

**Mapping the Radio KC community: A case study assessing
the impact of participatory research methods in assisting
community radio producers to identify programming
content.**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
of
Rhodes University**

by

**Brett Russell Davidson
January 2004**

Abstract

This thesis deals with the introduction of participatory research methods to programming staff working at Radio KC, a South African community radio station based in Paarl, in the Western Cape province. The focus is on a series of workshops conducted at the station, dealing with research tools developed to enable station workers to undertake research of their community. The aim was to determine, by means of a case study, whether the introduction of participatory research methods could improve the ability of community broadcasters to facilitate democratic participation among the communities in which they operate. More particularly, the thesis assesses whether the application of such methods has improved the ability of the programming staff that were involved in this case study to identify a wider range of stories and voices within their target community, for inclusion in programming content.

The participatory research techniques that are applied at the radio station are based on ideas in 'civic mapping' developed by Harwood and McCrehan (1996) under the auspices of The Pew Center for Civic Journalism, and supplemented by insights from Friedland (2001) and Downs and Stea (1977) about the cognitive, normative and imagined dimensions of community. All of the ideas and techniques were adapted for the South African situation.

The findings of the research project illustrate that for community stations, the key concepts of 'community' and 'participation' are highly complex ones and that stations need assistance to apply these concepts in their everyday practice. The account of the intervention at Radio KC shows that the process did indeed assist the individual research participants to better deal with the application of these concepts. It did not, however, make much impact on the station as a whole. Reasons for this are believed to lie in the organisational dynamics of the station, and the fact that the model as applied in this case did not provide a means for tackling the agendas, investments and power relations that define the activities of individuals at a given community radio station – what Hochheimer (1993) talks about as the entrenchment of power and personalities. In order to address these shortcomings, an attempt is made to develop a model for future application, which places the mapping process within the context of a broader strategic planning process, focussed on a station's programming schedule.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my supervisor, Jeanne du Toit. Her meticulous and detailed feedback on several drafts of this thesis, has been invaluable. Without her contribution and encouragement, this would have been a far poorer piece of work. Several friends and colleagues also offered helpful comments on various aspects of this thesis. In particular, I would like to thank Sean Jacobs and Desmond Guilfoyle. Thanks too, to Shepi Mati and my other colleagues at Idasa for their interest and support. Very importantly, I would also like to thank the staff, volunteers and members of Radio KC, for their willingness to participate in this case study, and to have their actions, comments, and working relationships placed under scrutiny in this way. Without them, this work would not have been possible. Sonwabile Dwangu deserves special thanks for his ongoing enthusiasm about this project, and his leadership role in helping ensure that it did indeed take place. Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Piko Sipamla, for his moral support and for enduring through many lonely evenings and weekends, while I was sitting in front of a computer.

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Section One: The Research Topic	1
Section Two: The Research Context	1
Section Three: The Research Design	6
Section Four: Thesis Structure	7
Section Five: A Note on the Use of Language	8
Chapter Two: Theoretical Background	10
Section One: Situating Community Radio – a History of Concepts	10
Section Two: Analysing Community Radio – Some Key Terms	17
Section Three: Community Radio in South Africa	26
Section Four: A Search for Useful Research Tools	33
Section Five: Conclusion	39
Chapter Three: Methodology	41
Section One: The Research Design	41
Section Two: Execution of the Research	47
Section Three: Conclusion	58
Chapter Four: Research Findings	59
Section One: Perceptions of Community and Participation	61
Section Two: The Participatory Workshops and Their Impact on the Research Participants	75
Section Three: Organisational Dynamics at Radio KC	90
Section Four: Conclusion	95

Chapter Five: Recomendations	96
Section One: General Conclusions	96
Section Two: Improving the Way the Process is Established	98
Section Three: Improving the Mapping Process	102
Section Four: The Strategic Planning Process	105
Section Five: Conclusion	106
 Bibliography	 108
 Appendix A: Maps Drawn by Station Workers	 118
Appendix B: Questionnaires	125
Appendix C: Participatory Workshop Curriculum	131
Appendix D: Radio KC Community Map	150

Chapter One: Introduction

Section One: The Research Topic

This thesis deals with the introduction of participatory research methods to programming staff working at Radio KC, a South African community radio station based in Paarl, in the Western Cape province. The focus is on a series of workshops conducted at the station, dealing with research tools developed to enable station workers to undertake research of their community. The aim was to determine, by means of a case study, whether the introduction of participatory research methods could improve the ability of community broadcasters to facilitate democratic participation among the communities in which they operate. More particularly, the thesis assesses whether the application of such methods has improved the ability of the programming staff that were involved in this case study to identify a wider range of stories and voices within their target community, for inclusion in programming content.

Section Two: The Research Context

It could be argued that South Africa is in danger of developing a “democracy without the people” (Mattes, 2002:22). Although there has been high voter turnout for elections since 1994, citizen involvement in decision-making is on the decline. The high level of popular participation that emerged as part of the struggle against apartheid has fallen off dramatically since the advent of democracy. According to public opinion indicators collected in surveys by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), this country’s level of community and political participation compares badly with that of its counterparts in other African countries (Mattes, Davids & Africa, 2000). This problem is particularly acute at the local level. According to Roefs and Liebenberg (1999), South Africans in most provinces know and understand very little about Parliament – and even less about their local government. The lack of popular involvement exists despite constitutional requirements for extensive public

participation in terms of local development plans and service delivery (De Villiers, 2001). More recent studies indicate that public dissatisfaction with local government continues, and there are low levels of trust in political leaders and institutions (Mattes, Keulder, Chikwana, Africa and Davids, 2003).

Community radio stations have the potential to play a key role in increasing local participation. Indeed, the Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999 includes local participation in station activities as one of the defining elements of a community broadcast service. As Carpentier, Lie and Servaes (2003:59) point out, there are at least two good reasons for linking participation in the activities of a local radio station, and participation in democratic life in general. Firstly, community radio stations can be viewed as part of civil society – a segment of society viewed as crucial for the viability of democracy. Participation in community stations thus constitutes participation in civil society. Secondly, participation in community radio, which Carpentier, Lie and Servaes refer to as “one of the many (micro) spheres relevant to daily life” (2003:59), is important because it allows people to learn and adopt democratic attitudes and practices.

The concept of participation referred to in my research is that of a ‘strong’ democracy, as described by Friedland (2001) – one that is both participatory and deliberative. In articulating my beliefs about strong democracy, I draw on the concept of a public sphere as described by Habermas (1992), in which citizens have the opportunity to deliberate critically over issues and problems that are important to them. It is against this ideal that I evaluate the impact that participatory research has had on programme content at Radio KC.

Participation, even at the community level, is not easy to achieve. In a background paper on the role of community broadcasting, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) warns that the principle of community involvement could be compromised because of the difficulties in achieving meaningful participation, and because stations are often by necessity preoccupied with generating income for survival (MISA, 2001). That these dangers are all too real is illustrated by an address by the Chairperson of the National Community Radio Forum to the organisation’s Annual General Meeting in 2001, in which he chastised station managers for failing to come to grips with the role that communities should play within stations (Matthews, 2001). More recently, Van Zyl (2003) has confirmed that at many community

stations, the struggle for financial survival continues to deflect managers' attention from "the different opportunities and options open to their station" (2003:3).

The difficulties faced by stations in attempting to implement community participation in their day-to-day activities can be seen to operate at different levels. Examined in legal terms, community radio in South Africa allows for what a number of scholars have labelled the highest form of participation – community ownership and management. However, since the word 'participation' means very different things to different people (White, 1994), the model of community radio outlined in legislation (Broadcasting Act no 4 of 1999; IBA Act no 153 of 1993) does not offer sufficient guidance for the way that participation will be achieved. There are not enough guidelines for how stations are supposed to interpret the concept, especially in terms of how differences are understood and played out in the community context. In addition to the concept of 'participation', the legal framework does not, crucially, tease out the complexity of the concept of 'community'.

For licensing purposes, the IBA Act (no 153 of 1993) makes a distinction between communities sharing a particular interest and geographically founded communities. This thesis focuses only on stations serving the latter category, because it is these stations that tend to serve information-poor communities that experience the challenges of participation most severely. Used for licensing purposes, the concept of 'geographical community' may conveniently and simply describe all the people living within a prescribed area, but the use of the term also carries with it the defining feature of the concept as it is generally used – a sense of unity and togetherness, or what Carpentier, Lie and Servaes term "the feeling of belonging and sharing" (2003:54). There is a danger here, however, as Opubor (2000) points out: this use of the term has proved particularly problematic in post-colonial Africa, where the idea of community has often been used to "...de-emphasise differences, ignore particularities and specificities and minimise or even proscribe any tendency that was likely to question the political orthodoxy" (2000:11). Under apartheid in South Africa, 'communities' were constructed through residential and social segregation (Zegeye, 2001). Thus, unless the word 'community' is used with caution, the argument that participation has been achieved because the 'community' owns and runs a station can mask the fact that it is certain individuals and groups that own and run a station. This entrenchment of power at a community radio station may reflect disparities in the access to power and resources within the broader social sphere.

Stations thus have little guidance in how to address their communities as cohesive entities. They struggle with day-to-day decisions about who is included or excluded, who participates or who does not. In this regard, Hochheimer (1993) asks a series of questions that highlight the tough issues that community radio stations must confront at the micro level:

Who speaks for which community interest? Who decides what are legitimate voices to be heard? Which points of view are most compelling? ...How are community views solicited, encouraged? In other words, to what degree does/can the station bring its audiences into the process of programme production for themselves? (1993:476)

In considering the kinds of questions raised by Hochheimer (1993) it is important to bear in mind that community radio stations must negotiate the tensions between the democratic ideals of participation and inclusivity and the "...desire to create an economically viable community media organisation" (Howley, 2001:1). Some of the qualities of radio may make it more open to participation than other media (its relative cheapness to produce and its technological requirements mean that it is more accessible to ownership and management by poor communities), but the pressure of producing 24 hours of programming 365 days a year demands efficiency¹, easily replicable programme formats and production templates, and a hierarchy that facilitates quick decision-making in a fast-paced media environment (Hendy, 2000). These can all interfere with the requirements of democratic participation. Participation can be slow and time consuming, is ideally non-hierarchical in order to satisfy the democratic ideal of equality, and may result in idiosyncratic programmes, which do not easily sit within the formats and templates the radio industry has come to adopt.

