influencing policy and becoming equal participants in decision-making, and beneficiaries of all areas of economic and political activities (CGE, 1998). It is much used by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other agencies involved in development (Sen and Grown, 1987; Friedman, 1989).

Sharp (1995) and Eade (1997) see empowerment as a process through which individuals or communities gain mastery over their lives and environment. Power is inherently linked with empowerment; hence, it is also a process of gaining, developing, taking or facilitating power and confidence to work for positive changes in an individual or a group of people for specific purposes. In addition, Shragge (1993: iii) defines it as:

a process that involves changing power relations between individual

and groups and social institutions. At the same time it is a process of personal change as individuals take action on their own behalf and then redefine their understanding of the world in which they live. Self-perception moves from victim to agent, as people are able to act in a political and social arena and pursue their own interest.

This power operates in different ways in the home and community and at various levels such as within a person and between people. In the process, it is expected that a transformation of power relations between them, their households and the society will take place. Such power relations are mostly derived from production relations and sexual division of labour. This implies that when an individual or a group of people is empowered, the people become capable of directing their lives and are most likely to succeed in whatever they attempt (Cook, 1995).

Shiffman and Motley (1989) see empowerment as the ability to make informed choices and to have the social, political and economic capability of meaningful contributing to the realization of these choices. However, an important mechanism in the operation of power is culture, which includes religious beliefs. Culture, religious belief and tradition are used as a means of justification, to shape attitudes, and to dictate practices. While some traditions have been abandoned in the name of 'progress', others have been retained because they benefit certain groups (Bullock, 1994). In most cases, the relation has been that of domination, which allocates social value and resources through a self-justifying ideology.

In order for communities to be able to gain mastery over their lives, they need some form of education or training. Training people en mass, through the mass media, house-to-house visits, using the community leaders or training planners and policy makers could do this. Furthermore, Thomas and Velthouse (1990: 667) describe empowerment as "a non-traditional paradigm for motivation".

Involving people in the decision-making process, policy formulation, implementation and administration of projects at all levels could attain motivation. In this vein, Friedman (1989:15) stresses that:

The most important concern is to empower people to participate in the development process so that they are also involved in directing this process. Such participation is seen to occur in a way, which will ultimately effect structural changes as well.

In the process, people would be able to overcome the conditions that hinder them from participating in the benefits of the society, get their needs met, and develop and function within their environment to their best potential.

This approach also focuses on the need to recognize gender relations between men and women. It encourages the participation of both men and women in projects with the aim of empowering women as the disadvantaged group. Furthermore, the approach stresses the importance of women's attainment of power as a dynamic process of change in order to transform the conditions of working life to suit both men and women. This would serve as an impetus to women's internal strength and at the same time enhance the redistribution of power within and between societies. This approach also focuses on progressively raising levels of respect for women in the society and building a growing sense of self-confidence and worth among women themselves. In addition, the approach argues for development that it takes root from the experiences of men and women in the south in view of the differing backgrounds of people in countries of the north and south.

Empowerment approach argues that more than ever before, women should be brought into the system as participants with an equal share of available technology and services. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) argue that granting equal access to resources is tantamount to the empowerment of women and this

would eventually stimulate growth and development within the existing system. They further argue that the empowerment of women can only be achieved when women's basic needs are met, they are able to participate in the definition of problems, solution finding and the control of resources and they can effect changes in matters that affect them.

The term empowerment implies a shift of control towards the people who are actually involved in performing the core of work (Block, 1991). Antrobus (1989) stresses that women's work is central to the process of development and that knowledge and practices are key factors in emphasizing them in order to promote social change and transformation. She emphasizes the need for consciousness-raising in order to analyze class, racial and structural issues. If development is to be sustainable, empowerment is a pre-requisite. Empowering women would inevitably enhance their working life and quality of life. In other words, the empowerment of women is an end in itself in that it is a basic human right. It is also a means to an end in the sense that it results in the transformation of the social structure and the world cannot afford to do without a full contribution of all people at every level of social, economic and political arena (Malatsi, 1991; Tshatsinde, 1993).

Davies (1993) perceives empowerment as a particular kind of process whose outcome is determined by what is fed into it. He further states that empowerment is a condition which cannot be achieved overnight but has to be encouraged, nurtured and reinforced continually until its continuity and vitality are guaranteed. This would entail establishing an on-going relationship with the disadvantaged communities and making available appropriate support services and building up capacity in them. This leads further into asking the question "what is capacity building?"

## ***Capacity building***

The term “capacity building” is commonly used in contemporary development discourse. While it is held in some quarters as covering a wide range of activities, some perceive it as a pure jargon or one of the fashionable terms used as part of development rhetoric in contemporary South Africa (Budlender and Plam, 1995). Capacity building is one of the vital pre-requisites of empowerment identified by Davies (1993). He argues that empowerment will only be achieved when capacity building and enablement are realistically addressed and implemented. Brew (1994: 115), in his study also identifies the inter-connections between capacity building and empowerment when he stresses that empowerment is “the value sought” while capacity building is “the content” of that search.

The basic rights and interests of the poor, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable groups (women, children, the aged and the disabled), the provision of basic social services and infrastructures as well as the development of human resources have been the current concern in development thinking and discourse. According to Korten (1990:67), development is:

a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations.

Development is thus about people and emphasizes capacity building. In this vein, Carrol (1992) views capacity enhancement as being at the heart of development process and the building of collective capacity among the poor as the most valuable trait of intermediary organizations. IDASA (1993: 5) states that capacity building is the key to a successful development. Since a development



can only be said to be successful when it is sustainable, Brew (1994: 2,3) argues that sustainable development depends on meeting three inter-linked and inter-related fundamental challenges: to achieve sustainable economic growth; to achieve sustainable improvements in quality of life for historically disadvantaged people; and to build sustainable capacity. In order to attain an equitable distribution and use of resources, people must be able to access and control resources.

Capacity building is a process concerned with the acquisition, matching and transferring of skills and competence in people (Hindson et al, 1996). It could be achieved through a careful understanding of people's needs, the identification of their skill gaps, and designing a programme to fully involve community members through experiential learning of the necessary skills. In this way, they would become better equipped for life's challenges. The process involves opening up opportunities for people to undertake appropriate training and exposing them to experiences that will improve their understanding about what they intend to do. In addition, it means breaking down the walls of dependence that limit the realization of people's own aspirations and that attach them to the 'aprons' of other people or interest groups (Davies, 1993). The concern is building self-confidence and a sense of self-confidence in people. In line with this, Cross, Clark and Bekker (1995) assert that access to information is a pre-requisite for community involvement and capacity building, hence, people should be given free access to information including information about development procedure.

The Working for Water Project aims at employing and training its workers to develop entrepreneurial skills to enable them job markets with appropriate skills (see section 1.3). A review of the empowerment is therefore relevant to this study in order to assess the extent to which job creation by the Project has built capacity in the women employees through the training programme. It will also help to assess the extent to which the women employees would be able to transfer skills in job markets after leaving the Project.

### 3.2.6. LIBERAL FEMINIST THEORY

Liberal feminism sees gender inequality as an aggregation of small-scale deprivations (Walby, 1990) consequent upon male prejudice and stereotypes. Robinson (1998) states that feminists perceive gender as a relation term, which is evident in the unequal power relation that exists between men and women, which work to the disadvantage of the latter. The proffered solution is a change of attitudes and practices that reinforce more access for women in the higher echelons until a balance is attained and gender inequality is eradicated (Connel, 1990). The feminists, thus argue that women's liberation entails their ability to compete with men on equal terms in professions (labour market) and political spheres since women are also endowed with reasoning abilities like men. Furthermore, the feminists argue that since access to participation in state policies is given by citizenship (Franzway et al, 1989), women should gain access to participate in policy formulation and develop their fullest human potential (Friedman et al, 1987; Connel, 1990). In this vein, the feminists stress the removal of constraints that hinder women in society and the encouragement of projects which relate to the training of women in new skills to equip them for competition in the job market (Friedman et al, 1987). The acquired skills would help them become self-sufficient rather than remaining as recipients of state or voluntary agency aid. In addition, these feminists stress the inadequate use of human resources and therefore encourage the effective and efficient utilization of human resources such that the welfare of the family and society becomes the joint responsibility of both males and females. This theory will therefore help to assess the level of women's participation and acquisition of skills in the Project, the division of labour in their households and the impacts on the empowerment and development of rural women in the study area.

### 3.2.7. NON-INTERVENTIONIST APPROACH

The Non-interventionist approach looks inward to proffer solutions to the

problems of underdevelopment. The application of many of development theories have not met with the desired results in view of the fact that the socio-cultural, racial, technological and educational factors were not given due consideration by 'foreign' development planners. This approach stresses the importance of finding local means of attaining development among rural communities. While some countries would be rated higher in terms of the development, others are found to be lagging behind. The non-interventionist approach therefore looks into the factors or variables that have propped up 'better communities' in the north and apply them to less developed ones (Chowdhry, 1995; Parpart, 1995). This approach takes cognizance of the fact that people in these communities operate under similar conditions. The approach also emphasizes the need for organized people. Organized people are a powerful people. The promotion of the organized attitude of people is a key development strategy as people have a sense of belonging and commitment. In this way, they are able to function effectively and participate in the choice of development projects and in decision-making that affect them and their environment. These organizations vary in forms and they relate to where people live and work, their religion, needs, sex, age or colour while others may be traditionally based around ethnicity, kinship and marital status (Eade, 1997). This approach also addresses the empowerment of women and advances their role in the development process.

In conclusion, the developmental approaches for the empowerment of women have been reviewed. The above-discussed paradigms stressed the need to identify and meet women's basic needs. In addition, in order for them to gain mastery over their lives, there is the need to identify their basic development problem and empower them to participate in development process and building capacity in them through acquisition and transfer of skills. It is believed that these will reduce dependence on other communities and the State as well as build a sense of confidence to manage resources and thereby enhance the quality of people's lives. While each of the approaches discussed above

significantly enhances the quality of life and empowerment of women through job creation, it is believed that their progressive incorporation will effectively enhance the empowerment and development of women in the study area.

The application of the approaches in the management of the Working for Water Project will be presented in chapter six in order to ascertain whether or not the women concerned have been empowered and developed through job creation.

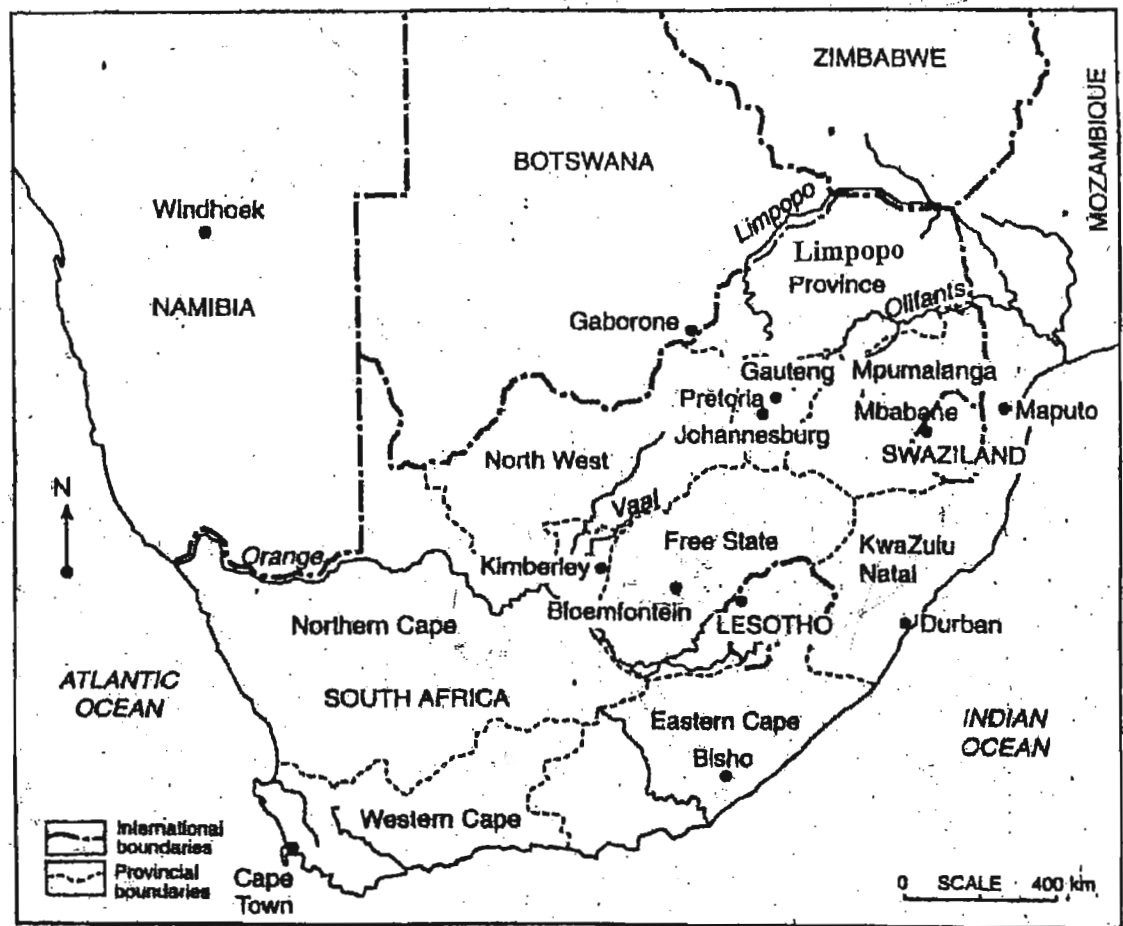
## CHAPTER FOUR METHODOLOGY

This research is aimed at assessing the extent to which job creation can enhance the empowerment and development of rural women and consequent rural areas in Kwazulu-Natal.

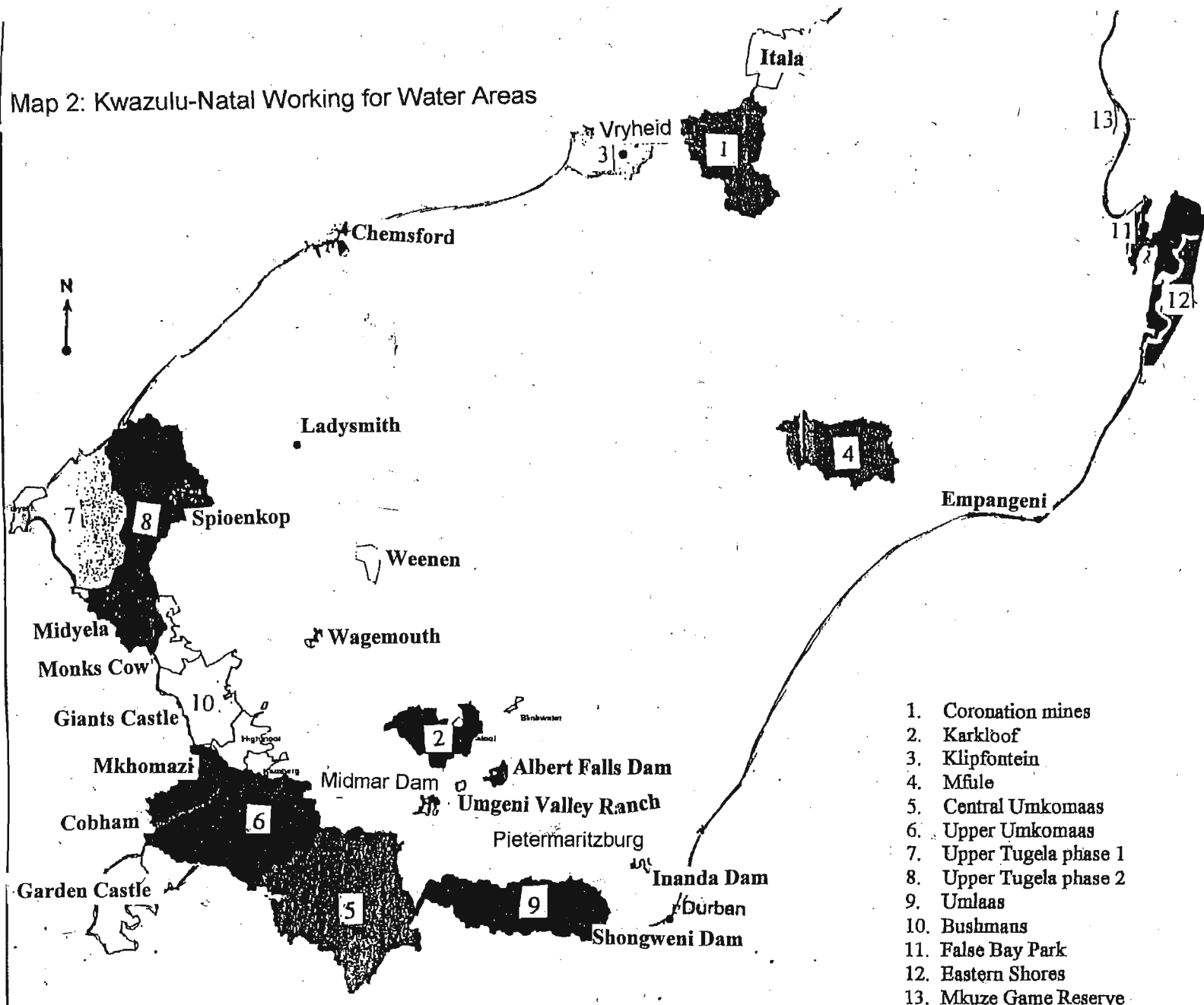
### 4.1. STUDY AREA

Kwazulu-Natal is one of the new South African provinces, which came into being in 1944 by the merging of the former Natal province and the black homeland of Kwazulu (see Map 1). It stretches over some 92,180 kilometres on the eastern seaboard of South Africa, which covers 7.6% of the country's geographic area. Kwazulu-Natal is the third smallest of the nine Provinces in South Africa with an estimated population of 9.8 million people (20.7% of South Africa's population) living in 1.6 million households and a population density of 92 persons per square kilometer. It has Durban and Pietermaritzburg as the major cities. Other towns include Ulundi, Ladysmith, Newcastle, Kokstad and Pongola. The main seaports are in Durban and Richards Bay. Tugela, Mkomazi, black and white Mfolozi, Mzimkulu, Mooi and Blood Rivers drain the Province. It is bounded in the north by Mozambique, Swaziland and one of South Africa's nine provinces, Mpumalanga (former Eastern Transvaal), in the west by Lesotho and another province, the Free State, in the south by the Eastern Cape province and in the east by the Indian ocean (Tourism Kwazulu-Natal, undated). There are hundreds of kilometres of magnificent sandy year-round beaches, the huge Drakensberg mountain range in the west and many unique natural attractions like the wetlands and lakes around St Lucia (Kwazulu-Natal Marketing Initiatives, 1996). It has an unemployment rate of 32.2% (which is significantly higher among the age group 15-30 years) and with more women than men (Central Statistical Service, 1994). It is likely to continue to have the majority of its population living in the rural areas (Development Bank of South Africa cited in May, 1996). The main language spoken is isi-Zulu (80%) while others are English (16%) and Afrikaans (2%).

