Title of Research Treatise

The investigation of the impact of Household Contractor Project in Ukhahlamba District since 2003 with regards to poverty alleviation among the participating household contractors.

By

Mandlenkosi Victor Ngwendu

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Masters in Development Studies.

At

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

Supervisor: Dr. H. Glass

December 2010
DECLARATION

I declare that the treatise on investigation of the Impact of Household Contractor Project in Ukhahlamba District since 2003 with regards to poverty alleviation among the participating household contractors is my original work. All sources used or referred to have been acknowledged in all respects. This treatise has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for an equivalent or higher qualification at any other education institution.

........................................
Mandlenkosi Victor Ngwendu

December 2010
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract 5

## Chapter 1

### 1. Background 6-7

1.1 The status of Household Contractor Project to date 7-8
1.2 Employment criteria and procedure 8
1.2.1 Employment criteria 8
1.2.2 Employment procedure 8-9

### 2. Problem statement 9-10

### 3. Aims and objectives of the study 10-11

### 4. Significance of the study 11

### 5. Literature review 12-14

### 6. Methodology 15

6.1 Research design 15

### 7. Sample 15

7.1 Household Contractor Sample 15
7.2 Ukhahlamba Roads and Transport District Office Personnel and Local Municipality Officials Sample 16

### 8. Scope and limitations of the study 16

8.1 Scope 16
8.2 Limitations 16

## Chapter 2

### Literature review 17

1. Introduction 17-19
2. Relationship between poverty and development 19-24
3. Poverty alleviation efforts and their impact on the poor 24-25
4. Involvement of the poor in poverty alleviation efforts 26-27
## Chapter 3

**Research methodology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Quantitative and Qualitative research</td>
<td>29-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Quantitative study</td>
<td>31-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Qualitative study</td>
<td>34-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sampling</td>
<td>36-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Population</td>
<td>38-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Data collection</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Challenges that may be pertinent to the process of data gathering</td>
<td>43-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1 Conducting interviews</td>
<td>43-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2 Language</td>
<td>44-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3 Planning and organising</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Questionnaires</td>
<td>46-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Open ended questions</td>
<td>46-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Closed ended questions</td>
<td>47-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>48-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 4

**Findings of the study and challenges facing the Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Key areas of focus</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Poverty alleviation</td>
<td>50-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Creation of job opportunities</td>
<td>58-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Creation of opportunities for skills development</td>
<td>63-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conclusion</td>
<td>65-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Recommendations</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bibliography**

**APPENDIX**
Abstract

This study investigates impact made by Household Contractor Project as a Poverty Alleviation initiative on participating Household Contractors in Ukhahlamba in the Eastern Cape Province.

Household Contractor Project is an Expanded Public Works Project implemented by the Eastern Cape Provincial Government to achieve the following EPWP principles, namely:

- Poverty alleviation
- Creation of employment opportunities and
- Creation of opportunities for skills development.

The project (meaning Household Contractor Project) is implemented in the Province’s six districts, namely:

- Alfred Nzo
- Amathole
- Cacadu
- Chris Hani
- O.R. Tambo and
- Ukhahlamba

The study aims at investigating whether Household Contractor Project in Ukhahlamba district has resulted in poverty alleviation among participating household contractors. The study uses measurable indicators like food security, education for children, health needs and basic household needs to achieve its aim.
Chapter 1

1. Background

The Expanded Public Works Programme is the South African Government’s poverty alleviation project and a short term employment intervention measure. A worker may not be employed on an EPWP project for more than twenty (24) months in a five year cycle of the Programme. The household contractor project in the Eastern Cape has been established by the Provincial Department of Roads and Transport as an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) project to achieve the three principles, namely:

- Poverty alleviation
- Creation of employment opportunities and
- Creation of opportunities for skills development.

Although these points are interlocking the particular focus of this study will be to assess whether the household contractor project impacts positively on poverty alleviation.

The household contractor project is implemented in all six districts of the Province, viz.:

- Alfred Nzo
- Amathole
- Cacadu
- Chris Hani
- O.R. Tambo and
- Ukhahlamba

The study will focus on the impact of poverty alleviation in one district viz., Ukhahlamba. Throughout the study reference will be made to household contractors when referring to people employed in the project.

This study investigates whether the household contractor project in Ukhahlamba District has resulted in poverty alleviation among participating
household contractors using measurable indicators like food security, education for children, health needs and basic household needs.

1.1 The status of Household Contractor project to date
Since its establishment in 2003, the Household Contractor Project has employed 18 000 household contractors throughout the Eastern Cape Province to perform the following road maintenance activities mostly on rural access roads:
- Pothole repairs
- Side road drainage cleaning
- Grass cutting and bush clearing and
- Pipe clearing and cleaning

Household Contractors receive a stipend of R500 per month working two days in a week, a total of eight days over a month. Out of the R500, R20 from each household contractor goes towards savings club fund to which the Department adds another R20 per household contractor, hence a total of R40 goes towards a savings club fund for each household contractor participating in the Savings club scheme. This means that a take-home stipend for a household contractor becomes R480 per month.

The savings club concept was established as a vehicle for the creation of sustainable economic and entrepreneurial activities for the household contractors. It was envisaged that these productive activities would act as mechanisms for livelihood and investment opportunities for Household Contractors when their contracts came to an end. In other words livelihood status acquired by household contractors during their participation in the Programme would be maintained and enhanced through household contractors' participation in Savings club scheme.

Furthermore savings clubs would enable contractors to organise themselves into community organisations during and after they have exited the Programme.
• Allow contractors to develop their own income generating businesses
• Facilitate the administration and training of contractors to ensure that they acquire relevant technical and life skills during their participation in household contractor project.

1.2 Employment criteria and procedure

1.2.1 Employment criteria
The project employs the poorest of the poor household contractors within a local municipality, in each district. The selection of the poorest of the poor is left with the community to decide, though in an open democratically well organised meeting. The Department plays the role of a facilitator, where all relevant stakeholders are part of the meeting's deliberations and decision making. The Department adopts this approach based on the fact that communities are in a better position to know who their poorest of the poor are. Although the emphasis is on female headed households, male headed households that fall within the poorest of the poor category are also included.

1.2.2 Employment procedure
Guided by the project's protocol and guideline documents, the employment of household contractors follows a form of consultative process between the Department and community leadership in the form of local municipality and traditional leadership. In this process, the community is entrusted with the responsibility of selecting the poorest of the poor of its people, who reside alongside the road identified and staked for maintenance purposes. Household Contractor Project does not allow household contractors on Provincial and National roads, but on access road and even on such access roads, the number of vehicles per day is a determining factor. (i.e. the volume should not be more than one thousand vehicles per day on such road)
Household Contractor Project focuses on rural access roads with the following characteristics to suit Household Contractor Project:
The access road is within a walking distance of the targeted community. So that those employed on the Project walk to work rather than using part of the stipend to pay for transport to work.

The road to be maintained has been upgraded to a condition where it would be easily maintained by a Household Contractor i.e. manually

Roads to be maintained by household contractors should not be subjected to traffic flow exceeding 1000 vehicles per day

After the individuals have been identified to work on the road staked for that purpose, following household contractors’ selection process as alluded to above, household contractors are then contracted and placed on their positions within the road length.

2. Problem statement
The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is the showcase initiative for poverty alleviation in South Africa. The programme has many innovative features to ensure that the targeted poorest of the poor in rural communities are reached. The programme, as mentioned above has precise objectives, viz.

- to achieve poverty alleviation,
- create work opportunities and
- create opportunities for skills development.

This research investigation adds the issue of whether in fact the household contractor project results in poverty alleviation among participating household contractors. Given the intentions and scope of the EPWP and the fact that 18000 household contractors in the Eastern Cape have participated in the project, has the desired impact on the participating household contractors been achieved?

One district has been selected to assess the impact of the Household Contractor Project on participating household contractors. Thus the issue to be investigated is: Has the household contractor project in Ukhahlamba District resulted in poverty alleviation among participating household contractors?
Linked to the above area of concern, would be the question, if then the household contractor project in Ukhahlamba District resulted in poverty alleviation among household contractors, would household contractor project result in poverty alleviation in other districts as well? Or if household contractor project in Ukhahlamba District did not result in poverty alleviation among household contractors, does that mean household contractor project cannot result in poverty alleviation among household contractors in other districts?

While the intention of the study is not to acquire a common definition of the term poverty, but a glaring question is whether the poor and the policy developers can define poverty in the same way? And what is not poverty? This is raised because to some people the inability to afford a television set or a refrigerator or even toys for that matter for their children is deemed poverty, while to some such things are perceived as representing luxury. In spite of this disparity (i.e. the existence of the haves alongside the have-nots) which exists in our society, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 proclaims that “Everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food” According to Strategy for Growth and Development of the Eastern Cape Province (2003) poverty refers to lack access to opportunities for sustainable livelihood and income distribution. This study among other things is confronted with such implied contradictions in investigating impact of household contractor project on participating household contractors.

3. **Aims and objectives of the study**

The following are the objectives of this study:

- To determine how the household contractor project in the Ukhahlamba District has resulted in poverty alleviation among participating household contractors.
- To measure, in terms of household income and expenditure, whether household contractor project has alleviated poverty.
- To evaluate the successes and/or failures of the household contractor project from the point of view of the implementing officials.
To compare and contrast the views and opinions of the participating household contractors and the implementing officials

This study therefore aims at identifying gaps within the Household Contractor Project as a poverty alleviation initiative of Expanded Public Works Programme. Also it aims at locating poverty alleviation initiatives within the broad spectrum of community development with specific reference to changing people’s lives for better. For example; South Africa’s population is dominated by illiteracy among other forms of deprivation. Any form therefore of development in the form of poverty alleviation for such people is inhibited by such skills shortages. According to Allen and Thomas (2004:415);

developing a small enterprise for example, requires information about several different things. It needs information relating to supply, such as the availability and sources of finance, labour, technology, raw material and other enterprise inputs. It needs information about demand, including market opportunities and characteristics of this market demand such as location, price, size and quality.

Against the background as illustrated by McCord and van Seventer (2004:1) that,

if public works programme is targeted to poorer groups with lower levels of school participation and poorer nutrition, impact may be greater per unit of wage transferred, in terms of contributing to human capital, but is still not likely to move participants out of poverty, but rather reduce the depth of their poverty.

This research project is also confronted with a challenge of investigating the impact made by Household Contractor Project on household contractors and the extent to which this project may have an impact in the future of household contractors.