The community radio sector lacks the skills that would equip stations to tackle these complexities. While there may be a desire on the part of the sector to ensure a greater degree of community participation (Matthews, 2001; Misa, 2001), there are a number of areas in which input is needed (Wanyeki, 2000). Suggestions as to what kind of contribution is needed range from training for boards and management on station governance, to the need for specific community mobilisation skills (Nell & Shapiro, 2001). It has been pointed out that there is a need for all training to explicitly address the problems highlighted above so that, for example, station staff begin to

¹ Although there is no legal requirement for community stations to broadcast 24 hours a day, there are substantial pressures on them to do so – for example, to help ensure their competitiveness against 24 commercial stations.

think about which kinds of audience research or marketing techniques might undermine or enhance their participatory mission, or which programme formats allow for greater or lesser degrees of community involvement. As Wanyeki (2000) puts it, training needs to "...deconstruct...internalised cultural and media values..." and to "...address questions of how to bring the marginalised into the voice, into the picture and the framing of the picture – and how to bring [in] the marginalised even within communities..." (2000:32). Wanyeki (2000) also notes that there is a need for research skills so that stations can begin to address the complex nature of their communities, instead of simply making assumptions about them. The kind of input needed is the kind that would help stations conduct ongoing research about the social environment in which they operate, the evolving needs of communities, the attitude of community members towards media performance and the effect of media on the community (Opubor, 2000:20).

In order for these needs to be met, it is important that more research be done on community radio. In particular, there is a need for more detailed research at station level, aimed at meeting stations' localised needs. Much of the research that has been done on community radio so far takes the form of general collections of brief station case-studies, which lack details that illustrate the way in which stations operate from day to day (Gumucio, 2001; Girard, 2001 and Mwangi, 2001 are good examples). In addition to collections of case studies, there are overviews of community media in specific regions (Boafo, 2000), and examinations of specific issues within a country (Nell & Shapiro, 2001; Wigston, 2001). There is also no shortage of articles and books that discuss in general terms the value of community radio for participatory development and participatory democracy. While these are all sorely needed and extremely useful, there is also a need for more research which seeks to bring together the theoretical ideals of democratic participation with the struggles and compromises of participation in practice, in order that each might be adapted and grown in the light of the other.

Despite the shortcomings of community radio stations in engaging their communities, and despite the many problems stations face in carrying out their mandate, it is important not to simply give up, or abandon community radio as an ideal gone wrong, but rather to actively search for concrete solutions to the problems that stations face. The ideals that gave rise to community radio – of participatory decision-making and community involvement in development – are central to the

democracy that South Africans have established, and are striving to maintain and entrench (De Villiers, 2001). In the face of low levels of citizen involvement in public life (Mattes, Davids & Africa, 2000) community radio stations, despite all their shortcomings, are among the few institutions that offer genuine opportunities for community ownership and participation.

It is my belief, however, that stations can only achieve the involvement of their audiences if they decide for themselves what is meant by 'community'. This must first take place at a conceptual level, where stations unpack the associations bound up in the use of the term. Secondly, stations need to take a series of steps towards a better understanding of their specific communities. This will help reveal the range of voices and views available for inclusion in programming, and thus go some way towards improving participation.

It is with this in mind that I argue, in this thesis, that the staff at community radio stations need to take conscious steps to involve their audiences and that in doing so the first step is to better understand the nature of 'community' on a conceptual level, and their particular community on a practical one. The thesis deals with research as a skills area that can empower stations to take these steps, so that they can gauge the needs, preferences and responses of their communities. Specifically, it explores a particular set of techniques that station staff might adopt in order to better understand the communities they serve, so that they might identify programming content that can help to facilitate democratic participation within such communities.

Section Three: The Research Design

The aim in this thesis has been to understand a community radio station (Radio KC) and its community from the perspective of members of the programming team. Because of this, qualitative research methods were adopted, as these were best suited to the consideration of the subjective experience of the subjects being researched. Given that the introduction of civic mapping at Radio KC was a deliberate intervention into the operation of the programming team, the study can also be understood as a form of participatory action research (Bless & Higson Smith, 1995).

This research problem is explored by means of a case study focusing on Radio KC in Paarl, in the Western Cape. Radio KC offered an appropriate site because it is a

typical example of a station that serves a geographical community in a semi-rural area. The community is information poor, and still struggling to overcome the divisions left by apartheid. Given that the station had explicitly committed itself to informing, empowering and transforming its community² and that station role-players had begun to grapple with the problems of achieving community participation in a divided society (F. Huizies, interview 29/08/2002), it offered a worthwhile site of intervention for purposes of this study.

The thesis is also a case study in the sense that it focuses on the introduction of one particular set of participatory research techniques at the station. Working with the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, Harwood and McCrehan (1996) have developed a set of tools for what they call 'civic mapping'. This refers to a process by which journalists go about identifying various layers of the community and the voices and issues within them, beyond the official and the private realms – the two layers that journalists tend to focus on most. Journalists have applied Harwood and McCrehan's (1996) techniques in a number of newsrooms in the USA in order to tap into new voices, perspectives and experiences. Supplemented by insights from Friedland (2001) and Downs and Stea (1977) about the cognitive, normative and imagined dimensions of community, and adapted for the South African situation, these tools were considered eminently suitable for application in the case study.

Section Four: Thesis Structure

The material for this thesis is divided into four broad sections. In Chapter Two, the concepts of 'community' and 'participation' are explored in more detail, specifically in the context of community radio and the problems that the community radio sector faces in implementing community participation. These issues are then examined with specific reference to the South African situation, and the legal framework for community radio in South Africa. Finally, Chapter Two presents the fields of public journalism and cognitive mapping as areas where some practical solutions to the problems might be found.

² Radio KC's mission statement reads: "We strive to inform, empower and to transform our communities through broadcasting relevant developmental programs by partnering with likeminded development organisations and focus groups in our broadcast area."

In Chapter Three, I reflect on the validity of the research plan for the case study as well as its implementation. In discussing the tools and strategies developed for data collection, this chapter deals with the plans for the workshops, field trips and exercises in which the community radio participants took part, as well as my own strategy for data collection in order that the participatory process might be evaluated and assessed.

I set out my findings in Chapter Four, examining the manner in which the workshop participants and to an extent the station membership as a whole engaged with issues of community and participation during the research process. In addition to this, I evaluate the success of the process in leading to changes in the station's approach to programming and news.

Based on the findings from the intervention at Radio KC, Chapter Five is an attempt to develop guidelines for a model for a community research process that might be usefully applied at other stations.

Supplemental and illustrative material is included in appendices. These include extracts from the curriculum for the workshops that were presented to the community radio participants, the community map, produced at the end result of their research process, and examples of the pre- and post-research questionnaires filled in by the participants.

Section Five: A Note on the Use of Language

During apartheid, the South African population was classified into four racial groups: white, black, Indian and coloured. A white person was defined as someone who appeared white and was generally accepted as such, a black person was defined as a member of an indigenous African group, while a coloured person was defined as a person who could neither be considered white nor black (Zegeye, 2001). As Zegeye (2001) points out, this classification of people into racial and ethnic groups represented an attempt by the apartheid government to "...suppress and distort identity by suppressing all constituents of identity except race and ethnicity" (2001:6). Moreover, these categories of race and ethnicity were imposed from above.

However, ten years after the demise of apartheid, the use of these racial categories is still common. Firstly, this is because it is difficult to recognise formerly

disadvantaged individuals and groups (and thus to address their claims to social justice) without reference to the apartheid categorisations. Secondly, most South Africans still use these terms to describe themselves (Gibson & Gouws cited in Zegeye, 2001:14). These racial terms are used throughout this thesis. While the problematic nature of these categories is recognised, for the sake of simplicity I have chosen to use terms such as 'coloured', 'black', and 'white', without inverted commas. As Martin (2001:263) points out, this usage is common in speech and in print, and does not mean support for ideologies separating human beings in terms of 'race'.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

In this chapter I will look at some of the discourses that approaches to community radio are based in, illustrating that they are deeply rooted in concepts of participatory development and democracy. I will then provide a critique of these concepts as they relate to community radio: in particular, the concepts of 'community' and 'participation'. It is my argument that these two concepts are complex and that the way in which they are used in the discourse around community media does not provide stations with sufficient clarity about how they might be applied in everyday practice. Furthermore, I argue that it is crucial that, as a first step towards facilitating greater community participation in practice, stations begin to do research into the nature, extent and dimensions of their specific communities. Finally, I will offer a few ideas about specific research tools with which stations might undertake the task of investigating their communities.

Concepts of participatory development and democracy are key starting points, as it is out of these that the imperative for participatory processes at the community level arises. I begin by examining the theoretical development of these concepts, and then apply them to the South African example.

Section One: Situating Community Radio – a History of Concepts

1.1. Concepts of development and democracy and their links to communication

Social scientists tend to use the term 'development' in different ways. Scholars in the field of development have identified what are variously called three major 'paradigms' (Servaes, 1996b; Melkote, 1991), 'approaches', 'models' (Jacobson, 1994; Kumar, 1994), 'perspectives' or 'theories' (Servaes, 1996b), each of which conceives of development within a specific understanding of democracy, power and social change. The 'modernisation' approach, which emerged in the late 1940s and 1950s, is linked to ideas around the expansion of Western models of democracy and free-market capitalism. The 'dependency' approach, which gained currency in the 1960s, is linked with resistance to modernisation theory. A third approach, emerging

in the 1970s and '80s, sometimes referred to as 'another' development, sees development as a multidimensional process (Servaes, 1996b). Central to this third approach to social change is an insistence on the importance of participatory processes in which people define their own needs and participate in defining and driving the processes by which those needs are met (Serves, 1996b). While the three approaches to development emerged in successive eras largely in response to perceived shortcomings of their predecessors, the earlier perspectives have not 'died' – some scholars argue, for example, that despite powerful critiques of its shortcomings and the promotion of alternatives, the modernisation approach has remained dominant (Melkote, 1991; Ascroft & Masilela, 1994).