Map1: The map of South Africa showing the Provinces and neighbouring Countries



Map 2: Kwazulu-Natal Working for Water Areas



1: 1250000

This study covers the Umlaas Catchment (see Map 2) area of the Working for Water area in order to assess the extent to which job creation has enhanced the empowerment and development of rural women. There was therefore the need to generate data on the demographic, social and economic activities of the women employees of the Project. The data were collected in April, May and December 2000. The details of the nature of the research information are presented below.

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (State) is implementing the Umlaas Programme. The area was selected because of proximity to minimize costs. It is also selected in order to assess the spatial variation in and the impacts of the Project on the development of the area. It is intended to assess the extent to which job creation can enhance the empowerment of women and the level of development of the area being managed.

## **4.2. DATA SOURCES**

For the purpose of this study (which aims at assessing the extent to which job creation can enhance the empowerment and development of rural women as well as the social and economic impacts of the project on the development of the study area), necessary data were obtained from two sources.

### **4.2.1. PRIMARY DATA**

Primary data were obtained from the comprehensive survey and fieldwork designed to take stock of the socio-economic indices relating to income, education, health, household, social amenities, shelter, food, clothing, economic power structures and club or society membership. In most cases, interviews were conducted among women employees of the Working for Water Project in their respective settlements in the catchment areas. For those residing at the Table Mountain, interviews were conducted at the work site in view of the long distance



involved in getting to the settlement. The interviews took the form of a semi-structured or open-ended interview (Shaw and Wheeler, 1994; Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). The responses were used to gain knowledge of the perceptions of the women in relation to the objectives of the study. In addition, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the project leader (Manager) and contractors of the Umlaas Working for Water Project. These interviews related to their perceptions of women's participation, capacity building, and empowerment of women employees of the project. Furthermore, interviews were conducted among educated folks and private business owners in the area on their perceptions of empowerment and the impacts of the Working for Water Project on the empowerment of women in the study area. In addition, information relating to perceptions of empowerment and the impacts of the project on women and the communities was gathered from the adult members of the household of the women employees of the community using semi-structured interviews. Such information was thought important to complement the responses from the women employees of the Project and since they live with the women, they are considered better 'judges' in assessing the impact of the Project on the women and the households.

Information from household members of the women employees included:

- (i) perception of empowerment
- (ii) socio-economic conditions such as income and level of education before and after securing a job at the Working for Water Project.
- (iii) contributions towards helping the household before and after securing job with the project.
- (iv) composition of the household.
- (v) who makes the decisions in the households.
- (vi) power relations in the household.
- (vii) the obligations and division of labour within the household.
- (viii) control of factors of production such as distribution of income and

- accumulation of capital.
- (ix) access to and control over the use of natural and social resources.
- (x) employment issues and rights to resources.
- (xi) status and role in the household and community.
- (xii) existence of and membership in any women's organizations in the community such as village, council and co-operatives
- (xiii) modes of operation of the organization(s).
- (xiv) roles in the organization(s).
- (xv) sexual divisions of labour as related to reproductive work, productive work and social involvement (management and political roles in the community or society).

Information from the project manager and contractors included:

- (i) perception of empowerment.
- (ii) proportion of women to men in the project.
- (iii) involvement of women relative to men in leadership positions.
- (iv) sexual division of labour i.e. level of involvement of women in tasks which are traditionally performed by men.
- (v) the extent to which capacity has been built in the women employees.
- (vi) assessment of community participation and environmental awareness.

Information from community members included:

- (i) perception of empowerment.
- (ii) impact assessment of the project on the development of the community to evaluate how much of development was attributed to the establishment of the project.
- (iii) level of involvement of women in identifying the priority needs of the community.

- (iv) proportion of women to men in leadership roles in the community.
- (v) level of involvement of women level of involvement of women in project design, implementation and evaluation.
- (vi) level of control of women over factors of production such as land, credit and accumulation of capital.
- (vii) social and economic impacts of the project of women in general.

Information from private business owners included:

- (i) perception on empowerment.
- (ii) impact assessment of the project on the development of the community .This will help to assess how much of the development can be attributed to the establishment of the project.
- (iii) the degree to which businesses have increased consequent on the establishment of the project.

All data obtained from the primary source were tape recorded and transcribed in order to identify recurring themes and facilitate triangulation. The validation of issues raised by the respondents was done using a combination of colour coding and cut and paste methods

#### 4.2.2. SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data used in the research included published and unpublished texts, articles from journals (such as Agenda, Indicator S.A., The Women and International Development Annual, Development and Change, Development Southern Africa and World Development), conference reports and annual reports. Literature on development paradigms such as basic human needs approach, empowerment approach, women in development, women and development, gender and development and sustainable development were used

to build the theory of the study. Secondary data was used to examine the role of women in the development process at home and society. In addition, maps, photographs, newspapers, census data, government reports and annual reports of the Working for Water Project were used to supplement the data.

### 4.3. METHOD OF PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

#### 4.3.1. INTERVIEW

The interview is a commonly used method of data collection in social research and development studies. Gordon (1980) sees an interview as a specific form of empathizing, participating and observation that takes place between two people. Interviews provide greater depth of understanding relative to other methods. The advantages are that they provide the opportunity to respond to information and obtain more accurate and complete information quickly. The respondents are able to ask questions, which should be seen by the researcher as their right. Also, interviews afford both the researcher and the respondents the opportunity to clarify points and put the respondent's mind at ease about anything bothering them and thus inhibiting their responses. Moreover, the researcher can arouse the respondent's interest and thereby encourage better responses (Gordon 1980; Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). Moser and Karlton (1971: 298) state that:

such interviewing gets away from the flexibility of formal methods, yet gives the interview a set form and ensures that all the relevant topics are discussed. The respondents are all asked for certain information yet they have plenty of opportunity to develop their views at length. Interviews on the other hand are free to choose when and how they put their questions and how much to explore and probe, all the time keeping within the framework imposed by the topic to be covered.

In addition, the face-to-face interview affords the researcher the opportunity to observe the non-verbal behaviours or expressions and thus obtain important clues as to how the respondent actually feels about the issue being discussed

Semi-structured in-depth interviews or open-ended interviews were employed as a key information-gathering tool in relation to the objectives of the study. The interviews were conducted with the five stakeholder groups and were tape-recorded. This was aimed at facilitating a linkage of respondents' perceptions of empowerment with the policies of the project to build capacity in the workers.

A micro-level study comprising the household members of the women employees of the Working for Water was conducted to delve into the ability of the household to generate income, the manner in which basic needs are met and the control of resources and power in the household.

In addition, information was gathered on composition and size of households, level of education, age and sex of members of households, occupation of household members, income and expenditure, and division of labour in the households. For the purpose of this study, a household is defined as people who live and eat together, with common bread winner(s) and pool economic resources for the welfare of all its members. The household heads were grouped into two types, consisting of female household heads and male household heads. The head of each household was interviewed and where the woman employee of the Project was the household head, an adult member who was above 18 years of age was interviewed. This was to enhance better responses from both sides (the women employees and their household members), as they were free to express their perception on empowerment, division of labour and power relations in the household. Themes were identified and the interpretation of the results focused on the availability and control of resources (human and financial), power relations in the household, training and level of education. The socio-economic indicators

selected for this purpose were income and expenditure, sources of income, economic activities, employment, education and level of political and social involvement, that is, participation in the running of the household and community, decision-making on income and in making choices (see appendix II).

As the researcher is non-Zulu speaking, two Zulu-speaking field assistants were employed to assist the researcher in conducting the interviews. In order to reduce the bias that may ensue from the interviews, questionnaires were administered, the research assistants and the researcher took notes and in addition the interviews were audio-taped for later transcription and translation. This to a large extent would have eliminated major errors and bias, and enhanced the reliability and validity of the study.

#### 4.3.2. QUESTIONNAIRES

The use of questionnaire is one of the common ways by which researchers obtain information from respondents. The purpose of using a questionnaire is to survey a representative sample of the population in order to make generalizations from the responses (Valentine, 1997). It consists of closed or open-ended questions, which facilitate responses into particular categories and can be analyzed using various statistical techniques. Although the interview method is more comprehensive in that respondents can express their views and thoughts without limits, the open-ended questionnaire allows for perceptions of and information on empowerment. Also the open-ended questions allows the respondents to express their views and thoughts openly on issues in the questionnaire and they are able to decide the aspect, form, detail and length of their responses (Smith, 1975).

The language of the questions for the survey was kept simple and straightforward, avoiding vague and ambiguous expressions. In addition an

informed consent (see appendix I) was attached to the questionnaire, which informed the respondents of the objectives of the research and their voluntary participation in the interviews. Also, the consent form assured the preservation of anonymity and confidentiality of the report (Moser and Karlton, 1971).

The questionnaires were administered alongside with the interviews hence all the administered questionnaires were retrieved. On the whole, 67 questionnaires were administered – 25 to the women employees, 25 to the household members of the women employees, 10 to the community members, six to the contractors and one to the project leader. On the average, each interview of the women employees and the project leader took about an hour while the remaining stakeholders' interview took about 45 minutes each. As earlier noted, empowerment is a new word in development discourse hence it was difficult to get the right word in isiZulu. The use of empowerment depends on the content in which it is used. It could mean "ukuhlomisa", "nkululeko", "ukusimama", "umdladla" or "umfutho". Thus, when the women were asked about their perception of empowerment, the question "what do you understand by the term empowerment?" had to be framed as "Yini oyaziyo ngenkululeko yamandla?"

The interviews were audio-taped for further reference during analysis. The research assistants also helped in the translation of the interview from isiZulu to English language and thereafter the transcripts were prepared. The researcher and the assistants were able to observe the verbal and non-verbal behaviours of the respondents and where they were reluctant or declined to answer some of the questions, respondents were asked other questions and the avoided questions were later re-focused and captured.

#### 4.3.3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SIZE

A purposive non-probability sampling method was adopted for collecting data for

the study. This involved the selection of sample units in view of time and financial constraints (Shaw and Wheeler, 1994). Sampling involved five stakeholder groups: the women employees, the project leader, the contractors, the household members of the women employees of the Working for Water Project and community members in the area. A total sample of 25 female employees was used for the study in the catchment area. This selection was based on the proportion of women employees in the area. There were a total of 158 women employees in Umlaas. As sampling was undertaken through non-probability method, it was made to fully represent characteristics of the population. This included women who were in their reproductive age and older ones. Also, 25 household members of the women employees, ten community members consisting of three private business owners (using systematic random sampling) and seven others drawn from other occupations (who were randomly selected) in the settlements were included in the interview. The interview also included six contractors (four men and two women) and the project leader (manager) of the Working for Water Project. They were interviewed on their perception of empowerment and the impact assessment of the Project on the empowerment of women and development of the study area.

The small sample sizes for each group may raise questions on the generalisability of the research. However, Schofield (1993: 206 cited in Flowerdew and Martin, 1997) argues that generalisability in the sense of producing broad universal law is not a useful or obtainable goal for any kind of research in social sciences. There is no claim that the case study in this research will be representative of the total population of rural women in South Africa. However, the sample population is considered 'typical' of certain cluster of characteristics and this is one way of decreasing the problem of case study generalization. The data collected were analyzed and reported in context while the conclusion and recommendations are limited to those in similar contexts as well.



#### 4.3.4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In view of the sensitive aspect of certain parts of the investigation, which might cause some psychological discomfort for respondents, ethical concerns were given particular consideration. Permission to conduct the research was sought from the Centre for Social and Development Studies, the Project Manager of the Working for Water Project and community leaders who were briefed on the purpose of the survey. Consent was sought from respondents with the assurance that the confidentiality of their responses and anonymity would be preserved in reporting the data. Appointments with the respondents were arranged well in advance at a mutually acceptable time and place through the Project Manager. Since the quality of data often depends on trust and rapport between the interviewer and respondents, the atmosphere was kept cordial and open. Also, the interviewers were made to commence informally in order to minimize negative impacts on data gathering process. Ethical concerns were raised where sensitive issues, such as possible abuse, suppression, rejection, disappointment and vulnerability, were brought up in the interview (Finch, 1994 cited in Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). Vulnerable women who feel suppressed and generally unheard might not be able to limit their responses and as such stand the risk of "telling too much" to a stranger and thereafter regret it (Finch, 1994 cited in Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). While aware of these risks, listening and sharing experiences and information with such respondents engendered their confidence and trust.

#### 4.3.5. RESPONDENTS' BIAS

Another challenge faced by qualitative studies of this nature is that the respondents may not fully understand some of the questions asked during the interview the way they are intended. The respondent may also feel pressured into agreeing with the ideas of the researcher. This will eventually subject the data collected to error (Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). Such errors are attributable

to ambiguous or vague questions, inappropriate wording of questions or poor interviewing technique. In addition, the face-to-face contact with the respondent might tempt him or her (the respondent) to say what the researcher 'wants to hear' (Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). In view of this, two research assistants who were Zulu speakers conducted the research interview. The research assistants were trained to create a friendly atmosphere with the respondents as well as observe verbal and non-verbal behaviours of the respondents. Where discrepancies were noted, such were considered and reflected in the analysis and interpretation of data. To this end, reflective summaries during and at the end of the interviews were used to ensure a proper representation of the respondents' views. Also, the reliability of the research was enhanced by triangulation obtained by comparing the data from the audio-tapes, written notes and questionnaires.

#### **4.4. DATA ANALYSIS**

There are various ways of deriving a composite indicator of need or social problems (Smith, 1975). This can be done through qualitative or quantitative techniques. In view of the research objectives raised above, the analysis was done using a triangulated approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis.

##### **4.4.1. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

A qualitative technique is generally explorative and innovative, takes an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter and studies things in their natural settings to interpret and make sense of phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin, 1994). There are different ways of making sense of the world and qualitative techniques are concerned with

discovering the meanings seen by those who are being researched and understanding their view of the world. In the case Umlaas catchment area the researcher's approach was to uncover the perception of the respondents to empowerment and its enhancement by the Working for Water Project. Qualitative techniques employs several methods including observing respondents body language and their level of participation in the interview and analyzing their responses as was done in this study. The reports from qualitative research provide an understanding and insight in descriptive value of specific situations. The responses were recorded for later translation and transcription. Common themes were identified through cut and paste and colour coding.

Basically, qualitative analysis:

provide meaningful, useful and credible answers to the evaluation of decision-makers and information users. To be meaningful, the answers provided must relate directly to the questions that have been asked; to be useful', the answers must be understandable and clearly presented; and to be credible, the evaluator must demonstrate that the perspective presented will hold up under careful scrutiny.

(Patton 1980: 327).

Given the nature of a research of this kind, which relies on an analysis of relevant information from the women employees, the Project Manager for the Working for Water Project and community members of the study area, qualitative techniques were adopted. This involved interactive interviews, which were deemed to be more sympathetic to female values. Moreover, since the research intended to give a careful consideration to social and power relations, qualitative analysis enhanced the communication of the women's experiences from their own standpoint. Face-to-face discussions meant the subjects were able to express significant aspects of their lives in their own words. Dialogue and interaction between the researcher and the respondents making the researcher aware of the

subject's points and view was encouraged.

The respondents' description of their own life experiences was useful in the assessment of the perception of the various stakeholders on empowerment, the social impacts of the Project on the empowerment and development of women. Also, the interviews assisted in assessing the impact of the socio-cultural lives of women on their productivity in the project and the extent to which the project facilitates community participation and awareness.

#### **4.4.2. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS**

Quantitative methods are expressions of analysis in mathematical language rather than in words (Mathews, 1981). They are more established, deductive and standardized. Reports from this analysis contain more precise data and thus provide facts of descriptive values. They allow less room for subjective bias into the interpretation of statements hence, they are amenable to verification and more easily compared with other statements (Mathews, 1981).

Quantitative analysis was utilized in assessing the demographic profile of the employees of the Project and capacity building in terms of training. Tables, percentages, bar graphs and pie charts were used where necessary to enhance visual understanding. This analysis was employed as it provides descriptive statistics (quantitative summaries) of the socio-economic and demographic profile of structured research responses.