4. Significance of the study
Lack of involvement and participation of beneficiaries in conceptualizing, planning and implementing initiatives that aim at changing their lives may lead to short term success or negative results of Project implementation.
5. Literature review

This study will review literature that relates to poverty alleviation in line with the concept development. The two terms are often used when referring to initiatives that aim at improving the status of the poor sections of population. This approach is based on the notion that poverty and poverty alleviation are prompted by inherent social inequalities that exist among people. For instance, as a response to the question; why do inequalities both within and across countries matter? The World Development Report (2006:7) responds as follows;

the interconnections and resilience of inequalities imply that some groups have consistently inferior opportunities economically, socially and politically than their fellow citizens. This is in conflict with the core moral and ethical teachings of the world’s leading religion which includes a concern for equity”. As a result any effort to improve the poor’s condition ends up taking a trickle down form.

Another area of concern relevant for the study of this nature would be the alignment of the Household Contractor Project to other poverty alleviation initiatives within the province. An example of such initiatives would be social security grant. According to Chambers (1997:170):

diversity in livelihood systems normally add to the number, size and spread of flows of food, income and other resources. Sometimes this is through the addition of enterprises or activities, and sometimes through synergies which increase the flows from the existing enterprises.

Given the fact that poverty is such a controversial term, this project, as part of investigating the impact of Household Contractor Project, will have to establish a yard stick, based on community development efforts of people within the Eastern Cape Province, in line with the Eastern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Plan, which takes its cue from Millennium Development Goals.
As stated in Strategy Framework for Growth and Development signed by the Executive Council of the Eastern Cape Province in 2003, “constraints impacting upon development of the province among others are poverty, income distribution and inequality.” In this regard poverty is perceived as lack of access to opportunities for sustainable livelihood and income distribution and inequality indicate that about 1 million households live below the poverty line in the province and income distribution is more unequal than in South Africa as a whole. As Allen and Thomas (2004:11) state, “poverty may differ relative to the norms of each particular society.

In line with the above discussion, investigating the extent to which Household Contractor Project alleviates poverty becomes imperative to assess the Programme’s contribution to the Province’s poverty alleviation initiatives. In order to achieve this, for the purposes of this research project, the term poverty will be reduced to measurable indicators, like food security, education for children, health needs and basic household needs.

In this way, it becomes easy to quantify poverty alleviation and enable review of the Project against policy trends, so that necessary changes and alignment are made to achieve the set goals, lest development strategies become obsolete due to changes by time. As Noorgard (1994:58) puts it, “rather than homogeneous development differences between nations and between people within nations have been accentuated.”

In spite of efforts to reach the poor through different initiatives like rural development, the alleviation of urban poverty, the creation of employment through small scale industries, redistribution with growth and other poverty – employment -, and equity – oriented approaches, especially those aimed at making the poor more productive, but the poor remain in the majority of citizens within most countries. For example, “54 per cent of population in the Eastern Cape Province represents females, of which represents the most impoverished sector of society” (McCord and Bhorat, 2003).
One way of addressing the plight of the poor and means of empowering them would be to engage them on issues that affect their lives. With regards to poverty alleviation they require to be part of identifying areas that lead to their poverty, means of addressing such areas and participating in implementation of initiatives to curb such areas. As Coetzee and Graaff (1996:315) claim:

> a part of the process in engaging the poor and the oppressed is the realisation that in order to change the world, individuals need to combine with others in an organized fashion, developing what has come to be known as “popular participation” with the aim of achieving power.

In the foregoing paragraph, participation of individual beneficiaries to achieve building of individual capacities and empowerment is implied. But what is not implied is the fact that participation may not always achieve capacity building and empowerment of individuals, unless planned and facilitated as such. As a result of such lack of planning and facilitation a number of development projects fail and such failure is blamed on other reason than the lack of involvement of beneficiaries. As Martinussen (1997:42) points out:

> a distinction has to be made probably between two forms of participation. One that views participation as an end in itself and the other one that espouses the principles of Basic Needs approach in the form of “popular participation”. In popular participation the development by the people themselves is a departure point.

In this way a tendency that development strategies are formulated by central decision makers on behalf of the poor and the poor are merely drawn into the process afterwards to support the implementation of such decisions is guarded against. Which thing means that the needs of the poor are defined by others than the poor people themselves.
6. Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The research investigation is designed to elicit the perceptions and understandings of:

- Household contractors on a number of dimensions of their perceptions of poverty alleviation and their participation in the EPWP’s household contractor project.
- Ukhahlamba Roads and Transport district office personnel and local municipality officials involved in implementing the household contractor project.

The investigation will use a mixture of questionnaires and focus group discussions. The questionnaires aim at gathering data from EPWP district and Local Municipality officials and the focus group discussions will gather data from household contractors. The research will be conducted against the background of theoretical and critical insights from the literature review.

7. Sample

7.1 Household Contractor Sample

A random sample of 30 household contractors will be drawn from the household contractors in Senqu Local Municipality within Ukhahlamba District.

7.2 Ukhahlamba Roads and Transport District Office Personnel and Local Municipality Officials Sample

A sample of 5 officials will be drawn from the Ukhahlamba Roads and Transport EPWP district office personnel and Senqu Local Municipality officials.
8. Scope and limitations of the study

8.1 Scope
The study will be conducted in Ukhahlamba district, one of the six districts where the project is implemented. This gives the researcher an opportunity to interact with the research participants closely. Research participants in the form of household contractors will be chosen randomly from Senqu Local Municipality and five officials from Transport EPWP district officials and Senqu Local Municipality of Ukhahlamba district. Apart from engaging the chosen research participants in focus group discussions, questionnaires will be administered to Ukhahlamba Roads and Transport district office personnel and Senqu Local Municipality relevant officials. This aims at broadening the information acquisition about Household Contractor Project.

8.2 Limitations
The study will be limited by many challenges, among which the following may be cited.

- The fact that not all household contractors may be interviewed, limits opinions and views about the project to only the chosen number.
- Also the fact that the study may not be conducted in all districts, limits views about the project to only Ukhahlamba, apart from the fact that one may generalize on the basis of what UKhahlamba’s views are, about the project.
- Scarce resources to broaden the base of study, is a limitation.
- Long distances that have to be travelled from different groups of participants.
CHAPTER 2

Literature review

1. Introduction

Poverty may mean different things to different people. To some it may be based on economically related material resources, while to some it may be socially based in the form of provision for basic needs like literacy, food, health and shelter. All these social needs in different situations may reflect the poverty status of different individuals or groups of people differently at different times. As Mvimbi (2000:23) points out; “Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, including powerlessness of individuals, households, or communities to satisfy basic needs, lack of control over resources, lack of education and skills…, lack of political freedom and voice.”

Apart from this perceived phenomenal multiplicity of the term to some people it may happen that poverty has no significance, while to others it may have significance, depending on where one sits in the social stratum. Wilson and Ramphele (1984:4)’s identify the different types of social impacts that poverty has on society as follows:

- damage poverty may inflict upon individuals or groups who must endure it
- poverty’s sheer inefficiency in economic terms and
- the role that poverty plays in social stability / instability.

In line with the above views, it may be concluded that poverty is an undesirable condition in human nature for the role it plays in reducing the status of individual/s to that of lesser human being/s than and making them powerless in the face of others in a society (powerlessness). Meaning that those who are not poor or who are rich remain recognised for their powerfulness and so dictate socio-economic and political terms in a society
for their convenience, In contrast those who are rich and powerful are in a position to control the socio-economic structures and politics of a society for their own convenience. Such control means that while the poor, by virtue of their social powerlessness are compelled to comply with such socio-economic and political dictates. As Chambers (1997:46) states; “the bad condition poverty is made not by the poor from their experience or choice, but by the well off for their convenience.”

There is a tendency for the powerful to ensure that there is the perpetual sustainability of such social relations. In other words, the economic and political power of the powerful of means to reinforces and maintains such socio-economic and political inequalities between groups, where some groups end up with inferior opportunities than their fellow citizens.

Fighting poverty or poverty alleviation may not just be regarded as an ordinary project that will come and go or be regarded as a particular political party’s manifesto, but a life struggle to attain equality of life opportunities for all. This type of struggle may not be viewed as any different from a liberation struggle because it intends to change the socio-economic and political imbalances inherent in any social formation. Such struggle therefore threatens the future of certain the economically powerful individuals and / or groups who are in social comfortable zones. The power of this group and its desire to protect its advantages is one reason why there remains controversy in how to alleviate poverty, let alone poverty eradication and development. The cautious manner in which poverty is so often addressed in a society may lead one to conclude that society has accepted the conditions of poverty and the impact of these conditions on the daily lives of the poor. There rarely is confidence enough to utter terms like poverty elimination or eradication of poverty in initiatives that aim at fending off poverty.
In the light of the above discussion, this chapter will review literature relating to poverty and development by:

- Analyzing the relationship between poverty and development
- Reflecting on poverty alleviation and development initiatives and their impact on the poor and
- Explore alternative means of involving the poor in poverty alleviation efforts

2. Relationship between poverty and development

Poverty has a negative impact on its victims in many ways. Apart from the role it plays in enhancing the might of the rich to impose their wishes and will for their convenience on the poor sections of society, it also contributes negatively to the country’s development. The more poor people there are in any society, the lesser the impact development initiatives may have in improving the state of underdevelopment. Also the fewer people with high income there are in a country or society, the lesser the development status of such country or society becomes. As Bhorat (2001:1) suggests; “although South Africa is an upper middle income country, the social indicators suggest that living standards are closer to those of lower middle or even low income countries.

With regards to the above statement there is an implied conflict of interests that emerges as a result of two varying interest groups, namely the rich and the poor. The rich are more concerned about their economic status and ensuring that they maintain this status, while the poor are struggling to meet basic needs. Hence then the social indicators suggest low living standards, because the poor are in the majority and the rich are in the minority then averagely living standards of supposed to be middle income country drop to low income country. What this discrepancy between the standards of living indicates is that there is a substantial social gulf between the few rich and many poor. In a situation like this, where imbalance due to conflict of economic interests is identified an intervention of an impartial party becomes
necessary. Such impartiality may only come from the government of such a country or society. Because both rich and poor people vote a particular government to power, therefore such government is not supposed to take sides, because it has been voted to power by both the poor and the rich of such a country or society. Therefore its role as government should be to bring balance between the opposing trends for the future and better life for all.