Development emerged as a major international concern following the Second World War. Under the dominant modernisation approach, social scientists presented the industrial economies of the West as the ideal model for all countries to follow, and conceived of development as a cumulative and progressive process of evolution, from traditional economies and political systems to the modern industrial nation state (Servaes, 1996b). Under this approach, development is seen as a way of bringing about progressive economic growth. In addition to this, the modernisation approach links development with the American values of free enterprise, capitalism and representative democracy. Melkote (1991) describes this perspective of development as a 'top-down' approach. The idea is that third world countries have to bridge the development gap, to 'catch up' with the developed world.

By the 1970's there was widespread pessimism over the success of the modernisation approach. Many developing countries had made little progress towards building industrialised economies, while the development process often had very negative consequences (Melkote, 1991). As Sainath (1996) illustrates in examples taken from a range of communities in India, development defined as progress has often produced unforeseen negative consequences as the result of the adoption of inappropriate solutions to social problems (and often the developmental problem was incorrectly identified in the first place).

The dependency approach, which emerged primarily from the writing of Latin American social scientists in the 1960s and '70s (Servaes, 1996b), stressed the role of global economic and political factors in keeping some countries 'under-developed' in relation to others. This approach brought an important new perspective to the debate on development. Scholars, mainly from developing countries, argued that the

underdevelopment of the Third World, far from being a result of 'backwardness', was in fact a consequence of the development of the Western nations. Critics of this approach, however, argue that the dependency perspective sees development as subject solely to global dynamics of power and economics, and does not make space for a multiplicity of conditions, needs and perspectives at the local level (Servaes, 1996b; Melkote, 1991; Kumar 1994). It can be argued that this approach has gained new strength in the present context of globalisation (Servaes, 1996b) where, for example, scholars of development and economics see national governments as relatively powerless in the face of multi-national corporations and organisations such as the IMF (Stiglitz, 2002).

The participatory approach to development emerged in response to the shortcomings of both the modernisation and dependency paradigms (Servaes, 1996b). Following the failures of development projects undertaken using the modernisation approach, scholars began to question its value. Under the modernisation approach, for example, experts generally focused on 'diffusing' innovations developed outside the affected communities or countries, from outside, through the use of uni-directional 'top-down' methods of communication (Servaes, 1996b; Melkote, 1991). When communities failed to adopt the proposed innovations, agents of change tended to blame the people for being 'backward' (Kumar, 1994; Arnst, 1996). However, proponents of an alternative approach put forward the idea that when it came to the development of their own communities, ordinary people might know better than the 'experts' (Servaes, 1996b). More appropriate development options might emerge at the local level, as the people identified their own problems and looked for solutions appropriate to their circumstances and cultures. This popular involvement in decision-making about development at the local level would in turn ensure that local communities adopted more favourable attitudes towards development solutions (Servaes, 1996b). This approach thus emphasises the importance of communities being involved in developing innovations suited to their own context, or in working out how existing innovations might be reconciled with core cultural practices and traditional values.

Both the modernisation and participatory approaches to development can be linked with corresponding concepts of democracy. Along with economic progress, the modernisation approach to development seeks to promote the expansion of representative democracy on the Western model (Kumar, 1994). Within this

approach, democracy is limited to a process through which citizens elect an elite group of representatives who are entrusted with making all the important decisions (Jacobson, 1994; Sirianni & Friedland, 2001). Just as the modernisation approach to development produced negative consequences, so critics of exclusively representative models of democracy charge that it has produced negative side effects such as widespread public cynicism, apathy and disconnection from political life (Sirianni & Friedland, 2001).

The participatory approach to development, in turn, can be linked with ideas of participatory democracy. While the participatory approach to development arises from an attempt to correct or avoid the negative consequences of modernisation, participatory democracy emerges in a bid to rescue democracy from the cynicism and apathy that the purely representative model seems to breed. Contemporary theorists such as Servaes (1996), Mathews (1999), Boyte (1995) and Page (1996) argue that both processes of development and democracy should necessarily include popular participation in decision-making – continual citizen involvement in deliberation on communal or public issues, government ‘by the people’ at all levels, and widespread involvement in civil society (Mathews, 1999; Servaes, 2000; Rockefeller Foundation, 1997; Taylor, 1995). These theorists argue that participation helps consolidate democracy by bestowing legitimacy on government decisions, and promotes success in development efforts because it ensures that projects take into account communities’ values and needs (White, 1994). Many of the contemporary theorists writing about participatory democracy in this way are strongly influenced by Habermas’s theory of the public sphere (Habermas, 1991) and this influence is particularly noticeable in writing around the idea of participatory democracy as ‘deliberative’ democracy (Mathews, 1999; Sirianni & Friedland, 2001). As Taylor (1995) interprets the concept, the public sphere is defined as “...common space in which the members of society meet, through a variety of media (print, electronic) and also in face-to-face encounters, to discuss matters of common interest; and thus to be able to form a common mind about those matters” (1995:259).

The approaches to development and democracy outlined above are associated, within national and international policies, with corresponding conceptions of the role played by communication in social change. As has been mentioned, under the modernisation approach for example, communication is conceived of and practiced as a uni-directional, top-down process. Under this approach ordinary people remain

passive recipients of communication designed to influence them into passively receiving modernising innovations. Corresponding with the dependency model's critique of the modernisation approach, theories of media imperialism argue that trans-national media play a crucial role maintaining the dominance of the West, and keeping the developing world in a subordinate position (Strelitz, 2003). Finally, participatory approaches to development and democracy conceive of communication as a multi-faceted and multi-directional process in which ordinary people actively communicate with one another, and are able to influence elites and respond to messages from the 'top' (Servaes, Jacobson & White, 1996).

As many writers have observed, however, national and international communications policies often act to legitimate and reinforce existing power structures, while the commercial mass media remains dedicated to profit rather than social benefits (McChesney, 1998; Duncan, 2001; Servaes, 2000). Under these conditions a small, powerful elite controls the media and, in practice, it is only they who enjoy freedom of speech (McChesney, 1998; Duncan, 2001; Servaes, 2000). However, according to many contemporary writers on communication (Servaes, 2000 and Gumucio, 2001 are two examples), if widespread popular involvement in decision-making is to take place, ordinary people need access to the media beyond being readers, listeners, viewers, or target markets. They must have the ability to create and distribute messages. Thus, decentralised media systems, democratic communication institutions, and community media are important (Servaes, 2000). There is an important link to Habermas's (1991) theory of the public sphere here too. Habermas (1992), for example, draws a distinction between a genuinely critical public sphere which is self-regulated, inclusive and horizontally linked (critical publicity), and communication processes which are staged by the powerful through the mass media in order to bring about conformity, loyalty or specific consumer behaviour (manipulative publicity):

This is the question of whether, and to what extent, a public sphere dominated by mass media provides a realistic chance for the members of civil society...to bring about changes in the spectrum of values, topics and reasons channelled by external influences, to open it up in an innovative way, and to screen it critically (Habermas, 1992:455).

The challenge in terms of communication under the participatory approach is to find ways in which the media can be set up so that they operate as a public sphere through

which people deliberate about the issues facing their communities and societies, and decide on forms of joint action (Mathews, 1999).

1.2. Implications for community radio

As an alternative to the uni-directional, top-down model of mass communication inherent in large national and global mass communications networks, activists often view community radio as one means of realising the ideals of participation and horizontal communication, particularly in the repressive, socio-political contexts of developing countries (Oluronisola, 2002). Indeed, there are numerous examples around the world where activists have put this vision into practice, giving rise to a new movement in media. The prime example of this is Latin America, where small, isolated communities of poor farmers or miners began their own community radio stations in the mid-1940s as means of education, to air their views and to challenge the monopoly of state media (Gumucio, 2001). Stations and initiatives mushroomed, particularly during the social and political struggles during the 1960s and '70s. In the '70s, similar initiatives began to emerge in Europe, also as part of social and political struggles. Community radio stations began in other regions too, such as Asia and Africa (Gumucio, 2001; Mwangi, 2001), often in the context of a broader movement towards democratisation. In Southern and Eastern Africa, for example, community radio began to grow strongly in the wake of the widespread political changes of the 1990s, when many countries in the region held democratic elections after decades of dictatorship or one-party rule. These political changes brought with them deregulation of the media, creating windows of opportunity for community broadcasters. At that time, a number of initiatives in participatory communication evolved into community media projects (Wanjau, 2000).

While many of these community media initiatives emerged in the context of participatory development communication at the local level, observers have recognised the value of community media, and community radio in particular, in the context of democracy in general (Carpentier, Lie & Servaes, 2003). Firstly, as indicated in Chapter One, community media organisations form part of local civil society and, as several theorists have pointed out (Mathews, 1999; Botte, 1995; Carpentier, Lie & Servaes, 2003), participation in civil society allows people to learn the habits and attitudes crucial to democracy. Secondly, as media institutions, community stations contribute to democratisation through media. As Duncan (2001)

points out, community radio represents a crucial element of the democratisation of broadcasting, which "...should in turn lead to the democratisation of society, as the ensuing plurality of information should encourage people to make informed choices and participate actively in public debate" (Duncan, 2001:106). Community media institutions, like other media, contribute to the free flow of information – important to any democracy. In addition to this, however, as participatory institutions, community stations form an important example in which people are actively trying to contribute to the establishment of a common space to which all the members of a community have access, and in which they are able to engage with one another in public discussion and debate.