#### **4.5. RESEARCH PROCESS**

The data for the research were initially collected in April and May 2000. The two research assistants were employed in the transcription and translation of

interviews into isiZulu. However, one of them was involved in an accident, which claimed his life. The sudden death led to loss of some information. The researcher had to conduct some interviews a second time with members of the households of the women employees of the project in December 2000.

As earlier stated, the study could not cover all the population because of time and financial constraints. Therefore data were collected by simple randomization of the population concerned. On the whole, 67 questionnaires were administered to the respective five stakeholder groups and all were retrieved because they were administered alongside with the interviews. Each interview of the women employees and the project leader took about an hour while the remaining stakeholders' interview took about 45 minutes each.

As the researcher could not communicate in isiZulu, two research assistants were employed in the interview and administration of the questionnaires. Initially, the respondents perceived us as spies as they were not familiar with the researcher and the assistants. However, this problem was overcome as the project leader informed the women employees through the contractors and led us to some of the houses.

Some of the respondents initially avoided answering some sensitive questions, as they were not sure what the information might be used for. Also they were not sure of their fate because they were appointed to work for the Working for Water Project by the Indunas (traditional authorities) who could exercise power to retain them or not. However, the questions were later re-visited by rephrasing them.

In addition, the word empowerment is new in development discourse and getting the right word in isiZulu was a problem. However, as earlier stated, the question on the respondents' understanding of the term 'empowerment' had to be framed for a better understanding of the meaning.

With this background, the researcher attended two workshops for qualitative and quantitative research methodology. Thereafter, a training session was organized for the two research assistants in order to facilitate satisfactory interview technique and limit the bias of the study. Samples from the different five stakeholder groups earlier mentioned were interviewed and the following chapter reveals the findings obtained from the analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER FIVE  
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE, SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
AND FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF  
WOMEN EMPLOYEES OF THE WORKING FOR  
WATER PROJECT

**“This Province holds great promise especially in rural areas. Our people are suffering and this needs not to be so. We have water, soil and infrastructure, and most of all we have the capacity to create policies that will lead to development in rural areas”.**

**(Dr Ben Ngubane, Kwazulu-Natal Premier. The Mercury 25 March 1998)**

As presented earlier, the Democratic Government of South Africa has introduced a number of projects in order to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. One of such is the Working for Water Project, established in September 1995 with the overall aim of increasing water yield through the clearing of invasive alien plants and in so doing employing and training people, especially women, from the disadvantaged communities. It is aimed at the transformation of the society by improving the quality of life of the South Africans, especially the poorest and most marginalized section, and enhancing their upliftment and empowerment through improved employment, health and education.

South African women are not a homogenous group. Their differences include race, class and geographic location. In spite of these differences, South African

women are generally the primary care givers in the society. Their childbearing role is one of the factors that render women less successful in the labour market, and has brought on them the responsibility of being primary caregivers not only to their children but also to the sick and the elderly (President of the Republic of South Africa, 1997 cited in CGE, 1988). These responsibilities imply that women have to undertake work closely related with the home in order to strike a balance between household responsibilities and job demands.

This chapter outlines the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the women under study. In addition, it is devoted to the exploration of respondents' view on empowerment, their major economic activities before the Working for Water Project employed them and the impacts of the Project on their empowerment and development.

As earlier mentioned in chapter four (section 4.3.3), sampling involved five stakeholder groups – the project leader, the contractors, the women employees and household members of the women employees of the Working for Water Project and the community members in the study area. For an easy understanding, a coding method was used especially where more than one respondent was involved in a stakeholder group. The codes are:

- WE            - Woman or Women employee
- H/HM        - Household member of the women employee
- C             - Contractor
- CM           - Community Member

**5.1. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT**

Figure 1 below shows the organizational structure of the Working for Water



Project. According to this structure, the area manager is at the apex, followed by the project manager (leader) and subsequently the contractors and the labourers at the wide base. The project manager explained that the area managers at the regional level were 28, six (21%) of who were women. The area manager oversees the monitoring sites and ensures flow of information to the project leaders under his or her jurisdiction. He or she also ensures regular monthly reports on progress from the project manager.

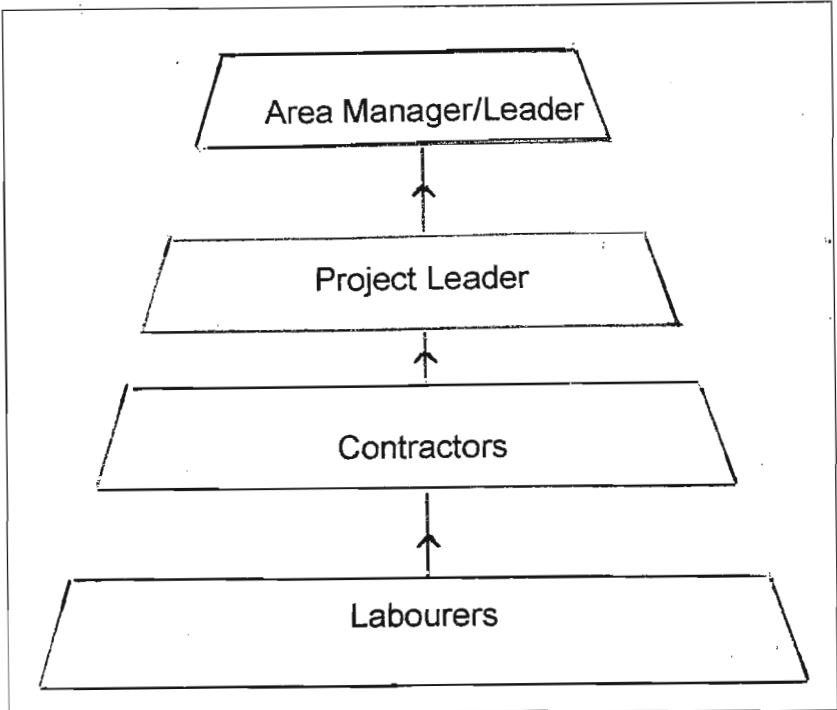


Fig 1: Organizational Structure of the Project

The project manager is appointed by the Department of Water Affairs and assisted by a project management committee of members drawn from local stakeholder communities and organization under the chairmanship of the Area manager. Only one project manager oversees the area under study. The Project leader reports on progress with specified key performance indicators to the Programme Manager on a regular monthly basis. The key performance indicators include the number of jobs created, the area cleared, cash flow against the budget, the number of monitoring sites established and the number (man days) of training completed.

According to the Project leader, the contractors are locally appointed through the combined efforts of the indunas (local authority), the project management committee members and the project leader. The contractors supervise the sites allocated to them by the project leader, keep custody of the equipment (chemicals and tools) and report on the progress made in relation to the objectives of the project.

In addition, the Project leader stated that the labourers are recruited from the local community by public participation. They are appointed by means of a contract for temporary appointment, which may be renewable after each phase of clearing depending on the recommendation of the contractor, the induna of the area and the project manager.

The training of the employees include machine operation, first aid, supervision and entrepreneurial skills and environmental awareness.

## **5.2. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE WOMEN EMPLOYEES OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT**

### **5.2.1 PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES**

25 women employees of the Working for Water Project (WWP) were interviewed in connection with the objectives of the study.

Table1 below indicates that only one of the women employees are resident in Hammarsdale, three respectively in Sankotshe and Mophela, four respectively in Entembeni and Hopewell and the highest number (ten) live in the Table Mountain. While 15 of the women employees live between one and three

Table1: Residence of the women employees of the WWP

Place of Residence	Frequency	%
Hammarsdale	1	4
Sankotshe	3	12
Mophela	3	12
Entembeni	4	16
Hopewell	4	16
Table Mountain	10	40
Total	25	100

kilometres from the work site, the remaining ten live on the Table Mountain. However, when the latter women were asked about the distance from work and the financial implications for them, they stated that the travel time from the Table Mountain is about 40 minutes and that their contractor organized their transport for them and brought them to and from worksite.

### 5.2.2. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Age plays an important role in productivity of work of this nature. The major work of the labourers is to cut down the invasive alien plants with the use of local tools to enhance the availability of water in the area. To effectively achieve this aim, there is the need to consider the age and the physical ability of people to be employed.

Table 2 shows that 22 (88%) of the women employees are in the economically active and reproductive ages while the remaining three women (12%) are above this age. For these latter women, observation during the interview show that they

Table 2: Age group of the women employees of the WWP

Age group	Frequency	%
20-24	1	4
25-29	5	20
30-34	3	12
35-39	5	20
40-44	8	32
45-49	2	8
50+	1	4
Total	25	100

were saddled with the responsibility of taking care of their grandchildren and children who are about to finish their grade 12 in the high school. One of the three women was actually taking care of the grandchild whose mother died recently. The project draws on a range of age groups, although the physical nature of the work means that the women are almost all less than 50 years of age.

5.2.3. LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Figure 2 shows that 12% of the women employees (three women) had no formal education. The table further shows that 88% of the women employees (22 women) had some form of education. The women with junior primary education constitute the majority (40%) of the women employees; seven (28%) had senior primary education while only five (20%) had high school education. A review of 1996 census shows that 22% of women in Kwazulu-Natal had no formal education, 8% had junior Primary education, 22% had senior primary education and 9% had high school education. However, when theses figures are compared

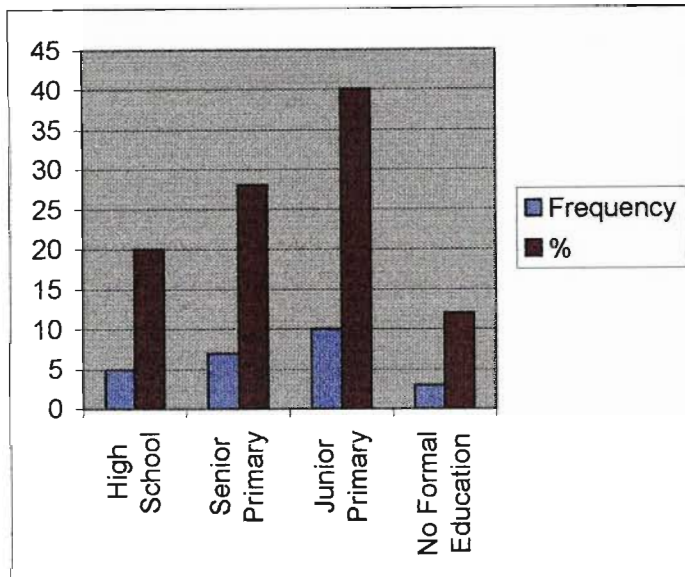


Fig 2: Level of education of the women employees of the WWP

with the 1996 figures, it shows that a greater percentage of women in the study area had some form of education. Even the three women that had no formal education spoke fluently in isiZulu interjected with some words in English during the interview. It is therefore not too surprising why during the interview most of the women employees emphasized that they had to look for job so as to send their children to school. WE eight literally said “I have to struggle to educate my children as one of them may become a ‘madiba’ of tomorrow” (she was referring to the former president –Nelson Mandela who in spite of his poor background rose to become the president of South Africa).

#### 5.2.4 MARITAL STATUS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Table 3 below shows that twelve of the women employees (48%) were single and they constituted the highest percentage. The 1996 census figures also reveal a high incidence of “never married” women. A close observation in the neighbourhood of the researcher reveals that people decide not to marry

because they do not want men to abuse them, they are afraid of being infected with the deadly pandemic (HIV/AIDS) and they want to live their lives the way they want without any interference from any man. Two of the women understudy were living with their partners, one was a divorcee, four were married, six were widowed and none of the women was separated.

The major causes of death have been noted to be accident, violence, sickness sexually transmitted diseases (STD) such as HIV/AIDS and other diseases like cholera (Central Statistical Service, 2000). The 1996 census figures reveal that Kwazulu-Natal has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS and the province has also been noted with high rate of crime and violence.

During the course of the interviews, it was gathered that out of the twelve of the women employees that were single, ten had children to support while the remaining two had no children to support. Among these two, one of them had just finished the Matriculation Examination in December 1999 and got the job in January 2000 while the other left her former better paid job in order to take care of her aging parents.

Table 3: Marital status of the women employees of the WWP

	Frequency	%
Single	12	48
Married	4	16
Living together with partner	2	8
Divorced	1	4
Widowed	6	24
Total	25	100

**5.2.5. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLDS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES**

One of the areas of responsibility of households is the biological reproduction

(child bearing and rearing) of the next generation. Although this is done in different ways and degrees, the researcher was interested in the number of children per household and the age groups in view of different needs among different age groups.

Figure 3 shows that more than 65% of the children in the households of the women employees of the WWP are above ten years of age. This figure is higher when compared with the census figure of 1996 (22%). The majority of children (41%) in the households is in the age group 11 - 18 years. This is a period when children enter the adolescent stage and they are conscious of their bodies and what they wear (Glassford, 1977) and as such more burden falls on the parents in providing for the needs of their children. Only four (6%) of the children are under the age of five and are not yet in the school going age.

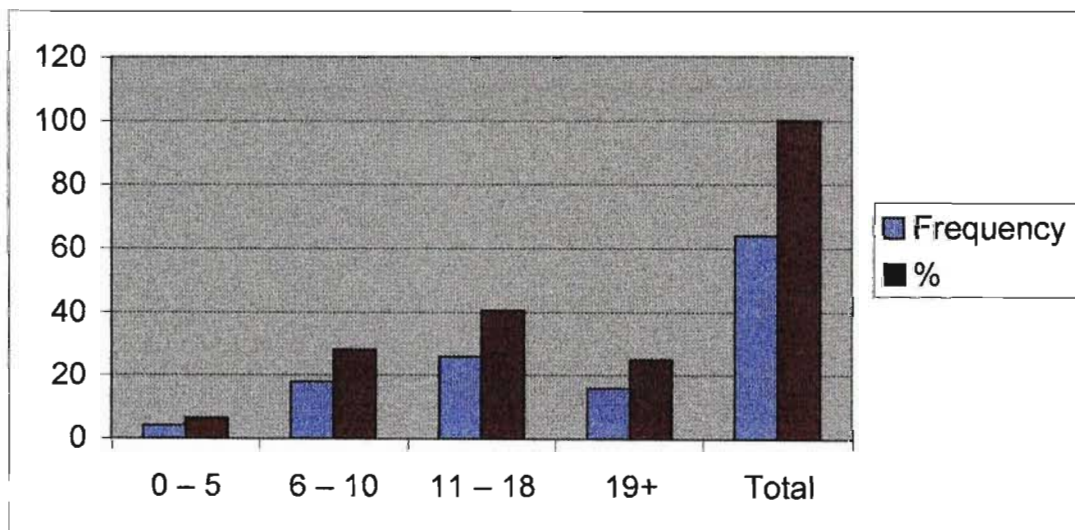


Fig 3: Age distribution of children in the households of the women employees of the WWP

Observation during the interview reveals that two of the children in the age group 6-10 have not been registered in schools. When the parents (WE eight and WE11) were asked about the children not going to school, the two mothers

attributed it to lack of funds to buy uniforms and stationery for them. Four of those that are above 19 years are out of school and waiting to get a job so as to relief their parents of the financial burden. This implies that 44 (69%) of the children in the households are in schools. It suggests that it is easier for women to take on WWP employment once the children are out of infancy. The burden of the education in terms of costs might therefore rest heavily on the people that are working in the households. Apart from this, it might imply that the women employees have to be involved in getting the children ready for school. These factors have financial implications and also affect the time management of the women in the households, as will be presented in section 5.4.4.

#### 5.2.6. YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Figure 4 shows that seven of the women employees (28%) had been working in the Project since 1998, six (24%) joined in 1999 while twelve of them were employed in 2000. When the women employees were asked a question relating to how they got the job, WE one, a widow with five children, said that she was brought into the Project by fate in 2000 when the world seemed to be collapsing on her. WE seven stated, "God saw that I have reached my elastic limit and sent help through this Project". Most of the other women responded in a similar way, giving credit to the government and the planners of the Working for Water Project.



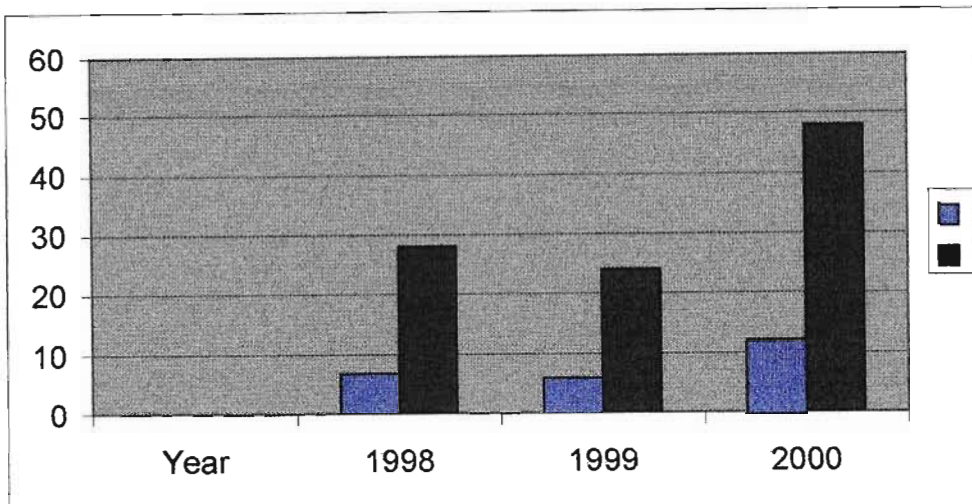


Fig 4: Year of employment of the women employees in the WWP

#### 5.2.7. COMPOSITION OF THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN EMPLOYEES

As earlier mentioned, the term household does not have a straightforward definition. Its meaning differs among different cultures and different social groups. It also varies in shape and sizes from one person living on his or her own to a large family grouping consisting of nuclear and extended family members living together. For the purpose of this study, a household is defined as either an individual living alone or a group of two or more people who depend on a common income and usually are living in the same house or 'kraal'. The household is a unit in which a range of activities which are central to individual's life are organized. The researcher took interest in the composition of the households to explore the activities of the members, how they are organized and their survival over time.