The above discussion about the negative impact poverty has on society refers solely to class levels of the country or society. The conflict of interests between the classes is as a result of individuals and groups’ interests based on their condition within such society. While one talks about different classes of society, actually one refers to different groups in such a society, without individualizing the groups’ condition, but generalizing social classes based on the country’s economic ability or development. Conflict of interests arises from class divisions which overlay if not suppress social reality. Where under development of the poor is reflected or communicated through the status of the rich minority, the country or society in other words hides the condition of individuals or groups within a society and projects the country’ s economic ability or development in its own terms. Such an approach refutes the fact that in any society are groups or individuals of which some are rich and some are poor. Each group or individuals represent individuals or group interests, and depending on what interests dominate society, those interests become a determining factor for fate of all, be it social, economic and or political stability or instability. As Coate and Rosati (1988:6) point out; “when individual needs are not fulfilled within the dominant values and institutions of society, deviant behaviour becomes necessary.”

From the above points of view, there is an implied relationship between poverty and development. It should be common sense that when one talks about a development project, such implies opportunities that get created for the people within the area in which the development project is implemented. Opportunities like job creation, skills development and poverty alleviation.
Whether or not such opportunities get created or become sustainable there is potential that such opportunities may address basic needs where they are created. In that logic the route to development goes via poverty alleviation. Depending of course on whose interests such development initiative is based. Hence Allen and Thomas (2004:13) maintain that; “it has proved quite possible historically for development to occur without alleviating poverty. Some even argue that development necessarily entails worsening poverty.” Therefore that raises a question about such development initiative. In that case such development initiative may be likened to a feast organised and conducted in a poor person’s homestead, and when the time to eat and drink comes all the food and drinks are taken somewhere to be eaten leaving the food preparers without even tasting the food they prepared or cooked.

The above allusion may be indicative of the fact that both development and poverty alleviation efforts may work in favour of the powerful and the rich. In the sense that while some approaches to development and poverty alleviation stress participation of the majority of previously excluded groups like the poor, women and youth, such groups have not been empowered enough to participate in policy formulation which policies end up dictating the form development and poverty alleviation initiatives should take. Empowerment in this regard means that people should be able to direct, influence and eventually own the process of development or poverty alleviation initiatives. People should be allowed a space to vigorously input to policy formulation that is behind improving their lives. This cannot happen unless the relationship between the poor and the rich is amicable and that the two parties are able to interact impartially. As Kotze (1997:66) maintains; “the emphasis in holistic thinking and research is on processes, relationships and interactions.”

In earlier discussion an issue was raised about unequal economic relationships between rich and poor, and who wields what power among these groups within our society. While poverty and development concepts may seem inseparable in terms of expected outcomes, depending on the motive behind planning and implementation either of the two concepts (i.e.
poverty alleviation or development project), it is only the outcome that tells what objectives lay behind such planning and implementation.

The issue here is about who wields power in our society and how that power is used. People in powerful positions may be influential. They may use their influence for their convenience. In other words, one may not just assume that implementation of poverty alleviation or development projects is always meant to improve the lives of the poor, especially if the poor people are not at the driving seat of such development or poverty alleviation efforts. At times if people are not careful, development or poverty alleviation is used to achieve a particular mission in the name of helping the poor. Development and poverty alleviation strategies have been used in the past for ulterior motives, therefore being the devil’s advocate, nothing stops the current powers that be from using such initiatives as poverty alleviation and development in maintaining the status quo so that the rich people maintain their rich status whether or not that is at the expense of the poor people. An example of the rich pursuing their own interests under the ideology of development is identified by Gardner and Lewis (1996:3) who maintain that “development has historically functioned as a mechanism for the colonial and neo-colonial domination of the South by the North.”

The fact that we live in a society characterised by inequalities predetermines that whatever development initiative such society embarks upon will be characterised by such inequalities. For objective poverty alleviation, towards development for all, we are required to restructure our social relations. As Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:2) put it,

The time has come to devote ourselves to explicit strategies for democratic structural changes that will enable people to liberate themselves from oppressive social structures which perpetuate their dependency and their powerlessness, including those of many of our bureaucracies.
Here at home, the relationship between poverty alleviation and development is evident in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Where Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) through Household Contractor Project among others implement projects to realize millennium development goals as stated in Eastern Cape Strategy for Growth and Development (2004-2014), 2003:7 in pursuance of the following;

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education and
- Promote gender equality and empower women

The success of poverty alleviation and development emerges from the unity in which developers engage the issues of development in a classless commitment with one objective and that being to improve the effectiveness of the country’s development and poverty alleviation. In his February 2008 State of Nation Address, the then South African President Thabo Mbeki poses the following challenge;

More than at any other time, the situation that confronts our nation and country, and the task we have set ourselves, demand that we inspire and organise all our people to act together as one, to do all the things that have to be done, understanding that in a very real sense, all of us together hold our future in our own hands.

If social relations among people within society are to be restructured in order to improve development initiatives that should be done within the prescripts of the South African Constitution’s Bill of Rights (1996 Act 108) where it is stated that; “everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected.” Therefore while poverty alleviation is a moral duty of a State to its citizens, the above constitutional right/s of the poor must be borne in mind. In this light any effort to address people’s needs must simultaneously strive to fulfill the need for people’s dignity. Dignity is promoted by giving people recognition they deserve as people, and not necessarily as either poor or rich, but as people. In fact according to South African Constitution (1996 Act 108); “all South African citizens are equally
entitled to the rights, privileges and benefits of citizenship and equally subject
to the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.” If such constitutional
obligations are honoured and respected, unequal social relations would not
have such influence they have on poverty alleviation and development
efforts. Of course it may be argued that the reason for such discrepancies in
our poverty alleviation and development initiatives they take their cue from
the past apartheid system of government. But even so opportunities like the
Constitution and other policies that aim at transforming unequal social
relationship of our society need to be seized.

The aforementioned implies that dignity grows as people fulfill their potential.
This then suggests that the expression ‘charity begins at home’ fits in nicely
with poverty eradication as means towards development initiatives. In the
sense that if individuals, households and or communities are well established
with regards to being self supporting, that implies a firm foundation for
sustainable poverty alleviation initiative en route of course towards
sustainable development.

3. Poverty alleviation efforts and their impact on the poor.

Many poverty alleviation initiatives have not succeeded in the past for many
reasons. The reasons that have contributed to failure of poverty alleviation
initiatives is leaving behind (or enclosing out beneficiaries in poverty
alleviation) the very people who are supposed to champion and benefit from
poverty alleviation and or development efforts. Whilst there may be
numerous reasons for marginalization of poverty alleviation beneficiaries in
poverty alleviation initiatives, but the relationship between poverty and
development share a portion of blame. Approaches that disregarded
beneficiaries in conceptualization, planning and design and implementation
of development projects led to the failure of such projects. As Liebenberg and
Stewart (1997:25) state; “most often projects for which beneficiaries were not
consulted, were decided on and planned by outsiders, be it government
agents, or non government organisations who decided on the needs of the
people are marked by violence to both the people and the environment and ultimately by failure.”

From the above notion of development, while outside expertise may be appreciated in conceptualising, planning and implementing development initiatives, leaving out beneficiaries in this process, changes the ownership of such development initiatives to those who facilitate conceptualisation, planning and implementation of them. In that case empowerment of communities and beneficiaries would not have taken place and as a result, development efforts end up being the waste of time and resources.

Empowerment of community beneficiaries may not be realised by just rallying people together, but by giving them opportunity to practice or put to test their ideas about the development initiative in question, in line with the experts that facilitate development. Where development experts leave out beneficiaries, both development facilitators and beneficiaries miss the opportunity to learn from one another. It is envisaged that engagement of beneficiaries recognizes their ability to contribute to their own development, which boosts their confidence and inculcates a sense of wanting to try more ideas. In that way their capacity may be built. Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:25) suggest that; “community development is the educational process by which people change themselves and their behaviour, and acquire new skills and confidence through working in cooperation with others.”

Empowerment of beneficiaries in this regard is an effort towards redistribution of power between those that are rich and those that are poor with regards to poverty alleviation and development initiatives. If the poor are able to stand their ground when it comes to development initiatives that affect their lives, then that means that the capacity building which they have received has empowered them.
4. Involvement of the poor in poverty alleviation efforts.

There may be many ways in which beneficiaries may be involved in poverty alleviation initiatives. The aim of empowerment is to enable the beneficiaries to get out of poverty and to build meaningful livelihood. In that case when poverty alleviation initiatives are conceptualise that should be done in consultation with the local beneficiaries in order to adapt the idea to the place in which it is going to be implemented. This follows the notion that local people should be treated as the leading authorities on their own circumstances in their own area. As Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:22) suggest; “beneficiaries are best people to lead and direct their own development. Those responsible for beneficiaries’ capacity building should assist them to discover possibilities of exercising choices and thereby become capable of managing their own future.”

Such involvement of beneficiaries on issues that affect their lives is not something that has always been a practice. In most cases the reason why beneficiaries would be left out, is because some people are threatened by their participation, mostly by questions they raise based on their knowledge of the area in which the project is implemented. To deal with such a situation successfully an expert social facilitation is needed. In this regard all parties (facilitators and beneficiaries) would be exposed to a learning experience of their lives. In that case, social facilitators should be aware of the demand placed on them by such situations. Situations that theirs is not necessarily to build other people capacity, but to assist capacity building. The notion of ‘assisting’ capacity building renders the facilitator a learner in the situation. According to Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:22) “the assistance in capacity building is part of a learning process characterised by a flexible, sustained, experimental, action based capacity building approach.”

Facilitation of such capacity building learning processes poses challenges, which requires from a facilitator a well developed capacity for responsive and
anticipatory adaptation. Such facilitation need not fear embracing error so that there can be better plans with the people and links between knowledge building and actions. According to Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:37) "embracing error is not necessarily because of sloppiness, but because experimentation includes mistakes and mistakes are learning opportunities."

In conclusion, this literature review has as its basis the fact that any effort to affect people's lives positively or bring about positive change in people's lives requires their unconditional and meaningful involvement and participation. This is the constitutional right that development and poverty alleviation beneficiaries require to be supported in acquiring. It is also the moral obligation of any democratic state to afford its citizens. According to Coetzee and Graaff (1996:1); "at the moral level, a new realisation has come to the fore, or rather an old realisation has been reaffirmed. That the ordinary people, powerless people, have a right to be heard, to participate in decisions concerning their lives and to have their values and preferences respected."