It is, of course, to the establishment of such a space that Habermas (1991) refers in his theorisation of the 'public sphere'. The concept of the public sphere is, indeed, of great value to the discussion of the role of community radio in the democratisation of society. The concept can also be very fruitfully applied in the context of community involvement in development at the local level and has indeed been utilised by writers on participatory development (White, 1994). These writers view the public sphere as the space in which community participation occurs, where the community meets to identify its problems and issues, deliberate on options and approaches and decide on courses of action (White, 1994). The importance of community media is that their participatory nature should ideally enable them to create and become this public sphere. Because the local public sphere is nested within larger regional and national ones (Taylor, 1995), the issues raised and discussed in the local public sphere should also be able to feed into the national agenda.

Key definitions of community radio reflect the ideals of community participation in this public sphere, which is seen as a form of democracy in action. Gumucio asserts that it is community radio that has "...invented participatory communication as we know it today" (2001:16). AMARC, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, asserts that, "...community radio represents the democratisation of communications" (Bonin and Opoku-Mensah 1998:1). This indicates that community ownership, control and participation are seen as central to community broadcasting. Girard (2001) says that, while most radio stations participate in the lives of their listeners, it is only community radio that allows "...the community to participate in the life of the station" (2001:xi). Closer to home, in

Africa, the Windhoek Charter on Broadcasting in Africa defines community broadcasting as:

...broadcasting which is for, by and about the community, and whose ownership and management is representative of the community, which pursues a social development agenda, and which is non-profit (*Windhoek Charter on Broadcasting in Africa*, May 2001).

These definitions, however, represent the vision or the ideal. The unique characteristic of a community radio station is its dual nature as both a community organisation and as a broadcast institution that shares many characteristics of the mass media. While it could be argued that the unique position of community radio as a participatory medium enables it to provide a space for just the sort of critical publicity Habermas (1992) is concerned with, it is important to bear in mind that community radio operates through a mass medium and is thus potentially the site for manipulative publicity. Thus, the very thing that makes it so valuable in the context of participatory development and democracy in theory is also that which makes the realisation of the participatory ideal very difficult in practice. It is important, therefore, to move beyond the definitions and the rhetoric, and to examine whether the democratic ideals of community radio are realised in practice. In attempting to do this, the starting point in the context of this thesis is an examination of how the central concepts of 'participation' and 'community' are defined and applied in the context of community radio.

Section Two: Analysing Community Radio – Some Key Terms

2.1. Participation

Even before we come to grips with the way in which the term 'participation' is invoked within definitions of community radio, it should be noted that different people mean different things when they use the term. As White (1994) points out, the word is "...kaleidoscopic, fragile and elusive, changing from one moment to another" (1994:16). Public participation can refer to activities in the formal political domain – for example, a citizen making a submission to a Parliamentary committee or attending a public hearing, or an elected politician consulting her constituency (De Villiers, 2001). It can also refer to activities in the broader public sphere – for example,

listeners calling in to discuss a government policy on a radio talk show, or members of a book club sharing ideas about the issues of the day.

The variety of meanings associated with this term becomes even more confusing when one looks closely at the agendas that inform its use within public discourse. The introduction of participatory activities on the part of the powerful may reflect a genuine desire to bring about real sharing of power. Often, however, words and practices apparently intended to promote participation are in fact used to hide the real workings of power (Peruzzo, 1996). For example, participation can be limited (a community is invited to discuss and choose between various pre-selected solutions, but is not given the opportunity to identify the very problems it wishes to be solved in the first place), or manipulated (rhetoric around participation is used as a cover for attempts to adapt community demands to the interests of the powerful, and participatory processes can be halted if this does not occur) (Peruzzo, 1996). Because there are often hidden agendas that lead to large gaps between the rhetoric and the practice of participation, there is a need for analytical tools that enable one to distinguish precisely between 'sham' participatory activities and the 'real thing'.

There have, in context of the high levels of ambiguity associated with this term, been several attempts to pin down more precisely what participation means in the context of communication and community media. According to De Villiers (2000) and MISA (2001), participation involves principles such as inclusiveness, shared responsibility, access, transparency and accountability. Participatory communication, according to Gumucio (2001), 'works horizontally', is process orientated and is about consciousness-raising rather than persuasion. Bordenave (1994) defines participatory communication as "...that type of communication in which all the interlocutors are free and have equal access to the means to express their viewpoints, feelings and experiences" (1994:43). These theorists' contributions help flesh out the concept and point the way towards the development of measurable indicators of the presence of genuine participation.

An influential framework for defining and understanding participatory communication emerged in debates at UNESCO in the 1970s (Servaes, 1996a:17). This framework offers a useful way of assessing the participatory nature of communication systems. It provides for three progressive tiers of public involvement in communication systems. Under this framework, 'access' refers to the lowest form of participation, and is defined in terms of opportunities for citizens to choose varied

media content and formats and to provide feedback on their reactions and preferences to media and production institutions. The next step up, 'participation', refers to consultation of the public with respect to management, planning, and production processes. The most advanced form of participation is 'self-management': here the public has decision-making power and is fully involved in policy-making and planning. This framework is useful, as it moves beyond an 'either/or' approach and treats participation in a more complex way by introducing the idea of a continuum along which various forms of participation can be placed. Community radio is an example of a sector in which there is an attempt to realise the third tier under the UNESCO framework. Stations within this sector are, according to the classic definition, owned and managed by communities themselves.

Caution is in order, however, as community participation is by no means ensured within a sector informed by such a definition. The mere existence of community radio stations under a legal framework that provides for community ownership and participation does not guarantee that the stations will be operated in such a manner as to constitute a genuine public sphere. Hochheimer (1993), for example, observes that even when stations are officially 'owned and run' by members of a community, there are still two possible types of station-community relationship: the station can be a centre "*of* the community" or a centre "*for* the community" (1993:476). If a station is a centre *for* the community, it is a source of information in a uni-directional sense, and the relation between station and community is that of sender and audience (1993:476). This corresponds to UNESCO's concept of 'access'. If a station is a centre *of* the community, it is a central part of the local, cultural network, and means by which community members can share information among themselves – what the UNESCO schema would refer to as 'participation'.

Perhaps the three stages of participation outlined by UNESCO need not be seen as successive steps, but can also be usefully viewed as three essential facets of participation, which must be present simultaneously, in a community media institution. Once self-management is attained it remains necessary to ensure (and work towards progressively greater levels of) participation in the day-to-day operation of the station (such as programme making, presentation and so forth), and access (in terms of programming content that is inclusive of a wide range of community voices and views). There are at least four broad problem areas for community radio stations when it comes to realising participation in practice. Firstly, there are structural and

operational issues make it difficult for them to fulfil the ideals of community media (Hochheimer, 1993; Hendy, 2000). These often lead community radio stations to borrow from other broadcast models. For example, because they compete with existing broadcasters for audiences, stations feel pressurised to be on air for 24 hours a day, with a programme schedule that provides a constant supply of rapidly produced content. This, after all is what audiences have come to expect from the more 'traditional' broadcast sector. Commercial and state broadcasters have, however, far more resources with which to keep a station running around the clock, and community stations often find the task of doing so virtually impossible. Another instance of this can be found in the time pressures entailed in the mainstream model of broadcasting, with its emphasis on up-to-the minute information. When community stations adopt this model, they often find that these pressures act in tension with the time-consuming nature of participatory processes. Broadcasting along the mainstream model demands, for example, a hierarchy that facilitates quick decision-making, and this pulls against the horizontal nature of participatory processes (Hendy 2000)³.

Secondly, participation is difficult to achieve at the level of content and format (Hendy, 2000). These difficulties can, again, often be linked to the tendency within community radio stations to 'borrow' from the guidelines established within commercial broadcasting. If stations are to make space for a wide range of community interests or for idiosyncratic programming, they must go against the grain of conventions and expectations set up by the commercial media industry, where slick presentation and niche branding predominate⁴. Going against the grain is not easy, however. As pointed out, above, stations feel pressurised to compete with existing broadcasters by giving audiences what they are used to. This pressure is not necessarily self-imposed, but may in fact come from the audiences. While some community members may value the kind of programming produced through participatory methods, others may not. Hendy (2000), for example, argues that community radio stations cannot easily reject wholesale the values, conventions and preoccupations of mass culture or mass media. While some people may wish to preserve local identity and tradition, others may aspire to the lifestyle, values, and culture conveyed by the mass media (Mano, 2001). Often these media are seen to

³ These insights are also based on my own observations from working within both the traditional broadcast and the community sectors.

⁴ This is again based on my own observation.

connect people in isolated communities with a wider, more cosmopolitan world. Recent scholarship acknowledges that audiences act as agents with their own power to make meaning out of media in a way that suits their interests (Reimer, 1997). Scholars adopting an ethnographic approach to media studies have argued, for example, that individual audience members may use global media messages as a resource enabling them to adopt a critical perspective on their own lives and conditions (Strelitz, 2003:140; see also Ang, 1991 and Reimer, 1997). As Peruzzo (1996) argues, it is simplistic to create a dichotomy between mass and popular media, labelling the one as 'good' for promoting communities' own values and the other as 'bad' for marginalising local culture. These problems are not unique to stations in the developing world. Howley (2001), for example, provides an illustrative case study of the problems of a community radio station in the US, as it attempts to negotiate the tensions between the strong legacy of politically progressive, alternative radio in the US, the desire to create a community media organisation that is economically viable and contradictory expectations on the part of listeners.

Thirdly, even if stations decide to 'go against the grain' participation entails costs that residents, volunteers and the station itself may struggle to bear (Downing, 2001). There are numerous examples of this to be found. For volunteers, the time and energy devoted to working at the station involves what economists would term an 'opportunity cost': by participating in station activities, the person may be forfeiting more productive activity (White, 1994; McKee, 1994). In order to visit the station or to participate in call-in programmes, residents may have to spend money that they can ill-afford to spare on transport or on phone calls. Communication with the community and regular talk shows may be disrupted from time to time if phones are cut off because the station does not have the money to pay its bills. The station itself may not be able to undertake research into the community or send staff members to visit outlying areas because of a lack of money for transport.