Table 4 below shows that two households are composed of one-member. The two women employees indicated during the interview that they were living on their own. The table also shows that three households respectively consisted of four-member, nine-member and fourteen-member households, one household

had four members, eight households had three members and they constituted the highest percentage of 32%, three had five members, five had six members and four had seven members.

Table 4: Members of the households of the women employees  
of the WWP

Members in Household	No of household	%
1	2	16
3	8	32
4	1	4
5	3	12
6	5	20
7	4	16
9	1	4
14	1	4
Total	25	100

When asked about the financial contributions of the adult members of the household members, two of the women employees who lived with their partners said that the partners are ‘not there for me financially’. One of them further lamented that she had always wished that he would act like a husband and father to her two children but he uses his money for drinking and comes home to complain of lack of money. Two of the married women stated that their husbands have been supportive since they married. One of them further said ‘he has always acted as a brother to me and father to my children... when he has money we all enjoy it and when there was none we all understand... as the children are becoming older the responsibilities are increasing....’ WE one said she has had to depend on farm products while WE19 said that her brother, who is 24years old, is on a disability grant of R280 hence the household depends on R760 monthly. WE two said that she had to depend on a monthly grant of R260 and her earning from the Project to support her and the children. One of the women

also said that since she divorced her husband, she has been receiving financial support from her relatives until she got a job with the Project. She concluded that the four of them in the household have been surviving on her earning and sometimes from her uncle. One of the women also said that her mother was involved in crafts from where she realized about R300 monthly and that they have been living on this and her earnings from the Project. WE eight, a widow of seven years, said that her household depends only on her earning from the Project.

**5.2.8. RESPONSES FROM CONTRACTORS IN THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT**

As stated earlier in section 5.1, the contractors are locally appointed by the indunas (local authority), the project management committee members and the project leader. The contractors are charged with the responsibility of supervising the sites allocated to them by the project leader, keeping custody of the equipment (chemicals and tools) and reporting on the progress made in relation to the objectives of the project.

Table 5 below shows the number of contractors employed in the Working for Water Project in the study area. The table reveals that there were only two women (16.7%) while the other 10 (83.3%) contractors were men. Of the twelve contractors, six were interviewed. This consisted of two women and four men.

Table 5: Contractors employed by the Working for Water Project

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	10	83
Female	2	17
Total	12	100

Although more women (158) than men (45) were employed to clear the catchment area of the invasive alien plants, there were more men than women contractors. This was not found to be in line with the objective of the Project to recruit more women than men at all levels (Section 1.3). When the Project leader was asked a question in connection with the gender distinction, he explained that the Project works on a trade account system, that the communities (Indunas) were responsible for the selection of the contractors and that they use their own discretion. However, he affirmed that, "the Project leader tries to motivate them to come with more women than men in order to realize the objectives of the Project".

### **5.3. THE MAJOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN BEFORE BEING EMPLOYED IN THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT**

Rural communities have numerous basic needs, which are mostly borne by the women who constitute the majority of the population. Women's vulnerability is at the center of their powerlessness. This powerlessness is entrenched in the inability of individuals to gain access to resources to satisfy the basic needs in the households. A woman is deemed empowered when she is able to gain control over her life in political, social and economic aspects (Bisnath, Undated). This section explores the economic activities of the women before securing job with the Working for Water Project in order to assess the impact of the Project on the women's lives.

When asked about the economic activities that the women employees were engaged in before securing jobs with the Project, their typical responses include "I was not working at all", "I was doing nothing", "I was a domestic worker", "I was doing bead works", "I was doing casual work on the farm", "I was in school", "I was a full housewife", "I was weaving basket", "I was involved in petty trading" and "I was working for the Rainbow and Dairy Farm".

When asked how they felt at such a period, 24 of 25 of the women expressed dissatisfaction. WE one in Hammarsdale sighed, shook her head and stated, "I was doing casual work on the farm". She paused and said "it was too rigorous for me as a woman as this meant that I had to depend on the farm products to feed us in the house... there are times you want to eat something different but it is not available hence you are just eating to fill the stomach and this does not bring satisfaction". She was doing casual work on the farm for 10 months.

Furthermore, WE two, WE three and WE four in Hopewell said that they had always been at home, doing nothing to bring any income. WE two did this for 13 years, WE three for one year and WE four for five months. WE two said that she was happy taking care of the home initially, but things became very tight for her when there was no longer support from the father of her children and she had to depend on a monthly grant of R260 to support her and the children. Her countenance changed immediately as she was holding back tears from her eyes. WE three stated that she was vigorously looking for a job for that one year, as she "really needed money to support my family."

In Mophela, WE five was working for the Rainbow and Dairy Farm before she got the job with the Project. WE six lamented that she had been receiving a grant of R160, which was later put on a hold for six months prior to the interview. She stated that "I was a full housewife doing my household chores and breaking the monotony with basket making... what you can not change, you live with it." She was doing this for more than 12 years when eventually she got a job with the Project. WE eight, a widow, was doing casual jobs before her marriage with her late husband and had never received any income whatsoever since his death about seven years earlier and had no one to support her and the children. According to her, she realized about R200 monthly from the casual jobs with no maintenance to augment the income. Hence she explained that she was very desperate for a job to support her two children. At this stage she was fighting

back tears from her eyes.

In Sankontshe, WE 10, a single mother with three children stated that she had been involved in petty trading for over 10 years. In the same settlement, WE nine explained that she had been a domestic worker for about 12 years with an average monthly income of R200, which was grossly inadequate to sustain her and her six children. She claimed that she "could not account for how they have been feeding and living". She paused for some time and continued that the neighbours have been there for her in times of needs. Moreover, she was not receiving any grant or financial assistance to support her and the children. She expressed that they had been languishing in hunger and abject poverty until she secured the job with the Project. Also, WE 11 stated that she had been at home doing nothing to yield an income for a very long time until she found a job with the Project in March 2000. With household members of five, she expressed that things had been very difficult especially as she could not support schooling for her children. Until she got the job with the Project, they were all living on a grant of R160. She became very emotional and lamented that she wished that the world collapsed at such a difficult time. At this time the interviewer asked if things were better when she started working for the Working for Water Project. Her countenance changed, with a smile on her face she said that although things were not totally as good as she had wished, she believed that there was still hope that things will be better in the future since she had not died earlier.

In Entembeni, where four women employees were interviewed, two of the women WE 12 and WE 14 had been unemployed for three and four years respectively. However, while the former had been receiving maintenance of R600 monthly the other received nothing and had to depend on help of about R200 monthly from her relatives until she got the job with the Project in January 2000. Even WE 13, who had been receiving maintenance, claimed that there was a hold on it and that made life more difficult for her hence the need for her to look for a job with the Project. WE 15, also from Entembeni, stated that she had been a cleaner for

four years on a salary of R650 per month. However, she opted to look for another job since her parents were becoming old and the need to take care of them, coupled with the transport fare, left her with less than R450 a month. According to her, it was just better than having nothing, especially with the long distance and strains involved. WE 14 was also involved in knitting from which she realized an average monthly income of R280 on which five members of the household depended.

Ten women employees were interviewed at the Table Mountain. WE 16 stated that she was involved in petty trading before she got the job with the Project. She was realizing an average of R300 monthly on which six members had to depend for livelihood. Also, WE 18 stated that she was at home for 10 years without a job except for the casual cleaning that she was doing for people. She was earning about R100 per month. In addition, WE 17 was only involved in gardening from which she was realizing about R100 monthly to feed a household of six members. According to her, ".... this money was grossly inadequate but the situation was a bit bearable because I was able to get something to feed on from my garden". Immediately she added with a smile "but you know that you cannot get a lot of what you need like oil, sugar, salt, bread and milk from the garden." WE 25 expressed that she was doing casual jobs for a period of one year and was realizing R200 monthly. Two of the women employees (WE 21 and WE 24) from the Table Mountain declared that they have been "supporting their lives and their households on wood selling for two and three years respectively and this has been fetching them R300 and R400 respectively on a monthly basis. In addition, two of the women employees (WE 19 and WE 22) stated that they had been unemployed for four and six years respectively. They claimed that they had been surviving on the good will of their relatives and neighbours. WE 19 further stated that she had a disabled brother who received a grant of R280 monthly. Also, WE 20 stated that she had been schooling from age six and has just finished her matriculation examination when she got the job with Project in January. She started the job because "I no longer have the

financial support to continue my education". According to her, she "took up the job in order to support myself and when I am financially buoyant, I will be able to go back to school". Furthermore, WE 23 has been involved in bead works for about four years from which she has been earning about R180 monthly to support a three-member household.

Examples of people desperately looking for job to take care of the children are not far-fetched in the neighbourhood of the researcher. In some of these cases, the women wake up in the morning not knowing where breakfast will come, who to talk to about disconnected electricity supply, how children will go to school and where supper will come from as the sun sets.

### ***Reasons for taking up job with the Working for Water Project***

Traditionally, women derive satisfaction in addition perhaps to other things, taking care of the children and other members of the households. However, research (Coolidge, 1994) suggests that women have entered the workforce largely in response to:

- (i) rising labour market opportunities;
- (ii) need for a second income to keep up with rising cost of living;
- (iii) the changed attitudes about a woman's role in household;
- (iv) reduced workplace discrimination against women;
- (v) increasing female headed households;
- (vi) increasing responsibilities in relation with the welfare of the children in particular.

The women employees were asked why they took up the job with the Working for Water Project. The following are typical responses of the 25 women employees using the cut and paste method:



- (i) 'To support my children'
- (ii) 'No one to support me'
- (iii) 'No more support to continue my study'
- (iv) 'To support my family'
- (v) 'For survival'

WE one from Hammarsdale with a household member of six said, "We would not be able to eat and live without an income. The stress was too much on me as I had to combine casual jobs with farm work so that we can live". In Hopewell, WE two stated that she took up the job to "meet the needs of my children". She expressed that things were not easy but the children did not beg to be born therefore she could not afford them to suffer. She briefly added, "Who knows what they would become in the future". In the same vein, WE three said that she joined the Project to earn an income to support her family and children. WE four said that she started the work because of 'the need to make ends meet'. She explained that the father of her children did not have a consistent job hence she needed to support her children.

Expressing why she was desperate for a job, WE eight, who has been a widow for seven years, stated that she 'had not received an income since my husband died and I have to take care of my two children'. She further explained that she had been doing casual jobs and getting R200 monthly. She had not been receiving any grant or maintenance to support her. Also, WE 13 explained that she had to take up the job because 'there was no one to support me and my kids...Without this job, my children would not be able to eat or be educated'. In addition, WE 11 explained that she was working so that she 'could get money to get my children into school and maintain them... I am doing all these for the sake of their future'. Furthermore, WE 17 stated that she 'was so loaded with family responsibilities' that she had no option but to take up the job. She saw the Project as 'heaven sent'.

WE 20 stated that she joined the Project because of hardship. She explained that her mother, who has been supporting her and her children, was no longer in the position to do so hence the need for her to get an income to feed the family. She declared, "If I do not do this work, then we are heading towards becoming destitute" However, WE 15 from Entembeni explained that she was working for the Project so as to be closer to her aging parents. She stated that she was receiving a better salary where she working before but she had to make the sacrifice because of her parents who needed her help 'at this period of their lives'. Smiling, she declared "they are my priorities for now".

Similar experiences were noted by Sotshongaye and Moller (1996) in their study of the rural women in Ndwedwe, Kwazulu-Natal. They observed that the rural women depended on pensions, grants, selling activities and family earnings for livelihood. Although none of the women in this study stated that she lives on pension, all of them depend on their earnings from the Project and in most cases had depended on grants, relatives and selling activities in a way before they got the job from the Working for Water project.

#### **5.4. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT ON WOMEN EMPLOYEES**

##### **5.4.1. EMPOWERMENT**

As stated earlier (Section 3.2.5), empowerment is a process through which an individual or a group of people gain mastery over their lives and environment. In order to assess the level of empowerment in women under study, one of the questions posed to the women employees of the Project was their perception of the word 'empowerment'. This question was asked to ascertain that the women had an understanding of what the research was all about. As earlier stated (section 1.7), the term empowerment is new in development discourse and its

use depends on the content in which one uses it. Thus, the question on the respondents' understanding of 'empowerment' had to be framed as "Yini oyaziyo ngenkululeko yamandla?"

Apart from WE 15 who had a better paid job before she joined the Project so as to be closer to her aging parents, the remaining twenty four women employees confirmed that were it not for the Project which employed them, they would have remained 'under abject poverty', 'depressed', 'unfulfilled', 'troubled', 'distressed', 'in a state of feeling out of place' and 'unable to satisfy my needs as well as those of my children'. When asked how they felt when they started working for the Project, typical responses included:

- "I am happier that I can now earn money on my own...."
- "I now earn an income and can sustain my family, plan for my life"
- "I am happy that I can plan to buy things now... "
- "I can now pay my creditors..., it is a great relief,... a heavy burden is removed" and
- "I can provide bread for my children".

WE one with a smile stated, "I now earn an income to sustain my family, my children feed better and I am now able to buy them clothes within my ability". Also, WE two expressed that she was able to earn an income, get better food and buy better things in the house. In addition, WE four said that she was happier that 'I now have money on my own, eat better food, wear better clothes and get my house finely decorated'.

Furthermore, the community members as well as the members of the households of the women employees of the Project also confirmed the women's responses. CM three stated "the women are less dependent on their spouses and they have been able to contribute financially to their households. More importantly, their children are able to go to school like other children whose parents are working in

the community". In addition, CM three reiterated "many of the women in the Working for Water Project were unemployed before but now they can boast of an income at the end of the month". Furthermore, CM five stated, "the women have been able to transform their lives and their family members"

These are indications that the Project has helped the women to meet their financial obligations toward themselves, their children and the members of their households. In addition, the Project leader stated that "the women employees are happier that they can live better lives", "buy uniforms and books for their children to enhance regular attendance in their schools", ".... they can now buy clothes and shoes for themselves and their children and eat better meals... they are now more confident in themselves in addition to the knowledge that they are gaining from the training to adequately manage available resources."

The business owners were also interviewed in connection with the impacts of the Project on the area. CM two from Hopewell, who started operating his business in 1999, said that his business had been progressing slowly over the past four years since the Project commenced. Although he could not attribute the increasing volume of the business to the Project, he said that there were more bulk purchases at the weekends and month ends when salaries were paid. CM four, who was a women leader in the community and also a business owner, expressed that although the sales had been slow, it all depended on the season. She claimed that the increase in sales could be attributed to the Project. According to her, "the buying capacity of women in the community has increased from what it used to be..., I see women more regularly in my shop now than before... even when children are sent to buy household items, they stipulate that they were sent by their mothers....". According to her, such a statement indicates that the women concerned gave money to the children to buy the items. She expressed that as a woman, she could understand the plight of the unemployed women and knew "how they feel when they can not contribute financially to the welfare of the family or can not provide for their kids... it is not

an easy task as a woman". When asked if she was ready to employ any of the women in the community, she reiterated that she would be delighted to help and employ the women.

When asked to comment on the noticeable changes that have been observed since the inception of the Project in the community, the contractors affirmed that although the Project has not brought much changes in the physical structure of the community as seen in the absence of tarred roads and piped water, the knowledge of water conservation was applauded and the people were healthier. In addition, C two reiterated that, "Although, no substantial physical development could be observed in our community as a whole, individual families are testimonies as one can see the effect on them." She quickly added that the women have got "strength to work effectively, they are happier that they can live better, buy clothes and school books for their children and buy things that they had not been able to buy". Furthermore, C six said that the women have been "empowered to live better lives, able to use available resources well, able to take better care of their families and send their children to school with books". Also, C one stated "you may not be able to see the effects of the Working for Water Project in the community as such, individual families of the workers can testify to the good that this Project has done....the women are happier, their children are better fed, they go to school more regularly, they wear better clothes and can now wear shoes to school...other women even want such jobs in order to enjoy a better living.... the women are able to support their families".

Empowerment is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The end is to be able to improve the lives of the women and protect their rights to participate in decisions that affect them. Since it is a process it cannot be achieved overnight, rather, it is acquired over time by developing capacity in them to participate effectively in making and implementing decisions. With regards to the women employees and decision-making in their households, one could say that the Project has enhanced the quality of living of the women. They were able to earn

income, eat better food, buy clothes for themselves and their children and send them to school.

An assessment of women's participation in decision-making in the Project is another dimension of empowerment under consideration. As earlier pointed out in the organizational structure of the Project, only 21.4% of the area managers at the regional level are women and only 17% of the contractors are women. Although the Project is not a 'women only' project, it was stated at its inception that it would employ women preferentially at all levels such that they constitute at least 60% of the workforce. Thus in the administrative area, women are yet to be empowered to fully participate in decision-making in such a way that if they were to vote on gender issues in the Project, they would lose out as they form the minority.

#### **5.4.2 TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

Training is an art of imparting knowledge in order to undertake certain tasks. It is a process whereby people are able to increase their capacity of managing scarce resources for improved quality of living. Training enhances capacity building and it plays a vital role in successful development.