Apart from this Coetzee and Graaff assert that "in the contemporary world, there is an increased awareness of the right of all people to live in a life world which is meaningful to them. This moral right is not recognised by some of the development theories and policies." This is where poverty eradication and development initiatives miss it. As Roodt (1996:318) in Reconstruction, Development and People attests; "to exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for the development of themselves and their communities, the people must control their own resources, have access to relevant information, and have the means to hold the officials of government accountable."
Conclusion

This chapter covered the relationship between poverty and development, poverty alleviation efforts and their impact on the poor and involvement of the poor people in poverty alleviation initiatives. While it may seem logical that there should be a relationship between poverty and development, that en route to development one has to go through poverty alleviation, some writers dispute this. According to Allen and Thomas (2004:3) “development and poverty are inseparable, but in practice it has proved possible historically for development to occur without alleviating poverty.” In some cases it is claimed that development even entails worsening poverty.

While poverty alleviation and development initiatives are meant to help the poor people out of poverty trap, in most cases poor people’s participation in poverty alleviation efforts are minimal and that deprives them of opportunities to interact vigorously with development initiatives for their own growth and development. Reasons for such lack of interaction have been identified as powerlessness of the poor people. Powerlessness of the poor people includes satisfaction of basic needs, lack of control over resources, lack of education and skills and others.

Any efforts that aim at helping people improve their lives require an unconditional and meaningful involvement and participation of such people. Due to the past apartheid policy practices current development and poverty alleviation initiatives are still affected negatively by the remnants of such social relationships between the poor and the rich people. So much so that poor people’s involvement in poverty alleviation initiatives does not allow them to take ownership of the processes by virtue of their status.
CHAPTER 3

Research methodology

1. Introduction

This research project followed a triangulation approach by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Qualitative focus group discussions were used to investigate the attitudes and opinions of thirty household contractors in Senqu Local Municipality with regards to Household Contractor Project as a poverty alleviation initiative. This sample was divided into three groups of ten (10) each. Also to supplement the process of data collection, interviews using quantitative questionnaires were administered to two (2) Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) officials in the same Ukhahlamba EPWP District office and three Senqu Local Municipality officials.

The study was conducted in Ukhahlamba district of the Eastern Cape Province in Senqu Local Municipality where it focused on urban and surrounding rural areas of the following towns;

Sterkspruit and

Lady Grey

2. Quantitative and Qualitative research

According to Holtzhausen (2007:20), “deciding to follow either a qualitative or a quantitative approach during research design, determines which research method will be chosen.” In this case, both qualitative and quantitative research was used. Given the fact that there is information required to tell a particular story, qualitative research was seen as partly relevant. The researcher wanted to study household contractors in their natural settings attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning household contractors bring to them and thus qualitative research was used. To augment such information gathering
process and to enhance the potential quality of the research findings, a questionnaire was also administered to both EPWP officials and Senqu Local Municipality officials.

The researcher decided to combine qualitative and quantitative research methods by conducting a questionnaire for interviews with officials to quantify the impact of Household Contractor Project on household contractors based on three EPWP objectives namely:

- Poverty alleviation
- Opportunity for jobs creation and
- Opportunities for skills development.

In the same vein the researcher used a list of questions for focus group discussions in order to observe the world of household contractors in its real form. In the spirit of a particular method to use for conducting research Ritchie and Lewis (2003:2) proclaim that “there is no one right and accepted way of doing research” and after careful consideration the research approach chosen here was deemed the best manner to investigate the impact of household contractor project with regards to poverty alleviation among the participating household contractors. Therefore household contractors responded to questions prepared for focus group discussions and officials responded to questions as contained in the questionnaire.

This chapter therefore elaborates on research design, stating how research participants were identified, how data was gathered and analysed and finally, how report on analysed data was compiled.

There are various types of research and stages within research design that have to be considered and applied to realise a full research project cycle. This chapter explains briefly the types and stages of research as they relate to this study.
2.1 Quantitative study

Quantitative research seems to be enjoying more popularity when it comes to research methods than qualitative research. The two approaches differ: Qualitative research seeks answers to questions that stress how social experiences is created and given meaning. In other words it is more interpretative and naturalistic. Quantitative research on the other hand emphasises the measurement and analysis of causal relationship between variables and not processes.

In quantitative research methodology, a questionnaire may be design for distribution to the chosen sample. The only problem though with this approach, especially with the sample that is not entirely known to the researcher, questionnaires may not be the best option in all situations, due to the fact some participants may not be able to read the questionnaire, let alone be able to respond to it. In that case, it means that the researcher will not have communicated with such people or will not have received the desired data from them. This problem with distributing questionnaires to targeted respondents may not only end at the level of being unable to read or write, but also may get to the level of respondents failing to understand the language used in the questionnaire. An example of cellular phone users’ population may be cited here. Some people own cellular phones for communication purposes only, not necessarily that such people are literate. Some people may only be literate when it comes to use of their cellular phones not in general reading and writing. Questionnaires whether aimed at acquiring information about cellular phones do not have a particular language that is used by such group as cellular users, but depend on the daily language used by everybody. In such cases, communication becomes an area of consideration.
The above stated language problem becomes a barrier in the process of acquiring data. In such a case close contact with the interviewees may be an alternative means of breaking the barrier.

That means the questionnaire has to be conducted directly with each individual subject by either the researcher or individuals designated to administer the questionnaire. This approach may address a number of challenges with regards to questionnaires and responses from the interviewees. Among others the culture of some questions ignored by subjects based on the fact that subjects do not view them as that important to them.

While such an approach may seem time consuming and costly, especially if large samples are targeted, but such an approach I believe has its paybacks. A close contact with interviewees may be established, researcher is able to learn more about research subjects’ situations, which thing will broaden the researcher’s understanding of some of the interviewees responses. For example, if there was a question that says; Are there any practices which you feel, are based on gender with regards to employment in Household Contractor Project? Some female household contractors may not identify the fact that overseers which are household contractors’ supervisors has an element of discrimination based on gender social stereotype that men in most cases are appointed supervisors because of their status in African families as heads of families. In a close contact interview, the researcher may be able to pick up such cultural nuances. Also where physical contact is made with the subjects, subjects may be bound by courtesy to respond to all the questions, now that the researcher is there. Some methods within qualitative research methodology allow for this close contact, among others, is focus group discussion which is also used in this study.

In spite of the fact that quantitative research methodology sometimes falls short of close physical contact with interviewees in its approach to collect
data from targeted study groups or individuals, but Best and Khan (1989:163) conclude that, “quantitative approach may be considered indispensable…it played an essential role in the history and development of science as it progressed from pure philosophical speculation to modern empirical verifiable observation.”

Depending on one's point of view, as a deduction from the above argument, it may be concluded that quantitative research is superior since, for example it is value laden free. Comparatively speaking, the implication here according to Silverman (2002:2) is that; “quantitative research simple reports reality, whereas qualitative research is influenced by the researcher’s political values.”

Each of the two approaches mentioned above seem to be competing with one another in the field of research. Quantitative research claims to be conducting research from within a value laden free framework. While some proponents of qualitative research see quantitative research as neglecting the social and cultural construction of variables which quantitative research seeks to correlate. On the other hand qualitative researchers prefer to describe how, in everyday life to go about defining counting, and analysing.

As a result of such a tussle between the two approaches, it may be unwise to draw hard and fast rules as to say which of the two methods is better than the other. Especially as has been indicated above that any approach may be adapted to suit the situation at hand. In line with this view, Best and Khan (1989:164) state that “the appropriate approach would depend upon the nature of the variables under consideration and the objectives of the researcher.”
2.2 Qualitative study

Qualitative methodology takes a different direction to quantitative approach. It rather concerns itself with issues than individual people, while such information to conclude on issues is extracted from people. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003:13), “qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry.”

As part of its overall approach, this study has adopted a qualitative method in alignment with Best and Khan (1989:163)’s conclusion that; “the non quantitative search for explanations would be fruitful in the study of human growth and development.” It is in this light that this study aims at eliciting participation of the identified research participants in the form of a sample drawn from the research population, so as to understand their experience, perceptions and frustrations with regards to challenges facing them.

In qualitative approach people are not supposed to be regarded as objects, but the researcher must find it in himself or herself to embrace them as human beings worthy of the research cause. Hence reference is made to research participants rather than research subjects. This view also addresses inter alia factors like attitude of the researcher towards the group to be studied. While this chapter will not discuss the character of the researcher, it is important to consider how important an attitude of a researcher may influence the process of research.

The qualitative research is regarded as humanistic, to maintain the humanistic part of qualitative research depends entirely on the rapport between the researcher and research participants. A researcher will only learn about research participants when research participants are known personally, and gain an understanding of their experience in their daily lives.
In the daily interaction with research participants, during the process of gathering data research participants gradually open up and ultimately become free with the researcher. It is in such instances where the free flow of information takes place.

The fact that qualitative research deals with people directly in search of information suggests a degree of interaction between individuals. Unlike in quantitative research where one has a choice of dealing indirectly with people through questionnaires, interaction implies possession of certain skills in dealing with people, if one is going to get the information one requires. Therefore one may conclude that in the process of engaging in qualitative research, a researcher is also developing skills, which skills are a determining factor in the type of data the researcher is able to squeeze out of people. As Leedy (1993:142) argues, “qualitative research methodology is considered ‘warm’, because in great part it is concerned with human beings,...the researcher attempts to attain rich, real and valid data from a rational standpoint, the approach is inductive.” In line with the above notion of qualitative research methodology and in comparison with quantitative research methodology, Hakim (1987:26) views qualitative research approach as, “offering richly descriptive reports of individuals’ perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings.”

In conclusion, though poverty in the Eastern Cape Province may present itself similar in all the six districts, but circumstances or factors that contribute to poverty like access to land, unemployment and illiteracy differ in each case. Therefore approaches to poverty alleviation may take different forms depending on the particular situation or environment in question. Qualitative method as part of the overall approach used in this study becomes relevant. For it is an approach (qualitative) that locates itself in the particular situation under study, for the researcher to observe realities as they are in Ukhahlamba district and get the meaningful understanding of meaning the people of Ukhahlamba district attach to phenomena within their social world.
3. Sampling

Research like any other human activity involves costs. Among other costs, is the cost of travelling to where research participants are, the spread of research participants and their number in their places of residence that account for such costs. To counter the cost of large numbers and their spread within the area in which research is conducted, sampling becomes an alternative means. A sample is the representative group which signifies all characteristics of the larger population. According to Goldenberg (1992:121), “the idea of sampling rests on a few premises, some theoretical and some pragmatic. One premise is that some way has to be found to generalise to a population without having to gather data from and concerning each element of the population.”

Sampling follows a particular procedure in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the research project. For, if it does not meet the characteristics and the quality of the population as a whole it may fall short of telling the story that it requires to tell hence Leedy (1989:199) suggests that, “the sample should be so chosen that through it the researcher is able to see all the characteristics of the total population in the same relationship that they would be seen if the researcher were, in fact to inspect the total population.”