Fourthly, even in a context where a communication institution is self managed by a community, power and people tend to become entrenched (Hochheimer, 1993), so that, within the community, new centres and new peripheries develop. In this context, Scannell (1991) highlights the manner in which the act of broadcasting itself can play havoc with existing local power relationships:

...the power of broadcasting...lies in the way it can define the terms of social interaction in its own domain by pre-allocating social roles and statuses, and by controlling the content, style and duration of its events (Scannell, 1991:2).

Presenters become community celebrities and their status changes accordingly.

Community members become listeners who can only get their voices heard by calling in to request lines or talk shows. Talk shows, instead of being genuinely participatory discussion forums, easily become entertainment in which the host is a gatekeeper, controlling the agenda and the length and type of calls, and adopting an opinionated persona – in many cases with the single aim of maximising listenership. Indeed, the Media Institute of Southern Africa has pointed out these very problems:

...a great danger of community broadcasting is how easy (sic) staff members, volunteers, executive committees or forums can forget the fundamental importance of involving and consulting community residents in the decisions making processes and general running of the station (MISA, 2001).

It should be clear that one of the key ideals that set community radio apart from other forms of broadcasting is its commitment to a high level of community participation. It should also be clear that community radio stations do not operate in a separate sphere, in which the power relations and structural constraints established by other broadcasters do not apply. To assume such a separation is to risk glossing over – and blinding oneself to – the very factors that stand in the way of realising participatory ideals. Participation takes place within pre-existing power relations and compromises must be made between the station in terms of its role, on one hand, as a broadcast institution and, on the other, as a democratic community organisation. Because of this, stations constantly have to compromise the steps they take towards community participation, which means that there is no simple, progressive realisation of their ideals. The realisation of community radio is, rather, an ongoing struggle, in which these ideals have to be constantly renegotiated and re-affirmed. Even once the ideal of self-management and control has been achieved in the establishment, licensing and running of a radio station, it is continually necessary to consider issues of access and participation at the micro level.

2.2. Community

Downing (2001) comments that it is hard to think of a replacement for the word 'community', used as convenient verbal shorthand to describe the arena in which community stations operate. At the same time it is important to acknowledge that, like participation, the term is 'fragile and elusive':

... The term community has been widely used as a catch-all. It has had a localist sense (this community stands firm on the issue of...), a world politics rhetoric (the international community's stance against terrorism), a professional sense (the scientific community), a politics of sexual frankness usage (community standards of decency), and a nostalgic sense harkening back to a supposed era of harmony (we need to recover a sense of community) (Downing, 2001:39).

The association of the word 'community' with a sense of cohesiveness or harmony can also be found in sociological discussions of community, in Tonnies's distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society) (Friedland, 2001; Carpentier, Lie & Servaes, 2003). *Gemeinschaft* or 'community' can be thought of as 'a big family', defined by "...close and concrete human ties and by a collective identity, [whereas] the prevalent feature of society is the absence of identifying group relations" (Carpentier, Lie & Servaes, 2003:53). The danger is that when the community is seen as a 'big family', albeit unconsciously, it is easy to lose sight of power dynamics. Since the concept of 'community' carries connotations of cohesion and communal interest, the use of the concept to describe a specific level of society (often the so-called 'grassroots'), can lead to the assumption that this level of society is egalitarian and free of power disparities. It is important to remember, however, that inequalities and differences exist at the local as well as at the national level.

Servaes (1996b) points out that there are centres and peripheries at all levels of society. A very poor, isolated, rural community may be considered to exist on the periphery of a larger society – forgotten about by those living in the large centres of power and influence. Even within that poor, marginalised community, however, there are centres – groups and individuals with relatively more power and influence – and peripheries – relatively marginalised and powerless groups and individuals. According to Arnst (1996), there is always a tendency for those with more power in a community to "...take advantage of any opportunity, including participatory programs, for influence and profit" (Arnst, 1996:112).

It is important to remain aware of the complex nature of the term community, as discussed here when dealing with community radio. One needs to acknowledge, for example, that once a station is self-managed by the community, the staff members and volunteers can form a new centre of influence and privilege. In this context, Thomas (1994) details the specific factors that can get in the way of genuinely participatory communication (although he is not referring specifically to community *media*):

These include: (a) the self-interest of the organizers and important members of the community; (b) the all-pervasive reach of populist culture; (c) the lack of trained personnel in communication skills; (d) the tendency to dogmatize and to do by the book which smothers both creativity and flexibility; (e) the influence of local and state politics; (f) patriarchy and gender discrimination; (g) the caste [or in SA the race] factor; and (h) the class factor (Thomas, 1994:55).

A number of theorists and development experts have observed that the push for consensus can act coercively on minority or subordinate groups (Opubor, 2000; Sanders, 1997). Gujit (2001), for example, has pointed out how concepts and models of community participation can sideline and obscure the interests of women. This is often a stronger likelihood in smaller political spheres, such as local communities, than in larger ones, as Mansbridge (1983) has noticed. Sometimes it may be easier for a relatively closed organisation with an egalitarian mission to serve a wide range of groups within a community, than for a participatory organisation to do so, as the latter can become dominated or 'hijacked' by powerful cliques within the community. Thus, Howley (2001) argues that the very process of opening up a media organisation to listener influence can undermine a station's ability to serve a variety of interests within a community, as the station becomes 'opened-up' to pressure from particular individuals and interest groups. He goes on to say:

...while community is generally conceived in terms of the co-presence of a relatively homogenous population sharing a common set of interests, beliefs, and values, community media highlight the diverse range of people, interests and beliefs within a community. Moreover, the clash of cultures, values and beliefs belies commonly held notions of community as a place free of conflict and internal struggle. In this respect, community radio might be seen as a site for the expression and the negotiation of difference within (and between) communities" (Howley, 2001:Listener support...).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Opubor (2001) argues that the idea of 'community' as a sphere of society which is somehow outside power has been used in post-colonial Africa to reinforce the political orthodoxy by papering over differences and particularities and proscribing any tendency likely to break the façade of unity

(2001:11). Used in this way, the concept of 'community' can in fact undermine the ideals of 'community participation'. Those involved with community media are thus confronted with the same fundamental issue that confronts Habermas and many writers on participatory communication – namely “the problem of what constitutes a ‘communicative democracy’ and how to realize one in practice” (Hochheimer, 1993:474). The key question here is the extent to which it is really possible for a public sphere to exist ‘outside power’ (Fraser, 1992, 1997).

Community radio stations tend to build their approach to radio on concepts such as ‘community’ and ‘participation’ without an exploration and acknowledgement of the complexities discussed here⁵. It could be argued that such stations can only realise the ideals of community participation if they develop an approach that acknowledges this complexity. It is important that managers and staff recognise that the station at which they work necessarily exists within an ongoing struggle around power relations, different agendas, and the compromising and renegotiation of ideals. Managers and staff at such stations need, furthermore, to be able to articulate what this means in concrete terms, within the specific communities in which they are situated. I argue, in this thesis, that in order to do this, the managers and staff at community stations need to undertake research into the actual conditions in their own communities. They cannot assume that they ‘know’ the community simply because they are part of it. Each individual comes from his or her own particular group and has particular views, perspectives and prejudices. They need, therefore, to set about consciously and methodically discovering and identifying the various groups, interests and agendas at play within their communities – paying particular attention to the voices and perspectives that have tended to go unheard. They must then work out how participatory processes and procedures might be implemented in such a manner as to bring about greater degrees of communicative democracy.

⁵ This point is again based on my own observations made during several years’ work with the community radio sector.

Section Three: Community Radio in South Africa

3.1. Historical background

The history of community radio in South Africa illustrates the way in which the sector has emerged to a large degree within the context of ideas around both participatory democracy and participatory development. South African community radio began during the final years of apartheid, as shifts within the political system began to make possible the existence of a form of radio that was not just propaganda. The initial emphasis was on participatory community radio as a democratising agent. Later, once the democratic transition had taken place, the broader political emphasis shifted. While the building and consolidation of democracy remained important, the process of reconstruction and development became a national priority. In addition to being seen as a means by which to support a democratic culture, therefore, community radio stations were also seen as key in processes of participatory development⁶ (Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999).

The birth of the community radio sector was given impetus by pressures from two different directions as events both within and outside the country conspired to bring about the end of apartheid. On the one hand, initiatives began to emerge from grassroots level in the context of political struggles within the country. On the other, policy discussions began to occur at the highest levels, as the various political players began to talk about post-apartheid scenarios, both within and outside the country. Two organisations played a key role in the grassroots history of community radio in South Africa, both out of impatience with the pace of change in the broadcast sector. The first was CASET/Bush Radio, and the second, Radio Zibonele (<http://www.bushradio.co.za>; Oluronnisola, 2002). Bush Radio was founded largely through the initiative of a group of activists in and around Cape Town involved in the Cassette Education Trust (CASET). CASET, which was established in the late 1980's, produced and distributed radio programmes on cassette, aimed at informing poor South Africans about a range of issues relating to literacy, health and politics. When, in August 1991, the *Jabulani!* Freedom of the Airwaves Conference was held in the Netherlands, two activists from CASET were able to attend. The conference was

⁶ At least some of the difficulties faced by community radio stations may be attributable to the fact that a sector set up when nation-building and reconstruction and development were priorities, must now survive in an era where the neo-liberal policies under the government's GEAR framework have sidelined reconstruction and development.

organised by the Dutch anti-apartheid movement along with the ANC, the Film and Allied Workers Organisation (FAWO) and Radio Freedom. The gathering called for a range of changes in the broadcasting system in South Africa, including the establishment of a tier of community broadcasting services, which would be of a participatory nature, with strong community involvement (Wigston 2001:8).