The project leader explained that the Working for Water Project organizes training for the workers in order to achieve set objectives. He said that capacity building means training or teaching somebody to do something. According to him, "in order for the Project to succeed, there is the co-operation between the contractors and the management. The management trains the contractors as emerging contractors in order to market themselves" they are therefore "trained on water conservation and how to be useful in the future". In addition, they are trained to train the labourers so that they can in turn "use the training that they have received in various ways at home and in the community". He stated that the

training incorporates:

- (i) awareness of the importance of water
- (ii) the need for water conservation
- (iii) management skills
- (iv) child-care facilities
- (v) HIV/AIDS awareness
- (vi) First aid (optional)

To this end, when new labourers are employed, they undergo induction course with their respective contractors. During the training the aims and objectives of the Project are introduced and they are taught how to use the implements and chemicals for weed killing. When asked about the degree of involvement of the women employees in the training, the Project leader said that all the women, including the nursing mothers, are involved in the training and that it is made a prerequisite. However, he reiterated that training on the First aid is not made compulsory for them.

In order to enhance the training, lessen the burden on the nursing mothers and increase their productivity, a crèche was built in the catchment area by the NGO and Welfare Societies to take care of the children. In addition, child welfare facilities are provided and the Project is fully responsible for taking care of the crèche. The Project pays R4 per day per child during the training and during the working hours as an incentive. When the Project leader was asked to comment on the benefits of the training programme to the employees, he mentioned becoming knowledgeable in water conservation, equipped in the use of chemicals to kill weeds and familiar with management of resources. He further stated that the training has helped in enhancing the empowerment of women in:

- (i) having the dignity to work, earn salary, live better lives and send their kids to school.

- (ii) getting opportunity for other businesses.
- (iii) extracting firewood for home use, wood for building and poles for their houses from work sites.
- (iv) training in First Aid, water conservation, use of chemicals to kill weeds.
- (v) awareness and opportunity to talk with their kids and community members about HIV/AIDS and interventions.
- (vi) acquiring managerial skill in budgeting, making choices and planning for their lives.

### *Participation in training course*

Table 6: Women employees' participation in training programme

	Frequency	%
Yes	7	28
No	18	72
Total	25	100

Table 6 shows that seven (28%) of the women employees had attended the training programme organized by the Project while sixteen have not yet attended the course. A further observation of the data collected reveals that five (71.4%) of the seven women employees who joined the Project in 1998 have attended the training course while two (33.3%) of the six women employees who started in 1999 were trained and none of those who started in 2000 has participated in the training. This might imply that the new labourers learnt on the job with the older ones or that they were informed on the use of the instruments and the chemicals on site as they started work. The women employees were asked about the importance of the skills they acquired during the training. They responded that they have knowledge about "the invasive alien plants and how much water they consume which eventually deprive us of water resources, ...killing of invasive alien plants, ...handling of the equipment and mixing of chemicals, ...conservation



and management of water resources for future use.”

Furthermore, the women employees were asked whether or not the acquired skills would have helped them to become self-sufficient, especially after leaving the job. WE three in response said, “I will be able to go out and be a manager of scarce resources.... I will also be able to help in educating people on water conservation and apply the skills in my home and elsewhere, that is ensuring that our scarce resources do not go into extinction”. WE 12 affirmed “Yes, I will be able to help in the ...conservation of scarce resources so that we can leave the future generation with something to live on”. In addition, WE 14 stated, “ I will be able to work confidently without much supervision”. Also, WE 10 expressed that “I will be able to stand on my own and use available resources to make an improvement”. However, WE one stated that although she had acquired some skills, she did not know how applicable the skills would be for future use in view of the fact that she was getting older. In addition, WE seven said that “...the skill may not necessarily apply to what I want to do outside ...but I have gained the skill of being able to manage resources and with the training, I am faster at doing the work effectively.”

As much as capacity building in people is important, Garba (1999) in her study of Nigerian women on endogenous empowerment strategy stressed the need to rightly channel appropriate skills and capacities in people who actually need them. Although some of the women under study expressed that they had acquired some skills in budgeting, use of chemicals and water conservation, the research did not explore the transferability of the technical skills. However, two of the women have engaged themselves in petty trading after hours. Moreover, most of the women had earlier reiterated that they looked for work with the Project because of the desperate situations to relieve them of their financial predicament. This might suggest that income generation is the underpinning factor for their taking up the job.

#### 5.4.3. POWER RELATIONS IN THE HOUSEHOLDS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

As noted earlier, patriarchy is a common denominator of all the ethnic groups, which permeates every socio-cultural, economic, political and psychological aspects of life. It is the prioritizing of the right of males and elders and the justification of those rights with kinship values which, are supported by religion or culture. It gives males and elders the privilege of ownership and control over resources as leaders. On this note the researcher wished to assess the level of involvement of women employees in decision-making in their households before and after joining the Working for Water project. The level of involvement of the women employees in decision-making is a self-assessment of the women employees, members of their households, the contractors and the project leader. Decision-making in this context relates to expenditure on food, clothing for children, medical care, furniture, personal spending for household members, children's needs (uniforms and books), household gadgets (stove, music set, bedding and kitchen) and household savings.

Table 7 shows that three of the women employees were the sole decision-makers in their households before they got the employment with the Working for Water Project, two of them were involved with their husbands in decision-making, while other people were involved in the decision-making in the other households. This reveals that parents, spouses and their relatives took decisions in 80% of the households with parents constituting the highest of 44%.

Table 7: Decision-making in the households before joining the Project

People involved	Frequency	%
Husband and myself	2	8
Mother-in-law	3	12
Mom and Dad	3	12
Mom and myself	8	32
Myself	3	12
Uncle or aunt	6	24

Table 8 shows people that are currently involved in decision-making in the households of the women employees. The table reveals that only 10 (40%) of the women employees were responsible for decision-making in their households; other people are responsible for making decisions in the households; other

Table 8: Decision-making in the households after joining the Project

People involved	Frequency	%
Husband and myself	3	12
Mother-in-law	1	4
Mom, Dad & myself	3	12
Mom and myself	8	32
Myself	10	40
Uncle and aunt	1	4

people are responsible in 60% of households. Nonetheless, this number represents an increase from the two women who reported being solely responsible for decision-making prior to being employed by the Project as depicted in figures 5 and 6.

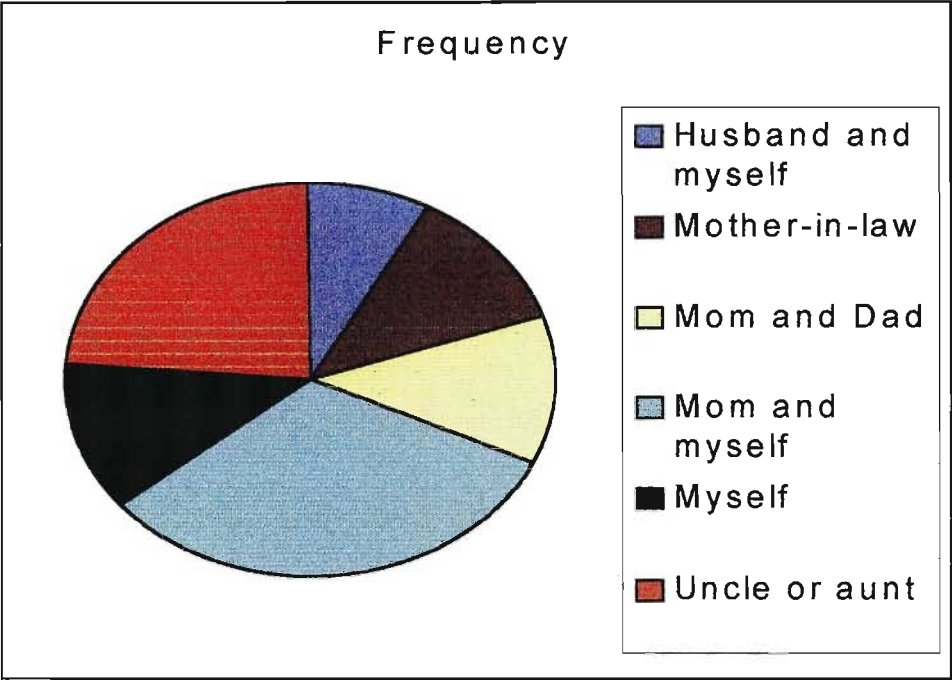


Fig 5: Decision-making in the households before joining the Project

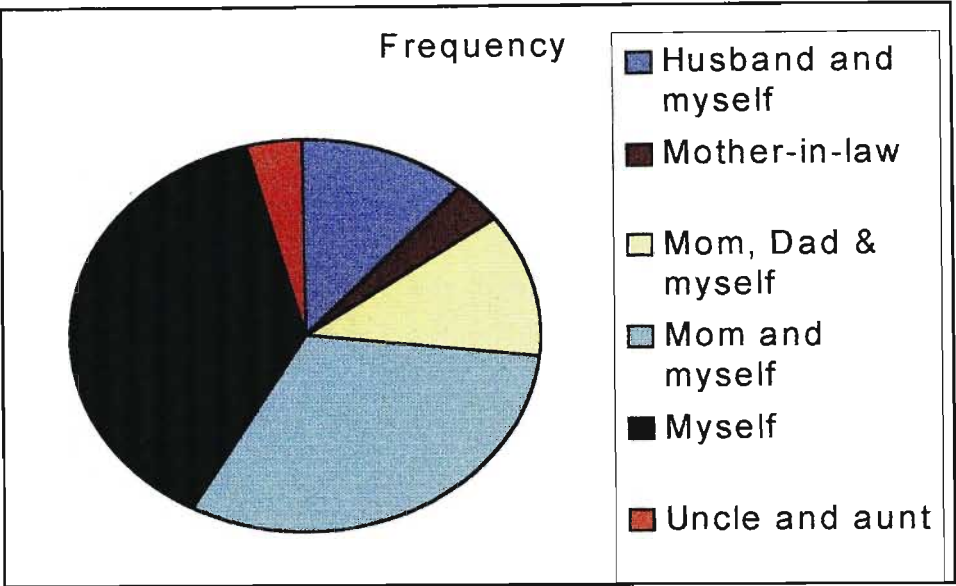


Fig 6: Decision-making in the households after joining the Project

In response to the questions on decision-making in the household, WE five stated that she was and is still the sole decision-maker and that her role is to take care of her children. She expressed happiness in doing this after getting the job with the Project. In addition, WE one stated that she was the sole decision-maker and the children were young hence she “only involved them in suggesting things that they wanted or desired”. WE 15 acknowledged that she was a passive member of the household in terms of decision-making before she got the job but now “it is not just suggesting ideas ...I am more involved ... we sit together to take decisions”. WE seven stated that her uncle was the sole decision maker in the household when she was unemployed and continues to be even after she had the job but she admitted that there was a difference since she started earning a wage. Both of them decided on how much to contribute for the purchase of basic things such as food and repairs in the house when necessary but how she spent the rest of her income is solely her decision. In contrast however, WE six stated that in spite of the husband’s death, she had to consult with her mother-in-law

when it comes to taking any decision in the household and she still has to consult with her otherwise, her intentions might be misunderstood. Furthermore, WE two, three, four, five, 11, 15, 20 and 21 stated that they were involved in decision-making in conjunction with their mothers. WE two and WE three however, said that they involved the grown up children when it concerned their needs. They admitted that they all get involved in decision-making after securing the job but the level at which they involved the children differ as their needs are 'limitless'. In addition, WE 10 explained that with the exception of the children, they "all get involved in decision-making in the house because we are all adults" (referring to her uncle and two aunts). Also, WE 12 expressed that her "parents and adult children meet to discuss and take decisions that affect us all". WE13 who expressed joy in earning an income said that she was never involved in decision-making prior to her getting the job said "... apart from taking care, my opinions are better respected these days...money is an important and determining factor for so many things". WE 10 also explained that they were still all involved in decision-making in the house but "I have to keep some money for my spending". WE 17 said that things have changed since she started earning an income as she is 'now involved in decision-making with my husband'. Two of the married women, however, said that things have not changed and will not change because 'income or no income we have always made joint decisions'

### *Keeping of bank account*

The data collected from the different stakeholder group reveals that most of the women employees of the Project were able to live better, send their children to school and buy things for themselves and households that they were not able to buy before they started the job. It was also gathered from the project manager during the interview that workers undergo the training of acquiring managerial skill in budgeting, making choices and planning for their lives. Based on these, the researcher was interested in how the women kept their money. During the

Table 9: Keeping of bank account by the women employees of the WWP

	Frequency	%
Yes	5	20
No	20	80
Total	25	100

interview, the women employees were asked questions in relation to how they kept their money.

Table 9 shows that only five (20%) of the women employees had bank accounts while the others (80%) did not have one. One of the five women had her account with the Standard Bank while the other four had their accounts with Ithala Bank. When asked if the bank accounts were opened in their names, WE six indicated that she was using her sister's bank account. The other four women (WE three, four, five and 13) said that their bank accounts were opened in their names and that this has helped to manage their finances better. WE three commented that her keeping money in the bank has restrained her "from spending just anyhow".

In sum, the study reveals that because most of the women were financially dependent on their spouses and relatives before they started working for the Project, they had to adapt to the situations in their households. The past dependency did not afford them the opportunity to make choices on what they actually wanted. However, when they started the work with the Project and earning an income, they were able to organize themselves and make choices regarding what to buy for themselves, the children and the other household members. Most of the women indicated that they keep their own earnings and as a result they are able to plan their expenses and take decisions on their earnings. However, a few, especially those that are living with their parents

indicated that they consult with their parents before making decisions on how to spend their earnings

#### 5.4.4. DIVISION OF LABOUR IN THE HOUSEHOLDS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Having considered the women employees' motivations to go out and work, the effects of the work on the distribution of the household chores among the household members is thereafter assessed. This is considered necessary in view of the burdens of combining full-time job with household chores and the time limit. This section will assess the re-allocation of household tasks and the hardships involved.

For many of the women, employment with the Project led to re-allocation of household chores. WE 14 stated that she did not have time for knitting again as she spent much of her time in her new found job. Nine of the women said that their relatives (mothers, sisters and adult members of the family) helped them with the household chores. In addition, WE six said that her "two children are very excited about my getting a job and since then they have been very co-operative. They take care of themselves to go to school. Prepare their breakfast and lunch and I come back from work to prepare supper". Furthermore, WE 15 stated that her neighbour's children had been very helpful in taking care of her children for her while she was away to work. According to her, the neighbour's children "help me to take my children to and from school and they stay in their house until I come back from work". Also, WE eight admitted that her children were small and therefore she had to leave whatever she could not do during the weekdays until the weekends. In relation to the above question, the women were further asked a question whether or not their workload at home was reduced after they started the job. Twenty of the women expressed that their work at home has reduced because other household members do the chores while they are away to work. WE eight said that she was always very busy with household



chores in the past but after she started the job, she has had to close her eyes to the minor things and delegated certain work to her children and relatives. Also, WE14, 16, 19 23, and 25 stated that they spent much time at work and were usually very tired when they would come back from work hence it was difficult to embark on other work on arrival. WE 23 added that "a lazy person is identified in his or her job, therefore I give it all that it takes". The women were further asked whether they were able to sleep more or less since they started the job. One of them said that she was having her normal hours of sleep and noted that they were fourteen in the house hence the adults who were not working filled the gap for her. Five of the women said that they were sleeping more because they were always very tired by the time they got home from work. However, the others (76%) said that they had to sleep less due to accumulation of housework and the need to rise early to prepare the children for school and organize for their own work too.

The women were asked if they were receiving support from their partners. It was obvious that the single mothers were facing a lot of challenges in rearing the children. WE one was emotionally stressed as she declared that she "had nobody to help her to take care" of her five children. In the same way WE seven stated "the father of my children had not been helping and it was impossible to force out money from his pocket". Three of the women stated that they were only receiving maintenance of R150, R180 and R200 respectively and the burden of feeding and clothing the children fell on them. One of them further added "...I am therefore forced to work to meet the needs of my children". Furthermore one of the women said that she had to look for the job because "the job of my children's father is not consistent". Another woman also said "I expect my spouse to care for us all and act like a father and a husband but soon as he gets his pension, he goes to drink and comes back to complain of lack of money". In addition, WE 17 explained that her spouse had other children from his previous marriage hence as much as he was trying, he could not meet the obligations in the home.

#### 5.4.5. INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN ORGANIZATIONS

As earlier stated in chapter one, women constitute the group at the bottom of the ladder, they lack access to land and even where they gain access to land, their right to the land is limited as it depends on their link to a man. It is also a generally accepted fact that women have the right to participate in political and economic decision-making to develop their full capability for their own benefit in the home and society. The Women and Development Approach (section 3.2.3) therefore suggested that women should be seen as a homogenous group for whom to organize small-scale projects to develop an active voice. On this note the women employees were asked whether or not they belonged to any women organization.

While 21 of the women employees stated that they did not belong to any organization, the remaining four (16%) women said that they belonged to women's organization in their community. Two of the four women were resident on Table Mountain, one in Mophela and the other in Sankotshe. The four women belonged to the AVBOB funeral parlour. AVBOB funeral parlour organizes for payments of certain amount of money per month from its members. The members are given forms to fill to indicate the members of their families and agree to pay a stipulated amount of money monthly. In case of death in the family, AVBOB is responsible for a percentage of the expenses and organizes for the burial of the deceased. Thus, it is a way of putting money aside in the family for the purpose of defraying the cost of burial in case of death in the family. If the member is loyal to the payments, much of the financial burden is borne by AVBOB in case of death in the family.