Sampling in this respect, follows Goldenberg (1992:79)’s view that, some way has to be found to generalise about a population without having to gather data from and concerning each element of that population. Among other types of sampling, probability sample incorporates the following designs:

- Simple Random Sampling
- Systematic Sampling
- Stratified Sampling and
- Cluster Sampling
In this study, Simple Random Sampling in Senqu Local Municipality in the District of Ukhahlamba has been used to acquire particular information needed about the population in question namely household contractors in Ukhahlamba District. The sample size consisted of thirty household contractors in Senqu Local Municipality, two EPWP officials in Transport District Office of Ukhahlamba and three officials from Senqu Local Municipality. As Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:432) point out; “simple random sampling is a sampling procedure that gives each N sampling units of the population an equal and known non-zero probability of being selected.

Thirty household contractors in three groups of ten were engaged in focus group discussions separately from both EPWP Transport District officials and Senqu Local Municipality officials who responded to questionnaires. Together with the thirty household contractors a total of thirty five individuals were engaged in data collection through different means.

The question may arise as to why the sample for the study was chosen from Senqu Local Municipality? The reason is based on the fact that, the very first household contractors to be appointed into the Project in Ukhahlamba District were employed in Senqu Local Municipality. Again for the purposes of study results validation, it is envisaged that the longer household contractors have been in the Project, the more reliable results obtained over time may be. Again according to population statistics, Senqu Local Municipality is the second largest after Elundini Local Municipality in the same district with a population of 118 174 (Stats SA Community Survey, 2007). Senqu has of all other local municipalities of Ukhahlamba District the highest population out migration and household migration percentage of 12, 6 and 31, 9 respectively. This is followed by Elundini Local Municipality which is the highest populated local municipality in the whole district with 4, 3 population migration and 5, 6 household migration.
4. Population

The specific nature of the population depends on the purpose of investigation to be conducted. To investigate the impact made by Household Contractor Project on household contractors will require more than conducting group discussions to household contractors only. Household Contractor Project as an EPWP project incorporates other role players like Local and District Municipality officials, District EPWP office personnel, household contractors themselves, community leadership in the form of councillors and traditional leadership. The Project under investigation here is broadly represented household contractor project, with stakeholders as mentioned above.

All the above stakeholders and representatives together form the household contractor project population. As Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:294) indicate, “a population is the aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of specification.” It is out of this population group that a sample of thirty individual household contractors plus two representatives from EPWP office and three Senqu Local Municipality officials making a total of thirty five research participants were chosen using simple random sampling. As would be expected such a sample would have to be representative of all elements of population and give each element an “equal and known no-zero probability of being selected” (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981:432).

As part of data gathering and means to enhance objectivity of the study, EPWP personnel and Local Municipality officials were also interviewed. The extension of participation beyond household contractors to other participants as mentioned above was an effort to heed to Leedy (2005:207)’s advice that, “the basic rule is, the larger the sample, the better.”
Table 1 Number of household contractors per local municipality and breakdown per each town

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Municipality</th>
<th>Number of household contractors</th>
<th>Breakdown per town including rural areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elundini Municipality</td>
<td>1 157</td>
<td>Ugie: 417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maclear: 740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gariep</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>Venterstad: 241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Burgersdorp: 210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steynsburg: 164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maletswai</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Jamestown: 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Joe Gqabi: 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senqu</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>Sterkspruit: 620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lady Grey: 374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 831</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the number of household contractors in each local municipality of Ukhahlamba district and the number of household per town in each local municipality of the district. Some of the local municipalities have more household contractors in rural areas than others. These household contractors for the purposes of the table above have been counted under each town of the local municipality concerned. These are the local municipalities like Elundini and Senqu.
In contrast, Table 2 indicates household contractors’ spread in each local municipality against each local municipality’s population statistics (Statistics source: Stats SA Community Survey, 2007).

Table 2 indicates household contractors’ spread in each local municipality against each local municipality’s population statistics (Statistics source: Stats SA Community Survey 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Municipality</th>
<th>Population Statistics</th>
<th>Village name</th>
<th>No. of household contractors per village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elundini Local Municipality</td>
<td>123 634</td>
<td>Ncembu / Elunyaweni</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mbidlana</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St Augustine / Sommerville</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ramatee</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hopedale/Mbonisweni/Sidakeni</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fletcherville/Phirintsu</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Sinxako</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maclear Township</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tinana/Tabase</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Ketekete/Ngxaxha</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sethathi/ Mashata</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chavy chase /Magedla</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ezingonyameni</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mqokolweni</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hlankomo</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper and Lower Tsitsana</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village name</td>
<td>No. of household contractors per village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsolobeng</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbizeni</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokoana</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manloaseng/Sathube</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vuvu</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seqhobong</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gqaqhala</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugie township</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kat-kop</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khothlopong</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mfanta</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1157</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Municipality</th>
<th>Population Statistics</th>
<th>Village name</th>
<th>No. of household contractors per village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Senqu Local Municipality</strong></td>
<td><strong>118 174</strong></td>
<td>T606</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krom</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betania</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musong</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhebheza</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qoboshane</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Grey</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coville/Khiba/Skisazana</td>
<td>104</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manxeba/Hlomendlini</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magadla</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiebank</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jozana’s nek</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmietfontein</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qhemerha</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Municipality</td>
<td>Population Statistics</td>
<td>Village name</td>
<td>No. of household contractors per village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gariep Local Municipality</td>
<td>42 846</td>
<td>Venterstad</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Burgersdorp</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steynsburg</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>615</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Municipality</th>
<th>Population Statistics</th>
<th>Village name</th>
<th>No. of household contractors per village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maletswai Local Municipality</td>
<td>23 709</td>
<td>Jamestown</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Joe Gqabi</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL SPREAD OF HOUSEHOLD CONTRACTORS IN UKHAHLAMBA DISTRICT = 2831
5. Data collection

For data gathering, the study used focus group discussions with thirty household contractors divided into three groups of ten and a questionnaire to two EPWP District Transport officials and three Senqu Local Municipality officials. Specimen of the questionnaire and guiding questions for group discussions used to collect information are attached as an appendix to chapter four of the study.

It is worth mentioning though that the process of data gathering should anticipate challenges and the following sub-headings briefly touch on some of such challenges.

5.1 Challenges that may be pertinent to the process of data gathering

The use of questionnaire as means of gathering data from research participants may be confronted by certain challenges. Not all questionnaire respondents are literate enough to follow the context from which the questionnaire is based. This goes further to the level of language. Some people may be able to speak the language and not be able to read and write it. The following precautionary measures may have to be taken into account in the process of data gathering.

5.1.1 Conducting interviews

It may be advisable to administer the questionnaire or guiding questions in case of focus group discussion directly to each individual respondent or to a group selected in the case of focus group discussion. While such an exercise may be costly and time consuming, but it also aims to enhance the notion that the success of any research exercise depends very much on the information gathered from research participants. In other words the quality of information received and its interpretation by the researcher has a bearing on
final analysis of the information and as a result would be a determining factor on the type of findings the researcher end up with. This point of view suggests that the researcher should time and again go back to clarify grey areas to individuals engaged in group discussions for focus group and research subjects in cases where questionnaires were used. This is expected more from the qualitative researchers, as they are the ones who are confronted with the challenge of interpreting phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. As Ritchie and Lewis (2003:3) maintain; “qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the people bring to them.” Besides establishing rapport between researcher and research participants, this approach promotes importance of regarding research participant as an important stakeholder in research process. In this way researcher attitude problem emanating from quantitative research is countered. As Leedy (1993) paints the character of quantitative research; “quantitative research is impersonally experimental. The attitude of the quantitave researcher is an either / or attitude. The decisions are made with the coldness of steel rule.”

5.1.2 Language

The fact that the questionnaire was conducted in English meant that the interviewer had to be bilingual or trilingual so as to be able to translate questions to the best of the interviewer’s understanding if useful information was to be acquired. Both the guiding questions and the questionnaire had to be designed in English to cater for a number of reasons namely:

Ukahlamba District Municipality has a diversity of ethnic groups with different languages, as names of local municipalities suggest. There are Afrikaans speaking areas like Gariep, there are dominantly Sotho speaking areas like Maletswai and also Elundini Local Municipality is a mixture of Xhosa and Sotho. Therefore to design a questionnaire in Xhosa could have been regarded as not recognising the other languages within the district, which thing could have elicited resistance from research participants. On the other hand one can say that English is also not their language. But it has
established itself as a dominant language in a way. This again suggests more than English language knowledge, but also patience in taking the other person with on the journey to find the required answers. This calls for thorough preparation of the sessions and planning

5.1.3 Planning and organising

Both interview sessions and group discussions were planned in consultation with household contractors’ supervisors, commonly known as overseers and with both EPWP Transport Office and Senqu Local Municipality Office. These meetings dealt with the following among others:

- Venues for both interviews and group discussions
- Times of sessions and events during such a day
- Types of questions for group discussions and questionnaires themselves

In other words planning of the activity was done by the office of the researcher in consultation with the participating stakeholders. As indicated above, part of planning and organising included meetings with the household overseers, EPWP and Senqu Local Municipality officials.

6. Questionnaires

Questions serve different purposes and thus are used as such. Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:210) proclaim that; “questions may be classified into two general categories, namely factual and opinion questions.” This study will not elaborate on categories of questions, but will rather focus on the types of questions that will be used in the study namely;

- Open ended and
- Closed ended questions.

Basically questions asked of the research participants covered the following areas:
• Biographical details of participants
• Participants’ life skills acquired by participating in the Project
• Technical skills acquired through skills training received by household contractors
• Economic empowerment of household contractors as a result of being appointed in the Project
• General questions based on things that household contractors think may be done to bring more improvements on the Project.

The guiding questions for focus group discussions as well as the questionnaires administered contained both open ended and close ended questions.

6.1 Open ended questions

Open ended questions are not followed by any specified choice, and the respondents’ answers are recorded in full. As Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:213) indicate, “the virtue of open ended question is that it does not force respondents to adapt to preconceived answers.” Having understood the intent of the question, one can express one’s thoughts freely, spontaneously and in one’s own language. If the answers to open ended questions are not clear, the interviewer may probe, that is ask the respondent to explain further or to give a rationale for something stated earlier. Such questions in this study were used a lot in focus group discussions. However, Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:2130) point out that; “open ended questions are not easy to answer and still more difficult to analyse. The researcher has to design a coding frame in order to classify the various answers.” In this process, the details of the information provided by the respondents might get lost. Hence the importance of the test run of questions with respondents and keeping of detailed notes as questions are asked and responded to.
With regards to two prominent questions of the study namely:

- Should Household Contractor Project continue as it is or do you want to suggest changes? And to the other question:
- Do you think that this Household Contractor Project can be improved to benefit the poor people more?