In 1992, under the impetus of ideas exchanged at the *Jabulani* conference, CASET was transformed into a fledgling community radio initiative called Bush Radio. The following year, in April 1993, a group of Bush Radio activists launched an illegal broadcast, which lasted four hours before the authorities raided the premises and seized the transmitter. Radio Zibonele, a station in the township of Khayelitsha, had also started up in this period and it began broadcasting illegally in 1993 (<http://www.bushradio.co.za>; Oluronnisola, 2002). Unlike Bush Radio, Zibonele did not have its equipment confiscated as it went on air in a far more low-key manner, and broadcast secretly for only a few hours per week. Zibonele decided to go off air when the Independent Broadcasting Authority was established, as a gesture of faith in the legitimacy of the licensing process that was being launched.

In conjunction with the grassroots developments, the political and policy environment was changing. Along with the political transition that occurred in the early 1990s, the broadcasting sector underwent significant transformation. The Viljoen Commission, appointed by the South African government to investigate broadcasting in South Africa, noted the calls made at the *Jabulani* conference and endorsed the need for local radio services to accommodate communities' needs and expectations (Wigston 2001). It seems surprising that there were strong correspondences in this field between the thinking of officials of the crumbling apartheid regime and that of liberation activists at this early stage of the process of political horse-trading, which eventually led to the transition in 1994. Duncan (2001) explains this by arguing that the apartheid government began introducing changes to broadcasting before a transfer of power, in order to limit the power that a new ANC-led government would have to use media as a propaganda machine (Duncan, 2001:121). At the same time, it is likely that members of the apartheid government realised that a restructured broadcasting landscape would also give rightwing voices access to the airwaves, as part of the community radio sector.

The restructuring process eventually resulted in the creation of a three-tier broadcasting system allowing for public, commercial and community broadcasting

(Wigston, 2001; Broadcasting Act no 4 of 1999; IBA Act no 153 of 1993). The Independent Broadcasting Authority was created in 1994 with the mandate of regulating this sector and issuing licences. Between 1994 and 1996, the IBA granted initial one-year licences to 82 community radio stations. When the IBA issued a call in 1997 for applications for more permanent four-year licences, it received some 230 applications (Duncan, 2001:165-166).

Anti-apartheid activists interested in the fields of media and broadcasting were aware of developments in regions such as South America. The *Jabulani* conference had input from Latin American delegates and one of the key founders of Radio Zibonele, Gabriel Urgoiti, was from Argentina. It is not unreasonable, given such influences, to assume that the development of a legal framework for community radio in South Africa was to some degree informed by ideas of participatory democracy and development gaining currency elsewhere in the world. When the new South African Constitution was eventually written, the drafters deliberately provided a framework for a democratic system that was both representative *and* participatory (De Villiers 2001:19). In this context, community radio has become one of a host of institutions designed to facilitate public participation in democratic life, as well as in development at the local level. A closer look at the specific legal framework will make clear the role that community broadcasting is meant to play in public life.

3.2. The legal framework

The Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999 defines a commercial broadcasting service as a service operated for profit, with the exception of services provided by a public broadcaster. A public broadcasting service, in turn, is defined as a service provided by the SABC or any other statutory body, or which receives funding from the licensing of radio or television sets. A community broadcasting service is defined as a non-profit organisation which serves a particular community:

...[and] encourages members of the community served by it or persons associated with or promoting the interests of such community to participate in the selection and provision of programmes to be broadcast in the course of such a broadcasting service (Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999:Chapter 1).

'Community' is defined by the Act as "a geographically founded community or any group of persons or sector of the public having a specific, ascertainable common

interest” (Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999). The Act states, furthermore, that programming on a community broadcaster must reflect the needs of the people in the community including, among others, “cultural, religious, language and demographic needs”, and must promote the development of “a sense of common purpose with democracy” (Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999:Chapter 1).

This approach to the definition of community radio can again be found in the IBA Act 153 of 1993, which includes the requirement that the applicant for a community broadcasting licence is controlled by a non-profit entity and can demonstrate that it has the support of the community. The Act adds that the Authority should also take into account whether the applicant plans to encourage members of the relevant community to participate in selecting and producing programmes for the station. Again, programming should deal “specifically with community issues” (IBA Act 153 of 1993:VI:32:a), should be informative, educational and entertaining, highlight a wide range of grassroots community issues, and “promote the development of a sense of common purpose with democracy and improve quality of life” (VI:32:d).

The matter of community involvement and participation is thus central to the definition of community broadcasting and a key element distinguishing it from public broadcasting. We have already seen, however, that there is a long and difficult road between the intention to bring about participation and the implementation thereof. The problem is not that the legal framework is inadequate, but that, on the ground, people need to do more interpreting of the central concepts of ‘community’ and ‘participation’.

3.3. Community participation: interpreting and implementing the concepts

While the legal framework insists on community participation, it does not go into detail on how this is to take place. Communities are supposed to participate in the selection and provision of programmes to be broadcast, but just what this means in day-to-day practice is not spelled out. When it comes to the concept of ‘community’, the South African broadcast regulations specify that this can be defined either geographically, or as a ‘community of interest’ (such as a religious community, or the community of classical music lovers). While these classifications allow the regulator to accommodate licence applicants from specific interest groups in addition to those from particular geographical areas, the use of ‘community’ here does not escape the

multiple shades of meaning the concept carries in every-day use. Thus while the regulatory term appears to be fairly neutral in its connotation – used simply to describe a collection of people living within a specific area for example – it in fact allows for a slippage of meaning.

Wigston (2001) points out that in South Africa the concept of community is politically loaded and used to describe groups of ‘historically disadvantaged’ people who are often assumed to have common interests. Thus the term ‘community station’ does not only describe a non-profit station operating in a particular location, but carries the connotation of a station possessing a grassroots authenticity, as being ‘of the people’. So the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) describes community radio as “...building grassroots democracy by mobilising all communities to engage in their own development” (<http://www.ncrf.org.za>) and AMARC can describe community radio as “...the community doing something for itself”. AMARC also talks of community radio as building community life, in the sense of “creating consensus, broadening democracy” (<http://www.amarc.org/amarc/ang>).

In discourse such as this, there is an assumption that community stations serve unified social entities, displaying communal interest and cohesion – despite the fact that technically the term ‘community’ in ‘community station’ simply indicates that the station is licensed to serve a particular geographical area. The slippage of meaning described here facilitates the perpetuation of the idea that the ‘community’ is an area of society outside power. It thus helps blind stations to the need to become aware of the power dynamics in their areas of operation and to undertake research into their communities if they are effectively to adopt a participatory approach.

Turning from the conceptual problems around ‘community’ to the practical implementation of participation, South African community stations face all of the four problems areas identified earlier in Section 2.1, with reference to community radio in general. These can be seen, firstly, on the structural and operational level. The pressures involved in broadcasting 24-hours a day and trying to compete with mainstream broadcasters for audiences, leave little time for participatory activities. Secondly, South African community stations face difficulties in implementing participation and adopting a local orientation at the level of content and format. At conferences and in discussions on community radio, it is not uncommon to hear the accusation that many stations have become mere jukeboxes, pumping out popular music instead of presenting programming dealing with important community issues.

Stations are also accused of covering national and international news in their bulletins, rather than focusing on local events and issues. Stations may face problems, however, if they stray too far from the kind of content and formats offered by their competitors. For example, stations that focus on local news may find listeners complaining that they are too parochial.

Thirdly, and linked to the points above, participatory activities entail costs which stations and their communities often struggle to bear. Even when stations do wish to present programming that deals with local and community-based news and opinions, they struggle to do so in the face of limited resources. In terms of numbers of stations and overall listenership, the South African community radio sector as a whole seems very healthy (Nell & Shapiro, 2001:1). Individual stations, almost without exception, however, face enormous challenges to their survival. Two of the biggest of these are the struggle to survive financially and to ensure organisational stability (Nell & Shapiro, 2001). By and large, stations' resources are devoted to simply staying open and on air and processes to ensure community participation can be seen as an unaffordable luxury both in terms of time and money⁷. In the absence of sufficient staff and field recording equipment, many stations re-write content taken from the SABC or national newspapers, for their local bulletins. When a community station does cover issues in their communities, this material is usually obtained from official sources such as local and provincial government, or the police – often because the station has no resources for going out and gathering news itself and these institutions make life easier by faxing press releases to the station, or calling with updates.

Fourthly, stations are faced with further challenges in implementing community participation when power becomes entrenched. As Duncan (2001) points out, issues of power and control emerged in South African community radio stations from the very outset. Stations had to grapple with "...what constituted community ownership and control, with frequent conflicts between board of control and management, especially around financial matters" (Duncan, 2001:166). Particularly in small rural communities, radio stations can become one of the few sources of jobs, money and power in the area – however limited. Thus the station can contribute to the formation of new centres and peripheries at the local level (Servaes, 1996b). In

⁷ These observations are based on over three years of personal experience in interacting with community radio stations across South Africa.

communities with high levels of unemployment the handful of people who enjoy paid jobs at the station, such as managers and administrators, become part of the employed elite, while presenters of popular programmes become minor celebrities. Under these conditions the promotion of widespread community involvement can represent a threat to the entrenched power of station insiders. Mindful of these pitfalls, MISA (2001), warns that stations should not assume that because they have demonstrated community support by collecting petitions, they need not devote further effort to involving community members at all levels of the station. MISA (2001) cautions that there is a danger inherent in community broadcasting, in that staff members, volunteers, executive committees or forums can very easily forget their fundamental mission to involve and consult community residents in the decision-making processes as well as the general running of the station.