Asked when they joined the organization, WE 16 and WE 23 stated that they joined the organization about a year earlier while WE five joined only six months earlier and WE nine had been a member for almost two years. The women were

further asked about the person who introduced them to the organizations. WE five and 16 said their sisters introduced them to the organization, WE 23 by a friend and WE nine by her cousin.

The women were further asked a question about what attracted them to the organizations. WE nine stated that 'death is inevitable' and emphasized the need to prepare for one's funeral as 'nobody knows when it is going to happen'. She said 'most weekends these days are spent in burying one person or the other in the community'. Hence her cousin, who has been a member for four years, advised that since she got a job, there was every sense in her putting aside a sum of R25 a month for such a programme.

Table 10: Women employees' involvement in organization/society

	Frequency	%
Yes	4	16
No	21	84
Total	25	100

WE five and 16, in the same vein, stated that they were advised to join the funeral parlour in view of the huge amount needed by family members in case of a death in the family. The mode of operation of the organization is that once they have been members for a period of ten months, most of the financial responsibilities will be borne by the organization in case of a death. The four women said that the amount of money they pay monthly is not much (R20 -28) for the benefit of having a befitting funeral.

The above are the findings from the study. The objective of the Working for Water Programme - improve the quality of living of the marginalized section of the society in which women constitute the majority has been presented. In

addition, responses from the women employees of the Project, their household members, the community members, the contractors and the Project leader have also been presented. Among the findings are:

1. Most of the women employees had no source of regular income but had relied on relatives and grants for living. Hence, they were living in abject poverty and could not provide for or satisfy the basic needs in their households before they got the jobs with the Project.
2. The project draws on a range of age groups with almost all the women less than 50 years of age.
3. Although more women than men were employed by the Working for Water in keeping to the objective, few women were at the management positions.
4. Single women constituted the highest percentage of the women employees while others were, divorced, married, widowed or living with their partners.
5. The women employees had some form of education with the majority having only junior primary education and none having secondary education.
6. Job creation by the Working for Water project has helped to improve the lives of the women employees.
7. Few of the women employees had attended the training programme organized by the Project during which the aims and objectives of the Project were introduced and they were taught how to use the implements and chemicals for weed killing.

8. Parents, spouses and the relatives of the women employees were involved in decision-making in the households, with parent decision-makers in the greatest percentage of cases. However, there was an increase in the number of women who reported being solely responsible for decision-making after being employed by the Project.
9. Men did not raise any opposition to their women working and earning income but many of them had no financial obligation towards the maintenance of the households.

## CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

“All the evidence tells us that not to empower women is a tragically missed opportunity – not to create a more just, but also a more prosperous society. Empowering women, by the same token, means ensuring their full participation in every aspect of development”

[The President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn 1995  
cited in Bisnath (undated):1]

This chapter presents an analysis of the findings in the previous chapter. It seeks to understand whether or not there are convergences between the approaches to development earlier discussed in chapter three and the perceptions of empowerment and development made by the respondents. Issues identified by the respondents are also dealt with.

### 6.1 UNDERSTANDING OF EMPOWERMENT

The empowerment approach emerged as a result of concerns raised by feminists in view of inequality of life benefits experienced by women (the deprived section) in private, economic and political spheres hence the determination to correct the image of women as victims of modernization (see section 3.2.5). This is in consonance with the objective of the Working for Water to employ and train people (women, youth and disabled people) appropriately from the disadvantaged communities (see section 1.3.). However, while the emphasis of the empowerment approach was women, the Working for Water Programme stipulated three categories of disadvantaged people – women, youth and the disabled. Although no question related to the physical fitness of the women

employees, observation during the fieldwork reveals that none of the women was disabled.

Furthermore, empowerment focuses on equipping women to gain mastery over their lives, access to better quality of life and attaining their desired level in all spheres without prejudice to sex and gender (section 3.2.5.). This resonates with the understanding of empowerment by the women employees and the Project leader in their responses. They emphasized being free to live their lives the way they desired, having equal opportunities like the men in workplace and community and the ability to make choices about what they desire to do. Most of the women did not have these opportunities, as they expressed dissatisfaction with their conditions of living before they secured the jobs with the Project. As such, they did not see themselves as financially empowered women. However, for most of the women, typical responses to their conditions after securing the job shows that changes have taken place for the better and that they could intervene in the financial aspects of their lives. The women employees stated that they were able to do things that they could not do previously. The project leader, the contractors and community members also bore testimony to the fact that the living conditions of the women employees and their households have improved over time. The stakeholders' responses show that the women employees were able to do things that they could not do prior to their involvement in the Project.

In addition, the study shows that only four (16%) of the women employees belonged to an organization – AVBOB funeral service. The remaining 84% did not belong to any organization. The formation of women's organizations is capable of facilitating the empowerment of women as they can be oriented to developing structure that reflect women's needs, interests and behavioural preferences. Although this organization is not a women-only organization, the women stated that they joined it in case of any death in the family.

Davies (1993) states that the outcome of empowerment depends on what is fed

into it while Shiffman and Motley (1989) stress that empowerment involves ability to make informed choices and making meaningful contribution to the choices. However, a situation where adult women are bound by traditions in such a way that they are not free to spend hard-earned money as they desire cannot be said to be empowering. While some of the women made decisions on how they spent their incomes, some still needed to consult older members of their households. The inability to independently plan on or spend the income might be responsible for the low percentage (20%) of the women who keep bank accounts. It is expected that women, who had been living under abject poverty and frustration before they secured the jobs coupled with management training they attended, would be competent enough to spend their earnings wisely and they should be so encouraged and nurtured by heads of the households. Also, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) stress that empowerment is the key to stimulating growth and development. They suggest that for any meaningful development to take place, the concerned people must be given equal access to resources. This implies that the targeted people need to be educated and informed about the expected desired changes. This study reveals that empowering women was the main objective of the Working for Water Project and accordingly more women than men were employed to clear the invasive alien plants. In addition, the women employees used the same implements in clearing the invasive alien plants as the men.

However, the study reveals that fewer women than men were involved in management position. The project leader stated that out of the 28 area managers at the regional level, only six (21%) were women. In addition, only four of the 12 contractors were women. This low percentage of women in the management position can be attributed to their low level of education. As earlier stated, education or training is essential for communities to gain mastery over their lives. In section 5.2.3, it was noted that only five (20%) of the women had senior primary education while 12% of the women employees (three women) had no formal education and the majority of the women (40%) had junior primary



education. Higher levels of education are required to function at management positions and where illiterates or semi-illiterates constitute the majority of a population, the management positions would be vacant and hence filled by more qualified personnel. Sen and Grown (1987) in their strategy for empowerment stressed that women's empowerment can be attained through consciousness raising and education. There is the need to encourage women's education not only to primary or matriculation level, but giving bursaries and scholarships to deserving female learners especially from the disadvantaged communities as an incentive in the Universities and Technicons.

One of the objectives of the Working for Water Project was preferentially employing a workforce of at least 60% women. The right of women to participate in income generating projects is crucial but it is not enough. Empowering women entails involving them in decision-making, policy formulation and administration of projects and becoming equal participants in, and beneficiaries of all areas of economic and political activities (Commission on Gender Equality, 1998). This study shows that although more women than men were involved as labourers, only ten (area managers and contractors) were in the decision-making level. Several studies have shown that women generally participate minimally in decision-making compared to their male counterparts (Foner 1982 cited in Garba, 1999; Muna 1991 cited in Garba, 1999; Odubogun 1995 cited in Garba, 1999). Even where they participate, their level of participation is insignificant on the major decisions made by the bodies to which they belong. Batliwala (1994 cited in Bisnath undated) argued that successful empowerment strategies require the direct involvement of women in the planning and implementation of projects. In a highly patriarchal society like South Africa where men dominate the core decision-making organs, there is an obvious and pressing need for the empowerment of women. State policy must therefore be directed towards creating incentives and support structures for women so as to be able to participate effectively in the formulation of policy and decision-making of such projects whose outcomes affect their lives.

In addition, the Project organized training programmes for its workers and a creche was provided to lessen the burden of nursing mothers, however, the provision of one creche was inadequate for use in six settlements that are not spatially contiguous. If women must be empowered, the provision of their basic needs to function effectively and efficiently is a requisite.

## 6.2. UNDERSTANDING OF CAPACITY BUILDING

There is a common understanding that empowerment focuses on people and building capacity in them through training. This reverberates with the objective of the Working for Water Project to train the women, encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills among the labourers and supervisors to enable them enter the job market with appropriate skills (section 1.3.). The study reveals that most of the women employees (88%) have one form of education and 12% had not attended school at all. Only 20% had high school exposure and only two of these five had matriculation certificates. This implies that most of the women are semi-illiterate. Although the Working for Water Project aims at educating and training workers to enhance capacity building, illiteracy is a major constraint to empowerment and employment. Observations during the interview reveal that there was no organized adult education for people in the area. When the project leader was asked a question regarding the training and the women employees, he reiterated that all the women were involved in the training course (in isiZulu) but the training in First Aid was not made compulsory for them. He further stated that training includes water conservation, management skills, childcare facilities and HIV/AIDS awareness. However, only seven (28%) of the women had attended the training courses. This comprises of five of the women that joined the Project in 1998 and two of those that joined in 1999. The other women that joined the Project later indicated that they did not undergo any formal training. This means that the majority of the women interviewed had not yet participated in the training. As earlier stated, except those that have been earlier trained are

training these women on the job, the exercise may not produce the expected result of building capacity in the participants. There is therefore the need for continuous and consistent training of the workers and there should be a mechanism of evaluating the impact of the training programme on productivity in the Project.

One of the findings of the study is the increasing number of workers in the Project over years. The project leader expressed that the Project has been motivating for an increase in the number of workers, especially women. This correlates with the objective of the Working for Water Project of preferentially employing a workforce of at least 60% women. Although there was a drop in the 1999 figures, this might be attributed to the challenges of recruitment and delays in salary payments, which many of the women employees complained about. The success of training is determined by its application in the desired or related fields. Furthermore, this study reveals that apart from the financial empowerment, the women employees of the Project had acquired the skill of managing their lives better. Most of the women stated that they were able to do things faster and better than they could before they got the job and they would be better at doing things at the end of their employment with the Project. Experience over years would help the women in their level of productivity as they do almost the same work every year and they become experienced. In this regard, the contractors were asked a question in relation to their satisfaction with the women's level of productivity. Five of the contractors indicated that they were satisfied with the women's level of performance. Only one contractor indicated that he would prefer to train a new set of workers, as he was not satisfied with their level of performance. This suggests that most of the contractors were satisfied with the level of performance of the women. This might be attributed to the fact that they had acquired skills from the training programmes organized by the Project and were able to manage resources in their primary assignment of getting rid of the invasive alien plants. The women also concluded that they would be able to start some small businesses on their own when they might have

finished with the Project. Although only seven (28%) of the women employees were found to have participated in the training programme, they stand the chance of starting small business on their own having undergone the training. However, only two of the women employees indicated that they engaged in petty trading after hours in order to augment their income. Thus, the engagement of the women employees in the Working for Water Project is not a means to an end rather, it is an end to means of creating livelihood.

Furthermore, when the women were asked about the transferability of the acquired skills after exiting the project, many of the women said that they would be able to transfer the knowledge of what they have learnt. One of the women said that the skills might not be related to what she plans to do after exiting the Project while another woman stated that she was getting old and as a result, the acquired skills are not going to be applicable. Since the training programme incorporates water conservation, management skills, childcare, HIV/AIDS awareness and First aid, all of which are essential in building households, it is expected that the training will help them in the home and community as stated by the Project leader. In order to affirm the assertion of the women who said that they have benefited from the training, the contractors were asked a question in relation to the women's level of productivity. Three of the contractors felt that the level of productivity was the same as men, two felt that the men's level of productivity was higher than women's while one indicated that the women's level of productivity was higher than the men's.

With regard to the structure in the organization, the study reveals that there are more women than men in the Project and this meets up with the proposal of the Project of employing more women than men in order to alleviate women's predicament (section 1.3.). The study also shows that there was no strict division of men and women into sections except where it was perceived that men were needed in certain places. Only one of the contractors indicated that the men working with him did the spraying while the women fetched water when

necessary. All the other contractors (83%) indicated that their workers (men and women) all did the work of cutting down trees, clearing bushes, applying chemicals, spraying weeds, cutting weeds and fetching water. This also resonates with the Women in Development, Gender and Development, and Empowerment Approaches (sections 3.2.2, 3.2.4 and 2.2.5) of empowering men and women to participate in the implementation of projects. In order to affirm this, the contractors were asked whether or not they would like to continue with the same set of workers, five of the contractors (83%) said they were happy working with the set of labourers that they had and would like to continue to work with them. However, one of the contractors (17%) indicated that he would need to train new set of workers afresh. In comparing the level of productivity of both men and women, five contractors said that they were satisfied with the level of productivity of the employees working with them.

### 6.3. BASIC NEEDS OF WOMEN

South Africa is a country with the highest levels of inequities in wealth and access to basic services in view of the legacy of apartheid (Mosaka-Wright, 1995). The Basic Needs Approach focuses on meeting the basic needs of people as earliest possible through effective use of local resources and using small-scale labour-intensive technologies (Ghai, 1977 and Thomas and Velthouse 1990). It is aimed at helping the marginalized section of the society (section 3.2.1.). This is in agreement with the objectives of the Working for Water of caring for the disadvantaged communities and making the programme labour-intensive by using local tools (section 1.3.). Although the interview did not ask the women to stipulate the instruments that they used in the process of clearing the invasive alien plants, some of the women, the contractors and the Project leader mentioned that the workers are trained to use local tools such as saws, cane knives and hatchets. This was to absorb more people in the Project and thereby making it labour-intensive. This also resonates with the Basic Needs Approach of

redistribution of income and employment of poor people (section 3.2.1.).

One of the most outstanding findings of the study is that the Working for Water Project has been very helpful in meeting the basic needs of the women in the study area. Most of the women employees stated that were it not for the project which employed them, they would have remained under abject poverty, depressed, distressed, and unable to satisfy their needs as well as those of their children. When asked how they felt after they started working for the Project, many of them responded with smiles to attest to the fact that they were very happy. The community members as well as the members of the households of the women employees of the Project also confirmed the women's responses. In addition, the Project leader and the contractors had the following typical responses "the women are happier that they can live better lives, buy uniforms and books for their children to enhance regular attendance in their schools, can now buy clothes and shoes for themselves and their children and eat better meals... they are now more confident apart from the knowledge being gained to adequately manage available resources." All these responses indicate that the Project has helped the women employees to meet their financial obligations towards themselves, their children and the members of their households.

The study further reveals that most of the women employees were either heads or breadwinners of their households. As earlier stated (section 2.3), Malatsi (1991) had estimated that women head 57% of the rural households and if they would not work, 40% of households would fall below the poverty line. As seen earlier (section 5.2.5), only two of the 25 women employees had no children to support however, all of them had members of their households to support. As earlier mentioned, Coolidge (1994) in her study of American families, pointed out that women have entered the workforce largely because of women's rising labour market opportunities, the need for a second income so as to keep up with the rising cost of living, the change in attitude about the role of women in the household and the reduced discrimination against women. For most of the

women in this study, the main reason for their involvement in paid-job was meeting their household needs and sustaining their children. Generally, the priority of women is their children but no matter how much a mother loves her children she would be constrained to give high quality care if she is poor, oppressed, illiterate, uninformed and unhealthy. Many of the women lamented that they would have loved to take better care of their children (better food on the table, better clothes and shoes) if their financial status were improved.

#### 6.4. POWER RELATIONS AND HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS

A great majority of women in the rural area live in unacceptable conditions of poverty due to various causes (structural, local, national and international). Conflicts, displacement of people and environmental degradation have further undermined the capacity of governments to meet the basic needs of their populations. The trend therefore is the increased poverty of women. Migration of men into major towns for jobs and the consequent changes in family structures place additional burden on women especially those who have many dependants. In addition to economic factors, gender roles that limit women's access to power, education, training and other resources are contributory to women's poverty. The Basic Needs approach to development stresses the need for the removal of mass deprivation, eradicating dependency and promoting autonomous control by empowering the communities (section 3.2.1.). In addition, the Gender and Development approach to development emphasizes the need for men and women to change in their relationship regarding their rights and responsibilities at home (section 3.2.4). This corresponds with the Growth Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) on which the principles of the Reconstruction and Development Programme were based. The study reveals that because most of the women were financially dependent on their spouses and relatives before they started working for the Project, they had to adapt to the situations in their households. The dependency did not afford them the opportunity to make

choices on what they actually wanted and many of them were not involved in decision-making in the households. However, when they started the work with the Project and started earning an income, a greater percentage of them were able to organize themselves and make choices as regards what to buy for themselves, the children and the other household members like food, clothing, shoes and other necessities of life. Consequently, they became 'people that matter' in decision-making in their households. Most of the women indicated that they kept their own earnings and as a result they were able to plan their expenses and to take decisions on their earnings. However, a few, especially those that were living with their parents, indicated that they still consulted with their parents before making decisions on how to spend their earnings. One of the women also indicated that in spite of her earning an income she still has to consult her mother-in-law in decision-making. One of the women further indicated that her aunt and uncle were still involved in household decisions. This shows elements of truth in the working hypothesis (section 1.5) that the creation of jobs alone is not an indicator of the empowerment and development of rural women. It also confirms another hypothesis that patriarchal relations in the home limit development as other people (relatives and in-laws) were responsible for decision-making in 60% of the households even after the women got jobs with the Project. This is similar to the report of the CGE (1998) about a woman who was left to live with her in-laws by the husband in rural Ngulumbi after he got a job in the mines. The bed was taken away from her without notice and she would be allowed to use it only when her husband was present (about three or four times in a year).