The latter question expected a response that would suggest innovations to the Project to make it employ more people. The former question expected a response such as improvement on working conditions. Something like dividing people into teams and assigning teams different tasks. To both questions more than half of the household contractors responded that “the Project must increase the number of days worked per week from two days to five days. Also another suggestion within the context of the two questions was that the increase in number of days should be accompanied by an increase in stipend (i.e. wages). These responses were not directly related to improving the Project per se, but were directly related to household contractors. Therefore using categories that assisted in analysing received information namely Project related and household contractor related, responses were categorised as such.

6.2 Closed ended questions

This study aimed for particular information and as such to get it opted more for closed ended type of questions especially in the questionnaire that was administered to the officials. There were not many closed ended questions in guiding questions for group discussions. This was based on the type of information required from a particular group of people and as such in order to acquire such information without confusing the respondents it was felt that close ended questions may serve the purpose better. According to Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:213); “close ended questions are easy to ask and quick to answer. They require no writing by either the respondent or the interviewer, and their analysis is straight forward.” The above view though should not lose sight of the fact while close ended questions may better suit
some situations they may be unsuitable in other situations. By their very nature close ended questions are structured, such structure may not always be free of individual bias of the person who construct the questions and the potential of depriving respondents’ freedom of expression on the subject.

Freedom of expression referred to here may be obtained when using open ended questions, where respondents and interviewees are not confined within the parameters of guiding questions and questionnaire structure, but may express themselves beyond the point of questions. Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:213) claim that close ended questions’ major drawback is that; “they may introduce bias, either by forcing the respondent to choose from given alternatives or by making the respondent select alternatives that might not have otherwise occurred.” This may very well be so with the target group aimed for in this Project. This is a group of people whose entry to the Project should be characterised by being the poorest of the poor within their localities. This suggests a degree of deprivation suffered by this group. Chambers (1997:45) refers to deprivation as incorporating many negative social elements. “Deprivation as poor people perceive it, has many dimensions including not only lack of income and wealth, but also social inferiority, physical weakness, disability and sickness, vulnerability, physical and social isolation, powerless and humiliation.”

**Conclusion**

This research project followed a triangulation approach, dominated by qualitative approach in the form of focus group discussion. The domination of qualitative approach within triangulation method has been prompted by the fact that the majority of the population group level of literacy and their level of communication skills would have not facilitated the acquisition of the required information without that closer interaction with the researcher. Especially based on the fact qualitative research is naturally open ended and more interpretative, than quantitative research that uses measurements and
analysis of causal relationship between variables and methodology that generate figures and graphs.

The choice of the study sample considered a variety of factors to enhance representativity. The longest serving household contractors in the project were considered as a feature which required to be incorporated into the sample. Population size of the Local Municipality as compared to others and the rate of population and household migration to urban towns within the district and outside the district into the broader province and in other provinces within the Republic were also considered as another feature. Unconsciously the study sample ended up incorporating Expanded Public Works Programme targets namely youth and women.

In line with the objective of the study that of examining Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a poverty alleviation initiative against the challenges faced by the Eastern Cape Province with regards to poverty, a consultative approach like qualitative methodology within triangulation approach proved relevant in engaging beneficiaries in efforts that are aimed at poverty alleviation. This view does not discount the role played by quantitative methodology in assisting to realise the objective of the study namely ‘to evaluate the success and / or failures of household contractor Project from the point of view of the implementing and monitoring officials.’
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY AND CHALLENGES FACING THE PROJECT

4.1 Key areas of focus

The study investigated the impact made by the Household Contractor Project on the appointed Household Contractor Project beneficiaries against the following Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) principles:

- Poverty alleviation
- Creation of job opportunities and
- Creation of opportunities for skills development

The analysis and interpretation of data gathered during the process of interviews conducted with household contractors will be based on each of the EPWP principles stated above so as to assess the EPWP programme.

4.2 Poverty alleviation

Poverty as a concept is perceived and defined differently by different people. To some people the inability to afford a television set or a refrigerator or even toys for their children is deemed poverty, while to some such things are perceived as representing luxury. Some people do not know where their next meal will come from let alone when they get it. To cater for such different worldviews and perspectives with regards to perceiving and defining poverty and different dimensions inherent in the concept (i.e. poverty), this study will limit the definition of poverty to the capacity level of the Household Contractor Project participants using the following measurable indicators;

- food security
- basic education for household children
- basic health care and
• basic household needs.

As Koch (2004:218) points out; “the actual livelihood needs of many rural communities are very basic and simple, and generally relate to water, food and human security”. While poverty has such different perspectives to be viewed from and as controversial a concept to bring down to a uniform meaning for different people, poverty alleviation is even worse. As a concept, poverty may differ relative to the norms of each society, the degree of varying intensity as a result of accentuated differences between nations and between people within nations and also the dimensions involved in the definition of the term. According to Allen and Thomas (2000:12); “some definitions of poverty only measure one dimension of the well being, so that a broader view would take it to form only one part of any definition of poverty.”

Taking a cue from such an array of perspectives which thing could be a reason enough for the term not to have a uniform meaning, poverty alleviation is even more difficult to define. It becomes more difficult to define because it does not only consider factors like dimensions, social norms and values, nation state’ status (i.e. underdeveloped, developing or developed state). But also involves issues like what yardsticks are used to measure poverty, to what an extent is the yardstick incorporative of other socio-economic and cultural differences especially in a South African situation where the legacy of apartheid has implications for development initiatives.

An alternative means of dealing with the disparity in understanding the meaning of the term poverty can be achieved through active and meaningful participation of beneficiaries in poverty alleviation initiatives. Where the poor people themselves, identify their areas of needs, means to address such areas and how achievements made may be sustained. In this way, the very poor people themselves wherever they are will be involved in realising their own plight as well as trying alternative means to deal with it in a manner that suit them, rather than depend on help that
comes from other people. As Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:21) suggest; “people can lead their own change processes. They can be the actors ‘in bringing about change’, not merely the subjects of change.”

Such involvement allows experience gathering in challenging circumstances, for each particular group or individual/s differently from the other individual/s or group/s, which thing realises the process of empowering people according to their needs within their unique situations and not according to the macro socio-economic and political demands of the broader society. Holcombe (1995:3) suggests that; “what unites most definitions of poverty alleviation is the broad agreement that participation and empowerment of beneficiaries are essential to poverty alleviation.”

In line with the above stated poverty measurable indicators and within the scope of the three above mentioned EPWP principles, a questionnaire conducted to thirty household contractors in the district of Ukhahlamba, revealed that thirty out of thirty household contractors engaged in focus group discussions responded positively to the question; ‘is there a difference in your life between now and the time you were not yet appointed to the project?’ Also to the question; ‘what is the difference?’ All thirty household contractors stated that they were able to support their families in the following manner:

- Buy food for household contractors’ dependants
- To a lesser extent buy clothing for children
- Pay for burial societies’ dues to cater for funeral undertaking costs in cases of deaths within families and
- Attend to health care needs of the family very minimally due to the fact that the stipend (i.e. wages for household contractors) is inadequate to cater for all household needs.
In this context, the Household Contractor Project served (based of course on the limited measurable indicators cited above) the purpose of poverty alleviation to some extent.

The qualification ‘to some extent’ is made because it is well known that the above few basic needs do not represent poverty and when they are met do not necessarily alleviate poverty, but at least provide opportunities for food acquisition to family members who do not have such opportunities. In line with the view of qualifying the different extents to which poverty may be alleviated; Holcombe (1995:3) proclaims that; “even more difficult with poverty alleviation is measuring whether and to what degree has poverty alleviation occurred.”

In other words, food acquisition and related limited basic needs to families may be counted as tangible achievement and viewed as a stepping stone towards facing the challenges of poverty on a broader scale. This view point indicates the fact that the concept poverty is incorporative of different perspectives and that it is inherent of different social norms and values. The relative poverty and social exclusion referred to by Allen & Thomas (2000:218) reflects that;

...individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diets, participate in the activities that their fellow citizens participate in and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely accepted and approved in the societies to which they belong.

Even more relevant to this fact, here at home the Eastern Cape Strategy Framework for Growth and Development defines poverty as a lack of access to opportunities for sustainable livelihood. What this definition leaves out is the fact that such lack of access to opportunities depends on number of factors. Among these factors one may cite the structure of our society, where the majority of the people are poor and
only the few are rich. To add to the structural arrangement of our society will be the type of rule such a state is subjected to. For example the different perceptions and definitions of poverty in South Africa are as a result of the previous South African government system of apartheid among other things.

In South Africa under the system of apartheid, different racial groups had different accesses to opportunities, differently. The apartheid system with regards to creating access to opportunities favoured white people than African people. As a result that system of segregation led to socio-economic inequalities among different racial groups of South Africa and affected development initiatives of the country negatively. This is especially with regards to the development of the African people within the country. Even today the legacy of apartheid in South Africa is reflected as contributing negatively to access of opportunities for different race groups. As Deng and Tjonneland (1996:15) state; “given the impact of apartheid policies on development and underdevelopment in South Africa, analysis of inequality and poverty indicators by race is inevitable and necessary.”

As a result for instance; “the white population in Alexandria is accorded 0,96 Human Development Index (HDI), while the Human Development Index for Africans in Barkly East is 0,09 and Alexandria 0,11” (McCord and van Seventer, 2004). This difference in Human Development Index happens in one province of the same country and that is the Eastern Cape Province. This preferential treatment of different racial groups lays the basis for different perceptions of poverty and confirms the lesser degree to which the Household Contractor Project may contribute to poverty alleviation as a basis for development of the poor people in the Eastern Cape Province.

While the Project serves the purpose of poverty alleviation to some extent as indicated, but there remain concerns about the Project itself. Concerns like the
following: stipend (representing household contractors’ wages) which is R480 per month after savings clubs deduction of R40 - becomes too little for ever rising food prices. This then means that what household contractors earn from the project cannot afford to adequately fulfill other household needs like health care other than buying food. In some instances, the very stipend itself is not enough for some family needs.

The example of such a family here would be where a household mother has two daughters who each, has three and two school attending children respectively. Whatever poverty measure may be used, in whatever area in a South African situation, definitely R480 per month is inadequate to support any size a family, let alone such an extended size family.