The obstacles identified above are large and complex, and not easily resolved. However, the premise behind this thesis is that it is important, and possible, to begin to address at least some of the problems standing in the way of improved community participation. Discussion of the concept of 'community' is necessary in order that community radio programmers and journalists can become critically aware of their own preconceptions and begin to grapple with issues such as power, identity and ideology and how these factors impact on participation at all levels. Furthermore, it is necessary to assist stations to adopt relatively inexpensive research strategies, which enable them to explore their specific communities in a concrete way. Research and investigation of the specific community is necessary in order that community station members can gain information that will enable them to construct more complex pictures of their communities. Such research should help stations to identify various sectors and networks within the community and enable them to discover where the multitude of voices and perspectives might be found, so that they might be included in the broadcast content.

Section Four: A Search for Useful Research Tools

4.1. Research and community radio

Efforts to assist community stations to conduct their own research have largely been undertaken in the context of audience research – understandably, in the light of the urgent practical need for stations to have facts and figures to present to funders, sponsors and advertisers. In the face of unhappiness with the research conducted by large national institutes (such as the SA Advertising Research Foundation in South Africa or Arbitron in the USA), there have been some initiatives to help stations conduct their own formal audience research that will stand up to scrutiny. For example, a US-generated *Listener Survey Toolbox* (Dominowski & Bartholet, 1997) is available for download on the Internet, while in South Africa the NCRF has in the past discussed the possibility of supporting audience research in the sector, along a participatory model⁸.

While this kind of audience research is necessary and useful, the emphasis on research conceived within the structural tradition of audience measurement (which focuses on the size and characteristics of audiences as a market), is problematic. As McQuail points out: this kind of research “links sender and receiver in a ‘calculative’ rather than a normative or social relationship, as a cash transaction between producer and consumer rather than a communication relationship” (2001:363). The structural approach to audience research, whether qualitative or quantitative, generally views audience members outside any social context – interacting with mass media messages as private consumers (whether of programmes, educational messages or advertised products) rather than as citizens or members of a broader public or community (Hendy, 2000; Stavitsky, 1993).

While research into communities may incorporate aspects of structural audience research, it is important that, in addition to examining the views and preferences of individuals, stations seek to understand social networks. According to Friedland (2001), at least three levels of networks can be identified in local communities: “...the macro-level networks of community power and influence..., meso-level networks or organisations and associations..., and micro-level interpersonal networks...” (Friedland, 2001:369). Furthermore, community research

⁸ For example, discussions along this line took place at the NCRF’s Annual General Meeting in Grahamstown in 2001, which I attended.

must examine context: the problems, issues, material conditions, as well as infrastructure, economic and other factors that have an impact on the life of the community.

There is a wide range of research tools that stations could use in order to gain a better understanding of their communities. For the purposes of this thesis, the focus is on two particular research tools, which have emerged from two different fields of study, but which are both built around the concept of 'mapping'. The first tool is a set of community research techniques called 'civic mapping', which emerged in the context of public journalism. The second tool is a map-drawing and discussion exercise that takes advantage of ideas from the field of 'cognitive mapping'.

4.2. Public journalism and research

The relevance to community radio of research methods that emerged from public journalism becomes clear when one looks at the similarity in the concerns that informed the birth of both these movements. According to Sirianni and Friedland (2001) public journalism began as a series of experiments in local newspapers in the USA, and later spread to public and commercial television and public radio:

[Public journalism] arose in response to a perceived failure of the press to constitute a public sphere in which citizens could understand and engage productively with public problems, rather than simply respond to election soundbites, horserace coverage [of elections] and polarized framing of issues (Sirianni and Friedland, 2001:186).

In essence, the innovations developed in the context of public journalism in the United States were rooted in the desire to bring about greater citizen involvement in the news media, in order to build a genuinely democratic public sphere (J.Carey, personal communication 03/05/2002; J.Rosen, personal communication 03/05/2002; Rosen, 1999). There is thus a large degree of similarity between the concerns that informed public journalism and those that informed the development of community radio. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that the field of public journalism might well be mined for practices that could prove useful in assisting South African community radio stations to improve community participation.

One particular set of practices developed in the context of public journalism and which seems to offer potential in this regard, is a set of concepts and exercises for "civic mapping", developed by Harwood and McCrehan (1996) under the auspices of

the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. The techniques of civic mapping were developed with the specific aim of assisting journalists to identify a wider range of community voices, stories and perspectives and they have reportedly been applied with fruitful results in several newsrooms (Shaffer, 2001). Harwood and McCrehan (1996) identify a range of 'community layers', describe various types of community leaders and present a set of practical exercises by which journalists (and producers) might explore these layers and come into contact with the various leaders in their own communities. In working through these exercises, journalists in fact conduct research in their own communities and consolidate this research into a 'civic map', which is used as a lasting and growing newsroom resource.

The concepts and exercises that Harwood and McCrehan (1996) outline can, I believe, be fruitfully applied in order to assist community radio journalists and producers to identify a wider range of voices and perspectives for inclusion in programming. By providing practical ways in which stations can research community layers and networks for the purposes of improving participatory planning, 'civic mapping' can also overcome many of the problems linked to structural models of audience research identified in Section 4.1 above. Furthermore, the techniques of civic mapping may assist community radio stations to begin to grasp the complex nature of 'community', as they enable staff members to make visible and to pin down differing power relations and the interrelationship of social networks.

4.3. Cognitive mapping and map-drawing

The 'civic mapping' techniques of Harwood and McCrehan (1996) were developed within the context of public journalism and deal with the mapping of social space. These techniques can be fruitfully supplemented by map-drawing exercises developed to take advantage of important ideas from the field of *cognitive* mapping. This field deals specifically with the way in which individuals cognitively organise the social and geographic space in which they live and operate (Downs & Stea, 1977). The manner in which people cognitively organise their social and geographic space has important implications for the way in which 'community' is perceived. As Friedland (2001) points out, the boundaries of community are not fixed, but must be negotiated across a range of dimensions:

...the *cognitive mapping* of social and geographic space and the social framing of which groups lie inside and which outside those boundaries; the *normative discourse* of what our obligations are to others; and the cultural dimension of *imagined community*, the storytelling that frames identity-forming narratives at multiple levels of neighborhood, city, state, and so forth (Friedland, 2001:376-377. My emphasis).

Downs and Stea (1977) describe cognitive mapping as "...the way in which we come to grips with and comprehend the world around us" (Downs & Stea, 1977:6). It is the way in which people construct a version of their spatial and social environments, in their heads. Cognitive mapping is an interior, mental representation of the world that facilitates one's interaction with it. However, although they facilitate our interaction with the world, cognitive maps are by no means necessarily accurate reflections of the world around us: "...a cognitive map...reflects the world as some person believes it to be; it need not be correct. In fact, distortions are highly likely" (Downs & Stea, 1977:6).

Cognitive mapping is used to define the boundaries and features of a community, along physical, psychological, socio-cultural, economic and technological dimensions. Furthermore, says Friedland (2001), it takes place in multiple registers – which accounts for a good deal of the messiness or fuzziness of the term 'community', as identified earlier. Individuals and groups position themselves in relation to all of the kinds of community identified by Downing (in the quotation on p. 23), and more. For example, individuals and groups can locate themselves cognitively within any or all of various kinds of geographical communities (the village, the neighbourhood, the nation), communities of interest (gun-owners, Christians, Moslems, businesspeople) or communities of circumstance (pensioners, women, youth, the unemployed) (Frederickson, 1999).

Cognitive mapping also forms the basis for the normative dimension of community to determine who belongs within the community and who does not, and what mutual obligations regulate relations within and between communities. This normative boundary setting can also carry negative consequences – such as xenophobia, racism, sexism and other forms of bigotry and discrimination.

Furthermore, and to an extent as a result of the previous two processes, all communities are imagined. As Friedland (2001) puts it:

The image of a common bond lives in the mind of each member of the town, region, nation and so forth, even though the members of all but the very smallest groupings will never know, meet or even hear of many or most of their fellow members (Friedland, 2001:378).

Downs and Stea (1977) provide a powerful illustration of just how variable the concept of neighbourhood or community can be – even when one is considering just a geographical description. They cite an experiment by Terence Lee in 1964, in which Lee asked people in Cambridge, England, to represent their neighbourhood by drawing a line around it on a large-scale map:

These neighbourhood maps showed a good deal of variation, and in order to confirm a growing conviction that although neighbourhoods are salient, they are also highly individualistic, I sampled a terrace row of corporation houses, eight of them within about 100 yards. When their outlines were superimposed they showed almost no coincidence. This was in spite of the fact that I had chosen an area labeled as a 'neighbourhood' on most people's lips and on the front of buses, and which in fact comprised an old village that had become assimilated into the edge of the city" (Lee in Downs & Stea, 1977:196-197).

In a further example, Downs and Stea (1977) provide an illuminating discussion of the manner in which drawn maps of the world can often make the distortions of cognitive mapping visible. They describe how students in various countries around the world, when asked to draw a map of the world, tend to place their own home country in the centre, and represent it as disproportionately large. These maps make visible the students' perception of the relative importance of their home country in their own lives. Individuals' perspectives on the world are coloured by age, experience and the religion, social group, nation and so forth that they identify with, and it is possible to use the drawing of maps as a tool with which to make these perspectives more visible as a first step towards critically examining them. Drawing on these insights from cognitive mapping, map drawing exercises may thus be very helpful tools in provoking discussion among community radio journalists and producers about cognitive mapping, normative discourse and the imagined elements of community and how these might affect the day-to-day decisions about which voices and views are regarded as legitimate for broadcast on the station (Hochheimer, 1993).

The point, in the context of this thesis, is that the work of community radio journalists and producers is coloured by their own, specific cognitive mapping of their communities; that this cognitive mapping is influenced and distorted by a range of factors; and that map-drawing exercises might prove a useful way of making such

perspectives apparent as a means of opening discussion around the concept of 'community'.