Furthermore, five of the women indicated that they were keeping their money in the banks. While four of them stated that they opened their bank accounts in their names, the other one confirmed that she was using her sister's bank account. The women stated that having the bank accounts has helped them to manage their finances better. A similar study of women's empowerment programme in Nepal showed that in less than two years, the rural women had



learnt to read and all Women Empowerment Programme (WEP) women had begun saving actively (WEP 2000 submission). The problem of empowerment goes beyond earning an income and productivity in workplace. It incorporates the ability to gain access to information, education and exercising one's right in keeping to the freedom, dignity and personal values that make for living. During the interview, the Project leader stated that the women were encouraged to open bank accounts for the payment of their earnings. However, the women considered travelling over a distance of about four kilometres and being on the queue for long to withdraw as little money as R440 was a waste of time, money and energy. Moreover, delays in the payments discouraged them from opening such accounts. More women should be encouraged to keep bank accounts, as this will help them to manage their finances better.

Batliwala (1994 cited in Bisnath undated) further reiterates that empowerment is a process of challenging existing power relations and of gaining control over the sources of power. In this study, the changing attitude of women's role in the household is a well-acknowledged fact. Women no longer sit back at home and expect men to provide food for the household members. The women, especially the single parents who are also heads of their households are involved in playing the same role of fending for their households as men. This resonates with the Gender and Development approach, which encourages changes for both men and women in their relationship as regards their rights and responsibilities in the home. The goal therefore is to challenge the patriarchal ideology of women subordination and thereby transform the structure that encourages gender discrimination and social inequality in areas of education, employment and other resources. Also, the understanding of gender and socio-cultural factors impacts gender potential or capacity and household dynamics. The socio-cultural dynamics in terms of who contributes and what is contributed have profound effects on opinions expressed by individuals in the household. This was the expression of one of the women employees who said that she is brought into the decision-making of the household because of her financial contribution and fears

that she will be back to her former passive role in decision-making if she loses the job.

## 6.5. WOMEN EMPLOYEES AND HOUSEHOLD CHORES

The study also reveals that many women have to balance the demands of marriage, parenting and care giving in their households. Among the twenty-five women employees under study, six were widowed, twelve were single (never married at all or single parents), two were living together with their partners, one was a divorcee and four were married. The study further shows that 23 of the women employees had children to care for in their households. However, of the 64 children in the households, six were less than eight years and were not attending schools yet. This might imply extra burden on their mothers, as they have to look for a caregiver in the household or outside. Although the Project leader stated that child-care facilities were made available for the nursing mothers, only one crèche is inadequate to take care of children from six settlements in view of the long distances to be covered.

Furthermore, the increasing number of women (mothers) in work places has created conflicts in the households. This has led to finding alternatives to work that are traditionally done by the stay-at-home mothers. When the women employees were asked a question in relation to who helped them with the household chores since they started working for the Project, they indicated that they were still involved in the household chores. Many of them expressed that they had to wake up earlier to do some of the chores and left others until after the working hours. This places more stress and tension between work and household responsibilities, which have been noted to be on the increase. This study further reveals that balancing work and household responsibilities remains an issue touching the lives of women in their roles as parents, spouse and caregiver. The study further shows that most of the women employees (23)

relied on the household members, especially their mothers, sisters and brothers, uncles, aunts and grown up children to do their chores while they were away to work. One of the women stated that she has to depend on her two children (less than 15 years old) to take care of themselves for school and prepare their breakfast and lunch. Also, since their relatives could not do some of the house chores, some of the women said that they had to leave these chores until the weekend when they did not work for the Project. Others had to rely on the third parties such as neighbours, day-care workers and housekeepers to do some of their chores for them. For instance, two of the women who did not have grown up people to do such work said that their neighbour's children helped them. One of the women who used day-care workers expressed that it was 'not convenient for me financially but I cannot help it, otherwise I will be jobless'.

Managing a household is an important and a time-consuming task. Sometimes it conflicts with the demands of workplace especially where both parents or a single parent is working. While some of the women indicated that they continued to have their normal sleeping hours, some of them complained that they have been sleeping less after starting the work with the Project. This could be explained by the accumulation of work in the household with no extra hands to help the women. Some of the women explained that they had to leave some of the household chores for the weekend since they had nobody to help them during the week.

## **6.6. SUPPORT FROM PARTNERS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES**

The single parents (mothers) who work are not only faced with the responsibility of raising their children sometimes without the assistance of the fathers or another parent in the household, but also do so with much less income than a two-parent household. There is disintegration in the family structure as this study reveals that out of the 25 women employees, only four (16%) were married and

two were living with their parents. Others (76%) were single, divorced or widowed. The single mothers constitute 48%. Although the women were not asked for reasons for their single state, section 5.2.4 shows that 19 (%) were de facto heads of their households. This may be related to the reasons of out-migration of male heads, other wife (wives) living in other places, no permanent partner or decision to remain single, as given by Archer and Lloyd (1985). Single parents (mothers) often face both a "time crunch" and a "money crunch" (Coolidge, 1994). Such mothers in the study area testified that they were facing a lot of challenges. Even where the fathers were helping by paying for the maintenance of the children, "how much can R150 or R200 do in a month to fend for a child?" one of them asked. Commitment can not be full, as the relationship might not be legally binding on the fathers of the children, especially if the men (the fathers) have not paid the 'lobola' (dowry). These imply that most of the financial burdens of the households are borne by the mothers. To some of these women, the lack of financial support forced them to look for a job. Their responses to the question "Why are you working" helped to affirm this as most of the responses read, "to meet my children's needs... to feed the kids... to support my children..., maintenance ran out...". One of the women employees lamented that she expected the spouse to "care for us all and act like a father and a husband but soon as he takes his pension, he goes to drink and comes back to complain of lack of money". In addition, commitments to other children and household members by male spouses limit their financial support. In this regards, one of the women stated that her husband was committed to the children of his previous marriage limited his financial support. This supports the second working hypothesis that skill training does not change power relations in the home. Since there is no evidence to support that the men did not want their women to work it could be inferred that they (the men) were happy that the women were working. Moreover, the earnings of the women were an addition to whatever the household incomes were previously. Also, one of the three women employees who indicated that their spouses jointly took decisions with them on their earnings and expenses in the households said that she was 'cut-off' in decision-

making before she got the job. Incidentally, none of the women indicated that their partners complained because they were working for pay.

## 6.7. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

The analysis was done based on places of residence of the women employees. This was done to ascertain whether or not their geographic location affected their productivity or lifestyle. Each contractor was designated to a specific working area in the catchment area. The working areas were separated by a few kilometres. Thus, each contractor and the employees were selected by the communities to conform to the guideline of securing jobs for the poorest and most marginalized members of the society for their social and economic upliftment. The study however revealed that it did not matter where they lived as the distance from the work site did not affect their productivity or lifestyle. Since the women employees who lived on the Table Mountain had their transport organized for them by their contractor, there was no significant variation in their level of productivity based on their place of residence.

The study also reveals that 40% of the women employees were resident on the Table Mountain. This might be explained by the rich soil, less risk of flooding which prevents destruction of properties and facilitation of gardening. Four of the women employees from the Table Mountain stated that they were involved in gardening before they started working for the Project.

The study further shows that the work sites from the women's places of residence is between one and three kilometres except for those living on the Table Mountain whose travel time is about 40 minutes. Even though the project was not an initiative of the community, observations during the interviews show that the women employees, contractors and community members applaud the programme. This can be attributed to the income realized by the women and

contractors or that they see it as belonging to them and working effectively for it. It can also be seen as preventing the women from abuse of city life while looking for jobs. This resonates with the definitions of the World Bank (1975) and Akinbode (1983) of rural development as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural people and the satisfaction to remain in the rural village.

## 6.8. PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN EMPLOYEES

One of the problems highlighted by both the women employees and the contractors was the issue of delays in payment of their salaries. As much as the women employees were fascinated and excited at getting the job, which prevents them from the boring routine of housekeeping, unnecessary visitation of neighbours and the dependence on relatives for daily living, they were disgusted about the delays in the salaries. One of the women employees stated that she was just working without knowing exactly when she would be paid for the work that she had diligently done and that the delay did not help her in budgeting for her household. In addition, one of them affirmed that although the salary would eventually come, she could not adequately plan and the household members had to hang on until the payday.

Another problem that was highlighted was the salary itself. Most of the women felt that the salary was small and they would be happy if they could get an increase. All the women except one had been involved in casual jobs such as domestic work, bead work, gardening as well as cleaning in their own houses before they got the job with Working for Water Project. Consequently they were happy that they could secure such a job that would fetch them R440 that was later increased to R484 a month. However, some of the women lamented that the salary could not adequately support them and their households. In view of this, two of the women stated that they had to resort to petty trading at the

weekends in order to 'make ends meet'.

Robberts (1996) in his definition identified three basic principles with sustainable development as futurity, quality of life and equity. The later two have been addressed by the approaches of Empowerment, Gender and Development as well as the Basic Needs. However, the question of futurity has not yet been address by the Working for Water Project in view of the external assistance it receives. Although no question to the respondents related directly to the sustainability of the Project, some of the women expressed the fear that they would go back to their former status of poverty, dependence and frustration if they lose their jobs. The problems identified may threaten the continued functioning of the Working for Water Project and considering the huge amount that has been pumped into it, it may end up like many of the 'white elephant' projects that started well and later went into extinction. In this realization, the Working for Water Programme has emerged with a proposal, which intends to continue to address the continuation of the Project and its workers even after they have exited the Programme. Short-term empowerment of women would have achieved nothing, as the development from it will be short-lived. There is the need to look into the future such that the cycle of poverty can be completely broken among the rural people. Thus, another area of study in empowering women is the exit strategy and the implication on the empowerment and development of the rural women.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the thesis by providing a summary of the major findings in relation to the aims, objectives and hypotheses set out for the study. Recommendations and possible policy implications will also be addressed with a view to enhancing the empowerment and development of rural women as well as stimulating further thought or studies on these issues.

### 7.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The world economic system and general idea about work have been shaped by the experiences of men in the job market hence a person is accepted as working if he or she is able to bring in an income or wage. However much of women's work is not accounted for in statistics. Women's contribution to the economic growth should not be measured monetarily but should take into account the hours they spend in managing the resources in and around the home, and in making the household members feeling welcome after the day's job.

The focus of the World Bank in promoting gender equality and enhancing economic efficiency is a right step in the right direction. In its policy report for Beijing in 1995, inequality was identified as a major constraint to high-level productivity in the society, tending to slow down economic growth (Bisnath, undated).

The women employees cannot remain in the Project for the rest of their lives. One of the women interviewed stated that she was getting old and this implies that she was running out of physical energy to perform her duties. The study could not address the plan of the Working for Water project in relation to the exit programme it might have for the workers to enhance their continued empowerment. Incidentally, the Project called for submission of a proposal for an exit programme in May 2001 and it is hoped that this Programme will be able



to work out strategies of keeping and improving on the tempo of empowerment of the women.

The involvement of women in the paid labour force and a range of occupations in the Working for Water Project is a step forward in amending societal imbalances and is highly commendable. More women should, however, be encouraged in management positions. Successful empowerment of women will require their direct involvement and participation in planning, decision-making and implementation of projects. Their involvement will encourage changes in the consciousness (having a sense of belonging) and identification of need or target areas for changes, analysis of actions and evaluation of outcomes. This will promote higher level of productivity.

The government of every developing country takes cognisance of the human and physical resources in the rural areas and the consequent need for balanced development (Mabogunje, 1980). South Africa is a middle income developing country with an abundant supply of resources (The World Factbook 2002 – South Africa). Effective planning must take cognisance of women's needs and address their particular needs and interest. In addition, there is the need to incorporate the aspirations of the rural women and motivate them through planning policies. Planning must ensure that women are involved and represented at the policy research, planning and implementation levels. Their participation in the programmes and projects that affect them give them a sense of belonging and the determination to succeed in such projects.

Furthermore, there is the need for radical improvement and provision of basic infrastructure such as pipe-borne water, postal, health and educational facilities. The provision of these basic human needs is most desirable and very urgent in order to stem the wave of rural out-migration of young school leavers and able-bodied people (especially men) for 'greener pastures' in the cities thereby destabilizing the family structure. In addition, the government should focus on

resources, production and the need to educate the people in rural communities. An informed people is an empowered people and they are capable of exercising their right in keeping with their freedom, dignity and personally held values.

Since the rural people are engaged in primary activities such as farming, fishing, mining and forestry, there is the need to encourage rural women to form clubs and organizations and pull their resources together to set up small scale industries. The expansion of women's opportunities in ways that would enhance their productivity and earning potential will raise their standard of living and contribute to better economic performance and family welfare. In this vein, Sen and Grown (1987) and Antrobus (1989) had argued that women's organization have the most potential to facilitate the empowerment of women as they develop new structure and cultures that reflect women's needs, interests and behavioural preferences. This will create more jobs for rural women and thereby enhance economic growth. Empowering women does not mean gaining power over men, rather it is gaining mastery over their lives and environment. Rural women should therefore be encouraged to increase their capabilities and capacities to make life choices and be self-reliant. In addition, there is the need for the improvement and maintenance of existing roads that link the settlements. This will facilitate the evacuation of agricultural products from areas of production to the consumers.

The condition of living of the majority of the women is degraded by illiteracy that they can best be regarded as victims of development process. Most women have no access to physical resources such as land and even where they have it is attached to a man - husband, indunas, son or father. The government should encourage women to participate and improve their shares in resources, land and employment to effect dramatic changes in their conditions of living.

It is important to note that empowering women does not necessarily mean disempowering the men. Rather, it is a key to a higher level of men's

empowerment. As men and women work together, it is more certain that men's and women's issues will be addressed and no party will be left out in development programmes. In this vein, Batliwala (1994 cited in Bisnath undated) argues that women's empowerment liberates and empowers men both in material and psychological terms hence, it affects everyone involved. Thus, the proverb "Behind every successful man is a successful woman" can be reverted as "Beside every empowered woman is an empowered man" and this can be realized in the cognitive, social, political and economic spheres of life. Going by the earlier definition of empowerment as a process by which women (the powerless) gain better control over their lives, this will entail giving them collective strength and voice as well as protecting them from all forms of exploitation in the society. Batliwala (1994 cited in Bisnath undated) describes this as moving women from absolute lack of power (removing the barriers of illiteracy, lack of skill, information and knowledge about market, job opportunities, self-esteem and self-confidence) to the other extreme of absolute power. This will go a long way in identifying their practical and strategic need, stimulating growth at the grass root level by helping them to gain access to physical resources.

## 7.2. CONCLUSION

A major pre-occupation of governments and agencies all over the world is the reduction of poverty and deprivation, and an improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the rural dwellers of which the majority are women. This study was carried out in a realistic rural tradition by employing a combination of methods to solicit data on the socio-economic and demographic lives of the women employees of the Working for Water Project. The aim of the study was to assess the level of involvement of women in the management of the Working for Water Project and the extent to which job creation can enhance the empowerment of rural women. This section now turns to assess the extent to which the women employees have been involved in the Project and consequently empowered.

The concept of empowerment of women relates to helping them gain access to factors of production and gaining control over their lives. The analysis of the study area confirms that most of the women employees (92%) were involved previously in unskilled and poorly paid jobs such as gardening, domestic work and craft. Also, they had little job satisfaction, were unskilled and vulnerable before the inception of the Working for Water Project. However, they were happy with getting jobs with the Working for Water Project as it has helped them to meet their financial obligations in the households.

The analysis shows that some of the women are still constrained by socio-cultural factors, as they are still dependent on other people (relatives and in-laws) for decision-making in the households in spite of their earnings. Even where some of the women are involved in decision-making, they stated that losing the job would imply reverting back to their past passive status in the household decision-making. To this end, there is a need to educate the community, especially the men, to remove the socio-cultural barriers for a full emancipation and empowerment of the women.

Also, the programme involves training of the workers to build capacity in them. Many of them stated that they were faster and better at doing their work and the contractors confirmed their satisfaction with the women's level of productivity. Furthermore, the women expressed that the skills acquired in the Project were not only useful in the work place but they would be able to apply them in managing resources in their households and the society after leaving the Project. However, there was a significant proportion of the women who had not attended the initial training programme. There is the need to ensure a continuity of the training programme such that new groups of workers can fully understand the vision and objectives of the Project.

The study has brought into focus that individuals or communities become

empowered when they can do things hitherto out of reach, develop ability to do things which were not previously within their competence and when doors of opportunities, influence and information open which were previously closed. The study shows that the women employees were able to feed their households on better food, wear better clothes and shoes, send their children to school in uniforms and with stationery. The objective of rural development process can only be adequately achieved if the majority of the rural women perceive real improvement in their living conditions and life chances including greater economic opportunities, freedom from oppression and subordination. This will be enhanced by empowering them to manage resources on their own through participation and ensuring that they are committed to the activities and projects undertaken in their areas.

The stakeholders – the women employees, the contractors, the community members, the household members of the women employees and the Project leader confirmed that the effects of the Project are not felt in the physical surroundings of the settlements as depicted by lack of tarred roads, health facilities and pipe-borne water. However, they expressed that the Project has had positive impacts on the women employees and their households as revealed in their improved standard of living.