With reference to a South African situation, where poverty among children is high, this Project’s contribution to poverty alleviation becomes uncertain. In line with the above view, Deng and Tjonneland (1996:42) proclaim that;

among Africans, the poverty rate among children is even worse. An important factor here is the high poverty rates among families with many children. As a result, over 45 per cent of the poor are children below the age of 16, although they make up only 38 per cent of the population.

A concern that requires to be considered alongside the above state of affairs is the future implications of such status quo for the future generations of African people. Among other implications poverty may have to children are the negative effects in their growth and development. That may not end there, but also affect them physically and mentally as adults which thing may have an effect in future development of the African nation. As Wilson and Ramphele (1989:5) point out;
the significance of poverty among others is its sheer inefficiency in economic terms. For example hungry children cannot study properly; malnourished adults cannot be fully productive as workers; and an economy where a large proportion of the population is very poor has a structure of demand that does not encourage the production and marketing of the goods that are most needed.

Without deviating from the concerns and without playing down the contribution made by household contractor project, but the extended family which has been brought up in the discussion above is another feature of the African culture which is another dimension that has a bearing on how African people find themselves in poverty, how they perceive it and what is deemed in their own way of life, means to address their poverty state, rather than an outside intervention that may have a set duration or life span like the very Household Contractor Project with minimal consultation with the beneficiaries. As McCord and van Seventer (2004:1) put it;

If public works programme is targeted to poorer groups with lower levels of school participation and poorer nutrition, impact may be greater per unit of wage transferred, in terms of contributing to human capital, but is still not likely to move participants out of poverty, but rather reduce the depth of their poverty.

The other concern with regards to the Project is the sustainability of such relief brought by the Project (i.e. household contractor project employment). Sustainability in the sense that any EPWP project may not go beyond twenty four (24) months in a five year cycle of Special Public Works Programme. The major concern is what will happen to these people that have grown used to the monthly stipend as a form of living when their term of appointment expires. While such concerns exist, Expanded Public Works Programme is about creation of opportunities for individuals and groups self supporting, not employment
opportunity itself, but due to the organisational nature of the Project such opportunities are unable to be created. This area of concern will be elaborated on under recommendations.

Another area of concern with regards to poverty alleviation is the role played by beneficiaries themselves with regards to the Household Contractor Project. The role played by beneficiaries in the form of conceptualisation, planning and implementation of the project. This may be termed ‘participative’ role played by beneficiaries in order for them to be involved meaningfully in the initiative and determine their own development trend, based on their own development needs. As indicated above if common understanding of poverty alleviation may be based on participation and empowerment of beneficiaries, therefore lack of participation may result in lack of beneficiaries’ empowerment. In this case, the Project cannot claim to realise the potential to achieve objectives of Expanded Public Works Programme.

If meaningful involvement of beneficiaries may be ensured in all stages of the Project there may be no such concerns as what happens to beneficiaries when their contract period expires, beneficiaries would even before contract expiry date voluntarily exit the Project for initiatives of their own. For example the interviewed household contractors indicated no involvement at all with regards to how the project originated except for being employed in it. To the question; can you describe the process that led to the existence of household contractor project? Interviewed household contractors only knew about the project when it was introduced wanting to employ people. Among other reasons that may make people feel not ready to exit development projects is the lack of skills acquired through the lack of beneficiaries’ involvement in project conceptualisation, planning, design and implementation. This may be so because such development projects are driven by governments or transnational corporations for solely their own interests. As a result most development projects have an element of
dependency inherent in them and neglect of the potential beneficiaries. Coetzee and Graaff (1996:1) allude to the above view as follows;

“driven by macro agencies like governments, development initiatives had too frequently failed to engage the people on the ground. Such initiatives have been marked by arrogance, by violence to both people and the environment, and ultimately by failure.”

Participation is broad as a term and may not necessarily achieve the same results in every situation. The kind of participation referred to here is the one that elicits active involvement of participants in development projects in such a way that participants themselves feel part of project conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluating and reviewing when necessary. That kind of participation is different from involving participants for the sake of honouring the constitutional demand of ‘people participation’ in service delivery that affects their lives. But is participation that is involving enough to empower those that participate to take full responsibility of their self development. This type of participation inhibits according to Martinussen (1997:42) “a tendency of development initiatives that are formulated by central decision makers on behalf of the poor, who are merely drawn into the process afterwards to support the implementation of them.”

4.3 Creation of job opportunities

The Household Contractor Project indicates a capacity to create opportunities for short term employment. For example in Ukhahlamba District by the end of the financial year 2008/09 that is by March 2009, there were 1,700 household contractors participating in the Project. Apart from that number, Expanded Public Works Programme District Office is in the process of appointing another 1,200 household contractors for the financial year 2009/10 as part of the Household Contractor Project.
This capacity to create job opportunities means that the Project addresses unemployment among the, especially unemployment of those individuals targeted by Expanded Public Works Programme, namely women, youth and people with disabilities, who find it difficult to find employment. As suggested by McCord and Seventer (2004:1); “if publics works programmes are targeted to poorer groups, with lower levels of school participation and poorer nutrition, impact may be greater per unit of wage transferred, in terms of contributing to human capital.” In this way a stepping stone towards development strategy referred to above to restore balance in society and begin the economic integration of the black majority through increased employment may be realised.

But to reach the level of restoring balance in society and begin the economic integration of black majority, requires drastic revamping of for example initiatives like the Household Contractor Project in line with realities that exist in areas where poverty and underdevelopment rage and where such projects are implemented. Especially in the Eastern Cape Province in this case, where this study has been conducted. Revamping may include small scale local education and political organisation for structural change at the level of community, targeting potential beneficiaries, local level community leadership and the affected government departments. Rather than focusing on glamorous lobbying for improvements or change of legislation at macro level, the focus should rather be on building the local base. Of utmost importance though, would be for such local efforts not to disregard development actions on a broader scope, lest such local efforts be in conflict with national goals. In other words such local initiatives must link up with national development strategies. This view will be elaborated on in recommendations.

Apart from the fact that Household Contractor Project creates employment opportunities and may contribute to integration of poor sections of population to the country’s economic development, the concern lies in the fact that for how long would EPWP employment opportunity continue? According to the Code of Good
Practice for employment and conditions of work for Special Public Works Programmes (2002:4), “no person may be employed in the Programme for more than 24 months within a 5 year cycle, except in circumstances where no other local labour is available.” Such situation where local labour is not available, in the Eastern Cape Province does not exist. Again this condition shows how out of touch the Project philosophy is with the realities of the country. According to Deng and Tjonneland (1996:3);

It is estimated that more than a third of all households or half the population in South Africa can be classified as poor. The poor are overwhelmingly African; the great majority live in rural areas, especially in the former Bantustans, and the majority are women and people living in female headed households.

For people who have been employed before, it is difficult to get used to being unemployed. These are the people who would have thought of being unemployed one day, but it is not easy to accept the fact that one is without employment when it comes to it. How much more then to people who have never been employed before, who have been employed in the Project for the first time in their lives, when they get used to employment which is their only source of income, the contract expires?

In the case of the Household Contractor Project, one is talking about practical basic needs to meet like food, clothing for children and meeting basic family health care needs. The Project contracts such people for 24 months within a 5 year cycle. At the time of signing the contract when people are still dizzy with excitement of finding livelihood means, they do not see the reason why they should be concerned about such a short term contract. Whether it is because of poverty itself that people become such short sighted? Or they follow the logic that ‘one thing at a time?’ But
when they get used to earning some money to buy food, they become conscious of the fact that it is difficult to live without knowing when your next meal will come.

During group discussions; to questions; ‘what can you say about the Household Contractor Project in general? The overwhelming majority of the respondents responded that “the Project is helpful, but if the contract period can be extended even if it is until one wants to voluntarily exit the Project, it may be more helpful.” This view lurches well with McCord and Seventer’s (2004:2) view that; “there is reason to be cautious about the potential of a national public works programme based on offering short term employment opportunities, to have significant impact on poverty, employment or growth.”

The other challenge that faces the Household Contractor Project with regards to job creation opportunities emanates from the term ‘employment’ and what people know and expect of employment. The experience people have of employment is that it goes with benefits and privileges. Benefits like unemployment insurance fund (UIF), which comes to one’s rescue when one’s employment term has come to an end. Benefits like different types of leaves, bonuses, pensions and others to name but a few. In spite of the explanations given to people as part of orientation sessions when they join the Project, all is well, until people complete some months within the Project and they come to their senses and ask for such benefits because the difference between poverty alleviation programme and employment makes very little sense to them. For example to the question, “How can the Project, be improved to meet the needs of the poor people even more?” The general response is that “if the Project may cater for things like funeral undertaking, provision for access to health care facilities, form of income when one is temporarily physical indisposed, this may mean a drastic improvement to the Project.”
As a Special Public Works Programme, the Project is exonerated from normal contributions. For example according to the Code of Good Practice for employment and conditions of work for Special Public Works Programmes (2002:4); “work on SPWP is not classified as employment and a contributor of Unemployment Insurance Act 30 of 1996.” These are the areas that may have been addressed if the conceptualisation of the Project was done with the beneficiaries.

A sensitive area that is not brought up in EPWP policy conceptualisation is the health condition of targeted Project beneficiaries and how to improve it. The Project focuses on labour intensive methods of construction and maintenance. Therefore the types of Project activities entail strenuous work, in the form of digging hard types of soils, delivering materials for pothole repairs, clearing and cleaning drainage, stamping pothole fills. These types of activities require strong and healthy people. It is assumed that poor people by virtue of their status do not all possess the strength required by EPWP activities neither may their condition of health be entirely always that good. In spite of that (if this is about poverty alleviation) there are no efforts within the Project framework indicative of boosting such areas of lack namely health condition and physical development.

For it is a fact that poverty stresses people emotionally, affect their mental capacities to some extent and finally drain their weight physically. As Coate and Rosati (1988:3) state; “if any requirement for a person’s survival, health or basic liberties are inadequately met, mental of physical health is impaired.” The question that remains unanswered is, if such support systems within the Project do not exist, how does one expect household contractors to exit the Project and start their own community projects (as an expectation of EPWP) still healthy and strong? Or stated differently can such a Project be regarded as poverty alleviation then, if it does not take into account the current health state of the very beneficiaries that it is aiming to help?
Because if conditions of the beneficiaries are not taken into account, the implication is that, there is no either or but the physically finishing off of the poor. In other words the poor people’ state of health through deprivation and destitution does not matter, what matters is for the Project to rhetorically convince the world about ‘jobs being created and poverty alleviated.’ This stand point lacks the moral value and empathy that poverty does not only include lack of income and wealth, but according to Chambers (1997:45); “also includes social inferiority, physical weakness, disability and sickness, vulnerability, physical and social isolation, powerlessness and humiliation.”

4.4 Creation of opportunities for skills development

Expanded Public Works Programme projects seek to draw significant numbers of unemployed people into the productive sector of economy, gaining skills while they work. The emphasis is on acquisition of business, technical and life skills. This notion is based on the fact that people who are expected to be employed in EPWP projects are those who have no form of income and find it difficult to get any form of employment. As contained in Code of Good Practice for employment and conditions of work for Special Public Works Programmes (2002:2); “beneficiaries of the programmes should preferably be non-working individuals from the most vulnerable sections of disadvantaged communities who do not receive any social security pension.”

In this way EPWP projects generally become relevant as means to address poverty in the sense that among other features, poverty in African people is characterised by lack of education and skills. Therefore the training that is attached to EPWP project implementation addresses skills shortage and low levels of literacy among the poor section of black population. Life skills are achieved through the provision of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) / (literacy) and HIV/AIDS among others. In this way the Project sticks to its objective namely poverty alleviation.
According to Mvimbi (2000:23); “poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing lack of education, lack of control over resources, skills, poor health and malnutrition.”

While that is so, the question may be asked as to what an extent is the training provided as part of project implementation, adapted to realise skills development of the targeted Project incumbents? This question arise from the fact that the Project targeted groups are people with low levels of literacy, therefore for them to acquire the necessary skills by being in the Project, their literacy level must have been elevated to the level of trainability. That is their level of literacy should be improved before they undergo skills training. Also for the type of training to change them to skilled people, training provided requires long enough period of time to cater for beneficiaries’ low levels of literacy so that they grasp the training that is provided.

For such training to be meaningful, it must be accompanied by a planned on the job follow up training activities. The above points have not been taken into account when training provision is planned as part of project implementation.

The reason for such omission lies with the fact that, training provision is outsourced to training service providers, who would strictly conduct training over a period of time for a fixed amount as contractually agreed upon between them and the Department of Labour. In other words, when one critically considers the training being provided one reads an element of trading from the part of the training service provider. It should be noted that the Implementing agent (i.e. Household Contractor Implementing Agent) is not part of the selection process. Neither is the Implementing Agent part of the processes of compiling the types of training as listed in the Department of Labour Manual. This definitely has implications for the suitability of training provided.
As a result the type of training that gets provided does not entirely assist trainees. To the question, “Did you receive training?” Interviewed household contractors responded positively. To the question, “What were you trained in?” The interviewed household contractors are not sure as to what was the training all about. To the question, “Who trained you?” Interviewed household contractors would respond by giving the first name of the instructor. On the basis of such responses one can safely conclude that the training provided was not perceived by the ‘trained household contractors’ to acquire skills as EPWP projects intend. In this regard it may be concluded that there is incongruence between EPWP intentions with regards to skills development and training that gets provided as part of EPWP project implementation to realise EPWP principle of skills development.

A further incongruence is the fact that the training provided is not South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) or any affiliate thereof accredited. If Household Contractor Project consulted beneficiaries during project conceptualisation, such areas of neglect could be identified and attended to.

5. Conclusion

A salient feature of the Household Contractor Project reflects the lack of consultation among the participating stakeholders, and a total disregard of the Project beneficiaries with regards to their needs and inputs to Project conceptualisation and design. Some of the Project shortcomings that have been identified are as a result of such lack of consultation. For example the relationship of stakeholders like the Department of Labour that is responsible for identification of training service providers and Project Implementing Agent that funds Project implementation is not clearly demarcated. The lines of communications between stakeholders are not clearly defined everyone is authority unto him/herself. As a result training that gets provided does not serve the intended EPWP principle of skills development as expected.
While Household Contractor Project may appear as having fallen short of achieving its intended objectives especially when it comes to skills development and employment creation, there are challenges faced by the Project which are a contributory factor to such lack of achievement. The Project is a government tool to achieve the principles of Expanded Public Works Programme. In this regard there are two competing parties with different competing interests namely the poor people who suffer poverty and the government that has a stipulated term of office. Government will always work towards satisfying the needs and interests above all of the macro level at the expense of the local poor. As Black (1999:213) points out; “big bureaucracies are creatures of political systems, they must answer first of all to the powerful, not to the powerless.” This is what happens to the Household Contractor Project, the quality of skills development and the sustainability of poverty alleviation does not seem to be of importance, what seems important is the number of trained and the number of people employed. This may not be regarded as a government’s failure, but an achievement to build improvements of the Project on. For example one area of improvement may come through consultation of beneficiaries and enhanced participation of community.

These parallel demands of intended goals of the same Project from two different interest groups raise the question of relationship between politics and people. Politics as to what are the current political pressures and demands of the country (in this case South Africa)? And on the other hand what are the needs of the poor people? This is a raging concern in South Africa currently; whose needs count most and suppose to be treated as a priority? This study will not explore this area of concern any further than just to state it. But it has a contribution to the lack of achievement experienced by Household Contractor Project. On the other hand that imbalance between interests and interest groups creates opportunity for the populace to challenge the government of the day.
Apart from all challenges brought up in the report about the Project, there is potential hope that the Project may work well if involvement and participation of beneficiaries is considered. The findings demonstrate clear that such involvement may not just be for the sake of involving beneficiaries, but should also incorporate responsibility sharing among stakeholders like the Implementing Agent – the funder of the Project, Department of Labour – skills development funder including beneficiaries and state clearly what is expected as an account from each stakeholder with regards to responsibility entrusted on it. The process of how this participation which is seen as the cornerstone of revamping the Household Contractor Project to work differently than it is now is elaborated on in recommendations about the Project.

Another issue which the chapter has highlighted is the concept poverty and different interpretations, attached to it by different people from different walks of life. As a term it has been indicated that poverty may be broad and controversial, therefore to avoid confusing what Projects like the Household Contractor Project’s expected outcome are, it is argued based on the findings that one needs to be precise and say: the Household Contractor Project is set up to attain basic needs in the form of the following;

- Provide beneficiaries opportunities to put food on the table. I think that this is different from poverty alleviation.
- Provide people opportunities to work in such a way that they will be able to buy food, provide for health care needs. In other words employment creation should not be left open ended in such a way that it creates impression to people that they will be employed and be able to live like any other employed person they know of.
- Skills development should be controlled in such a way that it states clearly what a person should be able to attain as a skill whilst employed in the Project. This requires careful planning of the Project and thorough consultation of the stakeholders.
6. Recommendations

It is recommended that for the Project to yield positive results with regards to quality employment, skills development opportunities and sustainable work opportunities, the Household Contractor Project must consult broadly and engage all stakeholders in conceptualisation of the Project, its planning and design, its implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Project implementation, assessing impact made by the Project and reviewing Project activities if needs be.

Consultation should take the form of saying for example when Department of Labour is interviewed about acquiring training service providers, the Implementing Agent (i.e. the Funder) is part of the interviewing panel, together with beneficiaries’ representative. That should also apply to the interviews conducted with training service providers for example. Such interviews should include the Funder, beneficiaries’ representatives and the Department of Labour. In other words no one’s interests may be represented by others excepting for the interested. While it is appreciated that such consultation sessions at times are time consuming, but time must be set aside to satisfy that need.

With regards to skills development to facilitate beneficiaries exiting the Project to be on their own, the mass training provided as part of project implementation should be accompanied by training initiatives that take a few people per district and vigorously engage them in particular maintenance and construction activities with mentoring support over a period of time, with targeted achievements. These activities should both include theoretical and practical training. In this case the Implementing Agent should enter into a contractual agreement with the Mentor and the identified beneficiaries and commit themselves to the expected results of the programme over what period of time. This is where household contractors may take over road maintenance in their own vicinities and employ local people themselves. In this way, exiting the project by household contractors may be realised.
If the Provincial Department of Roads and Transport is to stand up to both challenges faced by Household Contractor Project namely: what politicians want out of the Project and the demands of the poor people in the form of poverty alleviation, then careful planning of the Project design and implementation becomes necessary. Planning that involves beneficiaries themselves, to serve both interests, that of employing as many poor people as the budget of the Project may allow to cater for the needs of the politicians, but to build in such employment efforts, means to establish outcomes that will realise poverty alleviation and skills development which are sustainable on a small scale so as to be able to manage them well and build future development initiatives on them. These are small contractors or emerging contractors that come out of the same project as mentioned above.
Bibliography


Appendix 1

Guiding questions for group discussions

The following are guiding questions that have been asked to household contractors during group discussions.

What is entailed in Household Contractor Project?

Can you describe the process that led to the existence of household contractor project?

How have you contributed in bringing the Project about?

What do you think the Project was set up to achieve?

How has the Project helped you and your family?

How has the Project empowered you?

How can the Project be improved to help the poor people?

Is there a difference in your life between now and the time you were not yet appointed to the project?

What is the difference?

How has the training that you received by being employed in the Project helped you?

What do you think can be included to make the training more helpful for you?
HOUSEHOLD CONTRACTOR PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire has been administered to three EPWP officials and three Senqu Local Municipality officials.

PROGRAMME HISTORY Year of Monitoring and Evaluation ..........(date) ..........(month) ..........(year)

When did the Project start? .......(date) .....(month) ......(year)

How many contractors have been employed since the beginning of the Project? ............

How were household contractors selected into the Project? ..........................................................

INFORMATION ABOUT TRAINING

How many household contractors have been trained in the work they are expected to perform? ..............................................................................................................................

In what skills have household contractor been trained?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Year of training</th>
<th>Duration of training</th>
<th>Service Provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often does training get conducted? .............................................................................

Who conducts the training? ................................................................................................

What follow-ups get conducted after training? .................................................................
By whom? .................................................................................................

Who coordinates provision of training for Household Contractors? .................

..............................................................................................................

What informs this coordination? (in other words what training gets conducted and why
such training) .........................................................................................

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

What is the duration of the Household Contractor’s contract with the programme? .......

.................................................................(years or months)

What determines such duration? ......................................................................

..............................................................................................................

What does the programme do to empower Household Contractors socially and
economically? .........................................................................................

How many household contractor are part of the savings clubs scheme?......................

Are there household contractors that are part of the savings club scheme? Yes.....No.....

Are the saving club accounts that household contractor part of, active?...Yes......No.....

What programmes are planned to serve as Household Contractors’ Programme exit
Strategy? 1.................................................................

2 .................................................................

3 .................................................................

Name of official conducting monitoring and evaluation .................................