### 7.3. APPRAISAL AND LIMITATIONS

This study was carried out in a typical rural setting. Data collection included the demographic profile, socio-economic and functional characteristics of the women employees of the Working for Water Project. Qualitative analysis was predominantly used as the study involves socio-cultural aspects of the population. Data collection was by means of questionnaires and interviews, which were audio-taped and triangulated to ensure that the respondents said what they actually meant. The face-to-face individual interviews meant the

respondents were able to express significant aspects of their lives in their own words. Their description of their own life experiences was useful in the assessment of the perception of the various stakeholders on empowerment, the social impacts of the Project on the empowerment and development of women. Hence, the study is both reliable and reproduceable. However, in a study of this nature, the term empowerment (which is the fulcrum of this study) has different meaning to different people from different cultural setting. While it means equal say and participation with men in some cultures, some others may see it as kicking against the cultural norms of the society. In the case of this study, empowerment was assessed in the areas of finance, household decision-making, education, training and participation in organizations. The women's political empowerment was not considered in this study as it is thought to be of secondary value in the assessment of the women's empowerment through job creation by the Project.

Furthermore, the study was undertaken in a rural community. It may therefore be difficult to make a generalization based on these results as representative of urban areas of South Africa where the term empowerment may have different meanings. Hence, there is the need for the study of other areas to ascertain if these findings can be representative of South Africa.

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Appendix i

**CONSENT FORM**

School of Development Studies  
University of Natal  
Durban

Dear respondent,

I am presently undertaking a study on the empowerment of women through job creation in the Umlaas Catchment area of the Working for Water Project in Kwazulu-Natal. This study aims at discovering the dimensions that are significant in the empowerment and development of rural women.

I would like to conduct an interview with you. This interview is expected to last about an hour, as the questions require short answers.

In granting audience for this interview, you are not under any obligation to answer all the questions and you can choose to skip some specific questions. I shall be grateful therefore if you can respond to the questions as honestly as you can.

You remain entirely anonymous and your responses are going to be kept confidential.

A summary of the report on the research findings will be made available to the Project leader and thereafter focus groups will be formed among the contractors and the women employees who participate in the interview in order to discuss the findings of the study.

Thank you very much for your anticipated co-operation in the research.

Yours sincerely

Mary Jolayemi

Appendix ii

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR WOMEN EMLPOYEES OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT**

Case number .....

Date of interview .....

Place of interview .....

**A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. Age.

- 20 – 24
- 25 – 29
- 30 – 34
- 35 – 39
- 40 – 44
- 45 – 49
- 50+

2. Level of education.

- (i) No Schooling
- (ii) Junior Primary
- (iii) Senior Primary
- (iv) High School
- (v) Technicon
- (vi) University

3. Marital Status.

- (i) Single
- (i) Married
- (ii) Divorced
- (iii) Living together
- (iv) Widowed

4. Place of residence.

5. Household roster.

	Name	Sex	Age	level of Education	Relationship with you	Occupation	Job Status
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

6. Is any of these household member a pensioner? Who?
7. Are there additional household members who are not present at this time?
8. If yes

Name	Sex	Age	level of Education	Relationship with you	Occupation	Location	Time spent in household
1							
2							
3							

## B. JOB HISTORY

1. What were you doing before your employment with the Working for Water Project?
2. For how long did you do this?
3. How much on the average did you get from this monthly?
4. Were you receiving money from elsewhere such as relation, grants, pensions?
5. How much was this on monthly basis?
6. Do you still receive this?
7. Did you ever get any job before you started working in this Project?
8. Why did you not take it up?
9. What prompted you to look for job with the Working for Water Project?
10. Why are you working/ why did you decide to work?
11. If you were given the opportunity not to work, would you have preferred it?
12. Which Contractor are you working for? (Give name)
13. When did you first work for this Project?
14. For how many years have you been working for the Working for Water Project?
15. How many times have you worked for the Project?
16. What type of work do you do for the Working for Water Project?
17. Do you do any other paid job apart from the Working for Water Project?
18. Why did you embark on this (these)?
19. When do you do them?

## C. INCOME

1. What is your monthly personal income since you started working in the Project?
2. Has it increased since then? By how much?
3. Do you keep your earnings?
4. Do you have a bank account?
5. Which bank?
6. In whose name was it opened?
7. How do you receive your income (cash, cheque or paid into your bank account)?
8. Do you take decisions on how much you should spend from your earning?
9. If not, who makes the decision?
10. What proportion of your income goes for your personal effects such as clothing, make-up, shoes etc?
11. Do you have accounts for clothing and other personal effects (e.g. at Woolsworth, Edgars, Milady's, Hub)?
12. Since you started working for the Working for Water Project, have you been able to buy gadgets (such as television, stove, music set e.t.c) for

- the household?
13. Earlier, you mentioned that there are .... Children in the household, do you receive maintenance for any of them?
  14. How many of them?
  15. How much do you receive for each of them?
  16. State any other source of income for the household e.g. agricultural activities, grants and remittances
  17. Based on the number of people working for pay and earning from pension, what is the household's monthly income?
  18. What proportion goes for:
    - (i) food
    - (ii) Rent/bond
    - (iii) Water
    - (iv) Fuel/energy
    - (v) Other bills
  19. Does the household have any investment in credit schemes?
  20. Which type of schemes? How much goes for it monthly?

#### **D. PERCEPTION OF EMPOWERMENT**

1. Use five words to describe your self-image before securing job with the working for Water Project.
2. Is this image different now? Are you happy about whom you are now?
3. How?
4. Could it be better? How?
5. What specific changes would be happy to see?
6. In what ways do you think that this can be enhanced in the household?
7. Does the job make a difference in your life? If yes, give examples.
8. What is your perception of "empowerment"?

#### **E. POWER RELATION**

1. Before you started this job with the Working for Water Project, what kind of roles did you play in decision-making in the household? Give examples.
2. Is there any difference in these roles since you started the job? Give examples.
3. Do you think that this may change if you lose this job?
4. Do you own a piece of land in your name?
5. If yes, who decides what you do with the land?
6. Who influences the major decision made in the household on:
  - (a) food
  - (b) clothing for children
  - (c) medical care
  - (d) furniture
  - (e) personal spending for household members
  - (f) income distribution
  - (g) children's needs such as uniforms and books
  - (h) household gadgets such as stove, music set, bedding and kitchen equipment
  - (i) household savings
  - (j) how many children you should have
7. Is every member of the household satisfied with such decisions?
8. Who makes decisions affecting your budgeting and spending in the household before you started this work?
9. What about after you started?

10. Do the younger members influence decision-making in the household? Give examples.
11. Does any member of the household decide on how you spend your income from the Working for Water Project?
12. In what ways does your income from the Working for Water contribute to the overall livelihood/welfare of the household?
13. What roles do you expect the head of the household to play?
14. Do you think that he/she is fulfilling these roles? Give reasons and examples.
15. What roles are expected of you as a wife (mother) in the household? Give examples.
16. Were you able to fulfil these roles before you started this job? Give examples.
17. What about after you started the job?
18. Can you briefly describe how you spend your day before you started this job?
19. Is it different now?
20. If yes, give examples.
21. Is your work at home reduced since you started this job?
22. Do you sleep more or less?
23. Who helps in:
  - (a) making breakfast
  - (b) making lunch
  - (c) making super
  - (d) getting the children ready for school
  - (e) washing and ironing
  - (f) cleaning the house
24. Do you play any role(s) in the household which is (are) traditionally considered appropriate for men? Give examples.
25. Previously you mentioned the relations that live with you, are they involved in decision- making in the household?
26. If yes, give examples.
27. Have you ever had any conflict with them? Give examples of issues of conflict.
28. When was it more frequent (before or after this job)?

#### **F. SKILL ACQUISITION**

1. Have you attended any training since you started working in the Project?
2. How many times?
3. Of what relevance is the training to your productivity in the Project?
4. In what ways have you acquired skills in the Working for Water Project?
5. Do you think that the acquired skills have helped you in becoming self-sufficient especially when you leave this job?

#### **G. MEMBERSHIP IN ORGANIZATION OR SOCIETY**

1. Are you involved in any organization or society in this community (e.g. village council, co-operatives)?
2. What is the name of the society or organization?
3. Who introduced you to the society or organization?
4. When did you join the society or organization?
5. What prevented you from joining earlier?
6. What are the conditions for joining?
7. Did you fulfil the conditions?

8. What are the objectives of the society or organization?
9. How many members are in the society or organization?
10. What is the ratio of men to women in the society or organization?
11. Does the society or organization offer credit facilities?
12. If yes, have you benefited from its credit facilities?
13. How much?
14. How many times?
15. Are women given the same opportunities as men in benefiting from the credit facilities?
16. What is the ratio of men to women in the leadership position?
17. Are there committees in the society or organization? What is the ratio of men to women in the committees?

# INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT

Case Number .....

Date of interview .....

Place of interview .....

1. Who is the head of the household?
2. What is your relationship with the employee of the Working for Water Project (give name)?
3. Household roster

Name	Sex	Age	Level of Education	Relationship with head	Occupation	Job status
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

4. Is any of these household members a pensioner? Who?
5. Are there additional household members who are not present at this time?

1. If yes

Name	Sex	Age	Level of Education	Relationship with head	Occupation	Location	Time spent in in the household
1							
2							
3							

2. Who are the breadwinners in the household? (Male/female).
3. Is there any other member of this household working with the Working for Water Project?
4. How many? What are their relationships with the woman employee (Give name)
5. What do the other household members do to make a living?
6. What changes have you noticed generally among the household members since the woman employee of the Working for Water project (give name) started working in the Project?
7. What changes have you noticed in the lifestyle of the woman employee of the Working for Water Project (give name) since she started the job?
8. Do you think that the job has any influence in her decision-making in the household? How? Give examples.
9. What roles are expected of the head of the household?
10. Who decides on buying food, clothing, furniture and other needs of the household?
11. Is every member of the household satisfied with such decisions? Why or why not?
12. Who pays for

- (i) food
- (ii) rent/bond
- (iii) water?
- (iv) fuel/energy



(v) other bills

13. What roles are expected of the woman employee (Give name)?
14. Does the job affect the tasks that she used to do in the household? How?
15. Does she sleep less now? Does she work less in the household now?
16. Who does the household tasks which she used to do but can longer do ( e.g. cooking, ironing and housekeeping)?
17. Are there differences in the household tasks specifically done by male and female members? Give examples.
18. Do the household members meet occasionally or frequently to discuss issues affecting the welfare of the household? Give examples.
19. Which types of issues do male members in the household specially handle? Give examples.
20. Which types of issues do female members in the household specially handle? Give examples.
21. What effect(s) does (do) the job have on her decision-making in the household?
22. Does the household have any investment in credit schemes?
23. Which type?
24. How much goes for the investment monthly?

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE CONTRACTORS OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT

Case Number .....

Date of interview .....

Place of interview .....

### A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Age ✓

20 - 24

25 - 29

30 - 34

35 - 39

40 - 44

45 - 49

50+

2. Sex

3. Level of education

(i) No schooling

(ii) Junior Primary ✓

(iii) Senior Primary

(iv) High School

(v) Technicon

(vi) University

4. Marital status

(i) Single

(ii) Married ✓

(iii) Divorced

(iv) Living together

(v) Widowed

5. Place of residence

### B. JOB HISTORY

1. What type of job were you doing before you got this contracting job with the Working for Water Project? ✓

2. For how long did you do this? ✓

3. What do you know about the Working for Water Project?

4. What prompted you to look for the contracting job?

5. How did you get the contracting job?

### C. MODE OF OPERATION

1. Briefly describe your mode of operation with the Project

2. How do you get the people who work for you?

3. How many days of the week do they work?

4. How much do you pay each worker in a month?

5. How do you pay the workers- cash, cheque or deposit into their bank accounts?

#### **D. SEX STRUCTURE**

1. How many people are working with you in this catchment area?
2. What is the proportion of men to women in the Project?
3. Are the workers divided into various sections?
4. List the sections.
5. Which of these sections are more dominated by men and which ones by women?
6. What strategy do you employ in dividing the workers?

#### **E. SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR**

1. What type of work are those working with you doing?
2. Are there certain tasks that are specifically done by men only? Which type of tasks?
3. Are there some for women only? Give examples.
4. Are the women involved in tasks which are traditionally regarded as men's tasks? Give examples.
5. Comment on the level of productivity of women as compared to men in the Project.
6. Will you still want to continue with this ratio in the next contract award?
7. Does the remuneration system reflect male/female distinctions?

#### **F. PERCEPTION OF EMPOWERMENT**

1. What do you understand by 'empowerment'?
2. What do you understand by the term 'capacity building'?
3. Given your definition of empowerment, what role(s) do you think the Project is playing in the empowerment of the women employees?
4. How is capacity built in women employees of the Working for Water Project?
5. Do women have access to training?
6. Are the nursing mothers included in such training?
7. Are the training courses made compulsory for every worker? Why or why not?
8. What is the ratio of women to men in the training courses?
9. Are child welfare facilities provided by the Project for women during the training courses? Why or why not?
10. How do the training programmes help in achieving the set goals of the Working for Water Project? Give examples.
11. How is the existing training programme facilitating capacity building and empowerment of the women employees?
12. Do you think that the women are actually benefiting from the training programmes? Give examples.
13. What constraints does the Project have in the empowerment of women- funders, workers, communities e.t.c.?
14. What can you say about the attitudes of the workers and the community towards the empowerment of women?
15. What is your opinion on the issue of the workers acquiring skill and the necessary use of the technology elsewhere?
16. How useful will the acquired skill be after external funding or assistance has been removed?
17. What changes have you noticed since the Working for Water started in this area?
  - (i) among the contractors
  - (ii) among the women employees of the project
  - (iii) among the community members
  - (iv) in the community

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE PROJECT LEADER (MANAGER) OF THE WORKING FOR WATER PROJECT**

✓ Date of interview .....

✓ Place of interview .....

### **A. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT**

- ✓ 1. What do you consider to be the main priorities of the Working for Water Project since its inception?
- ✓ 2. What are the goals of the Project for this community?
- ✓ 3. What do you consider the women's priority since the inception of the Project?

### **B. SEX STRUCTURE**

- 1. How many contractors do you have in this catchment area?
- 2. What is the proportion of men to women contractors in the Project?
- 3. Are the contractors divided into various sections?
- 4. If yes, list the sections
- 5. What strategy do you use in employing the contractors?
- 6. How would you describe the Project's management style in terms of employment stratification?
- 7. How many women are in the leadership or managerial positions e.g. supervisors?
- 8. How would you describe the relationship between the management and the contractors? Give examples.

### **C. PERCEPTION OF EMPOWERMENT**

- 1. What do you understand by the concept 'empowerment'?
- 2. What do you understand by the term 'capacity building'?
- 3. Given your definition of empowerment, what role is the Project playing in the empowerment of women employees?
- 4. How is capacity built in the women employees of the Working for Water Project?
- 5. Do the contractors have access to training courses?
- 6. Do the women have access to training?
- 7. Are the nursing mothers included in such training courses?
- 8. Are the training courses made compulsory for every worker? Why or why not?
- 9. What is the ratio of women to men in the training courses?
- 10. Are child welfare facilities provided by the Project for women during the training courses? Why or why not?
- 11. How do the training programmes help in achieving the set goals of the Working for Water Project? Give examples.
- 12. How is the existing training programme facilitating capacity building and empowerment of the women employees?
- 13. Do you think that the women employees are actually benefiting from the training programmes? Give examples.
- 14. Does capacity building or empowerment have an end point?
- 15. How do you assess/know that capacity has been built in the workers? (give examples).
- 16. What constraints does the Project have in the empowerment of women –

fundes, workers, communities e.t.c.?

17. What can you say about the attitudes of the workers and the community towards the empowerment of women?
18. What is your opinion on the issue of the workers acquiring skill and the necessary use of the technology elsewhere?
19. How useful will the acquired skill be after external funding or assistance has been removed?
20. Do you think that the goal of employing 60% women will assist in achieving greater empowerment of women?
21. What changes have you noticed since the Working for Water Project started in this area?
  - (i) among the contractors
  - (ii) among the women employees of the Project
  - (iii) among the community members
  - (iv) in the community

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Case Number .....

Date of interview .....

Place of interview .....

1. Are you aware of the Working for Water Project in this community?
2. What do you know about the Project?
- ✓ 3. What do you understand by the term "empowerment"?
4. Do you think that the Project has contributed to the empowerment of women in this community? Why or why not?
5. What changes/ improvements have you noticed in terms of local development since the inception of the Project in this community? Give examples.
6. In what ways do you think that these changes have affected the lifestyles of women employees of the Working for Water Project?

### A. COMMUNITY LEADER

7. Are there women organizations in this community?
8. If yes, how many?
9. Do you think that these women organizations are benefiting the community? Why? Give examples.
10. Are the women benefiting from the social and economic development programmes of the community? Give examples.
11. Do the women have the chance of being voted or holding appointed posts in the community? Why or why not? Give examples.
12. As the community leader, do you think that the women are contributing in the identification of priority needs of this community? Why or why not? Give examples.
13. During the course of community development works, are there tasks that are specifically done by men? Why? Give examples.
14. Are there some that are specifically done by women? Why? Give examples.
15. Do the women have access to possessing land titles in the community? Why or why not?
16. If yes, what conditions guarantee their right to land?
17. Do they have access to credit facilities? Why or why not?
18. If yes, what are the conditions for such credit facilities?

### B. BUSINESS OWNERS

7. When did you start operating this business?
8. Have you noticed any increase in your business over the past four years?
9. Which year did you record the best increase?
10. Do you think that the Working for Water Project has contributed to this increase?
11. If yes, in what ways?
12. Will you be willing to employ the women workers of the Project if they apply in your business? Why or why not?

### Appendix III

#### Dates of interviews

April 20 - 28, 2000

May 4 -10, 2000

December 5 -12, 2000