Map-drawing exercises can be used to facilitate discussion around the perceived relative importance of various parts of the community, about who are seen as 'insiders' and 'outsiders' and how these factors might affect programming content and news judgement. Downs and Stea (1977) point out, for example, how value systems shape cognitive maps, often leading to an "...unspoken agreement to ignore certain aspects of the environment" (Downs & Stea, 1977:79). They state that cognitive models of the world exert "...a powerful shaping influence on what we write (and read), how we think (and interpret), and how we decide (and behave)" (Downs & Stea, 1977:90). Ignorance of certain aspects of the environment by community radio personnel can lead to the absence of certain aspects and segments of the community within the ranks of the radio station or from the station's news and programming content. However, maps might also be used as a tool for making value systems apparent, as a step towards becoming aware of the need to acknowledge and include what has previously been ignored or deliberately shut out.

4.4. Mapping, community radio, and community

The Parliamentary Millenium Project exhibition, entitled *Perspectives on and of Africa*, opened in the South African Parliament in late 2002, attempts to do just this in the African and South African context. The exhibition presents a range of maps of Africa, produced over the centuries by mainly European and Chinese cartographers, and points out how each map represents a specific perspective on the world and on Africa's place in the world. In her speech at the opening of the exhibition, Parliamentary speaker, Frene Ginwala, encouraged those present to consider the way in which perspective colours notions of 'South Africanness', of citizenship and the nation. She pointed out, for example, how many urban maps produced during the apartheid years reflected racist ideology by omitting the townships. It is a short step from there to the consideration of the manner in which the mainstream media under apartheid omitted the stories, voices and perspectives of the black majority (*Maps and Visions of Africa*, 2002).

Community radio stations operate in cities, towns and villages still marked by the social divisions that are the legacy of apartheid and it seems that research tools and exercises developed around concepts of mapping might be effectively used in the

microcosm of neighbourhood and community, in much the same manner as the Parliamentary exhibition uses these concepts in the larger context of nation and continent.

As Hendy (2000) points out, some researchers paint a picture of the radio experience as one that promises listeners a feeling of belonging to a listening 'community'. Particularly in the case of commercial radio, however, this community is largely constructed and is given tone and emotional tenor, through highly conventional strategies of representation – by drawing on the DJs' banter and the station's specific combination and type of music and advertising. A community of shared interests is invoked, but this community does not necessarily have any independent basis, outside the station's own evocation of it: "...[it is] not the family, or the neighbourhood or even the nation as such, but rather the radio audience itself" (Montgomery in Hendy, 2000:186). Because it is constructed by marketers, based on little other than a shared demographic, this radio-created sense of community can ultimately be alienating and disempowering. Community radio has something more concrete, but also far more complex, to work with – the existence of an actual, geographic community. The community radio station thus has a huge responsibility – although its job is supposedly to *reflect* an actual community to itself, it is also unavoidably involved in *shaping* the cognitive, moral and imagined aspects of the community for its listeners. It must do this in a way that empowers its listeners and creates a genuine sense of belonging and participation. It cannot do this adequately if it uncritically adopts proven commercial formats and inappropriate definitions of news and fails to implement specific practical measures to research the various social structures and networks that make up the community it serves.

Section Five: Conclusion

This chapter began by illustrating how the development of community radio is closely linked with the emergence of ideas of participatory development and democracy. The key elements differentiating community radio from other forms of broadcasting are participation, a community orientation and focus on issues important for community development and the promotion of democracy. It was argued that, while community radio ideally has a key role to play in processes of participatory development and

democracy, these ideals are difficult to realise in practice. If the stumbling blocks in the way of participation are to be overcome, it is important that stations begin to unpack the central concepts of 'participation' and 'community' – concepts that are often used in a relatively unexamined fashion. It is necessary for station volunteers and staff members to begin to critically examine notions of community and to research their specific communities, in order to gain knowledge of the range of voices and stories available for inclusion in programme content. These points are central to this thesis, which aims to explore ways in which community radio journalists and programme makers might be assisted in researching their communities. This chapter ends by proposing the use of mapping as a framework for exercises and techniques that will assist stations to embark on such research. The next chapters describe one attempt to implement these proposals.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The concepts discussed in Chapter Two will be further explored by means of a case study in Chapters Four and Five. The case study will, as explained in the introduction to this thesis, focus on the application of participatory research methods at Radio KC, a South African community radio station. This next chapter describes the research design for the case study and explains how the methods that formed part of this plan were intended to achieve the aims of the research. Section One discusses the research aims and shows how these were incorporated in the research design. Section Two details the implementation of the project.

Section One: The Research Design

1.1. Choosing a research model

1.1.1. The selection of participatory action research

The value of participatory action research for this project lies in the approach, within this method, to the relationship between the researcher and the object of study. Action research aims to generate useful knowledge. It is concerned with solving problems faced by communities and aims to change conditions rather than simply observe them (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995). This typically involves progressive cycles of research, reflection and action. *Participatory* action research also concerns itself with the politics of research – specifically, with the power relationships that exist between the observer and the observed. In order to narrow the power gap between the researcher and those being researched, this method seeks to involve those who are likely to be affected by the research as decision-makers in all stages of the process (Hughes & William, 2001). Social scientists operating from a more positivist research paradigm might argue that participatory action research compromises scientific objectivity and academic detachment. Indeed, proponents of action research regard this as unavoidable, but consider it a strength as the aim is to achieve validity not through detached objectivity, but through “involved subjectivity” (Arnst, 1996:117).

As such, participatory action research lends itself to the realisation of the aims that inform this study. Central to these aims was a commitment to change: to make an intervention, by means of the research project, that would enable the staff at the station that formed part of this case study to develop a greater awareness of the complexity of their target community and of the demands of establishing a participatory relationship with that community. The project sought, furthermore, to determine the degree to which such an intervention succeeded or failed and to discover which aspects of the intervention worked and which did not. The desire was to generate knowledge from the intervention, in order to formulate recommendations for future interventions, which might be staged at this or at other community radio stations. This corresponds with the aims of participatory action research as described by Bless and Higson-Smith (1995):

The community desires a solution to its particular problem. The social scientist hopes to identify a more general solution adaptable to a range of similar problems that may be experienced by other communities (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:57).

Since the project took place within the context of community radio – a sector of broadcasting specifically concerned with addressing power disparities, bringing about widespread community participation and promoting democracy – it was important that the research approach also embody a democratic ethos.

Within this study, participatory action research operated at two levels. Firstly, I assisted a small group of volunteer producers from the station to conduct their own research into the nature of the target community of Radio KC⁹. The aim of this research was to improve this group's knowledge and understanding of the station's target community and consequently of the strategies needed to achieve a greater degree of community participation in programming content. Secondly, as researcher, I conducted my own study, as an observer in the first process. The aim of this second level of research was to explore the value of the first-level process (i.e.: to determine whether the research techniques followed by the participants did in fact enable the station participants to construct a richer, more complex picture of the community served by the station, and to identify new voices and perspectives for inclusion in programming).

⁹ I present my reasons for writing in the first person, later in this chapter.

1.1.2. The value of qualitative research

The fact that participatory action research lends itself to the generation of qualitative information was also important in influencing the choice of research design. As has been expounded in Chapter Two, it is important that radio stations get to grips with the concepts of 'community' and 'participation' within their own particular contexts and circumstances. Thus, it should be the participants' own interpretations and evaluations that inform the assessment of the intervention – and such interpretations and assessments are qualitative in nature. As will be shown below, qualitative research tools were developed to form part of this design: in-depth interviews, a strategy for observation, open-ended questionnaires, and document analysis. These instruments enabled me to generate detailed material capturing information about participants' experience and interpretation of the research process in which they were participating.

1.1.3. The use of the case study

It was decided that a case study would be the most appropriate approach for the research, as the intention was to investigate the impact of participatory research in the context of the day-to-day operation of a radio station. Whereas an experimental study isolates variables by removing a phenomenon from its real-life context and a survey limits the variables under examination by defining the object of study fairly narrowly, a case study seeks to examine a phenomenon in a complex fashion. This has the benefit of allowing the researcher to obtain a wealth of information about the research topic from multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1984 in Wimmer & Dominick, 1987:156). In the context of this project, a case study was useful for the generation of insights that could inform the development of a research model that might be replicated at other stations.

1.2. The design of the research instruments

1.2.1. The first level of participatory research

As described above, the first level of participatory research refers to the investigation, by a group of volunteers from a community radio station, of the nature of their station's 'community'. In order to assist the volunteers to carry out this task, I developed a curriculum for a series of participatory workshops, using the ideas and techniques described in Chapter Two. This curriculum was based largely on the

techniques of mapping developed by Harwood and McCrehan (1996), adapted slightly for use in the South African context, and supplemented with additional material developed from concepts outlined by Rosen (1999), Downs and Stea (1977), Friedland (2001), and Guilfoyle (1999). The curriculum is designed to take participants through a process of discussing and then researching aspects of the community served by their station with the aim of compiling a community map – a file of information about places, people and issues in various areas within the community. This file, or map, is intended for producers and journalists to use as a resource in their day-to-day work.

The initial exercise in the curriculum calls for the workshop participants to draw a map from their heads, of the community served by the radio station. This exercise is based on the ideas of cognitive mapping discussed by Downs and Stea (1977) and Friedland (2001). Once participants have drawn their maps, these are used as the focus of a discussion on the concept of community. The various maps are then compared, the intention being to identify similarities and – even more important at this stage – differences between them. By drawing attention to the similarities and differences between the maps, one can open the way to a discussion of the manner in which one's perspective influences one's perception of the nature and the boundaries of a given community. An exploration of decisions made by participants with regards to the size and positioning of objects within the map can lead to a discussion and questioning of the value systems that inform these choices. Likewise, the level of detail of the maps, and parts thereof, can help to make apparent value judgements and perspectives that informed the map drawing process. This can lead to a discussion of the way in which participants' perspectives of their community influence and shape their choices in their work at the radio station.

Following the initial map-drawing exercise, participants are expected to work through Harwood and McCrehan's (1996) processes. Firstly, in order to assist the participants to begin unpacking the concept of 'community', they are presented with the idea that this word is simply a short hand, convenient way of talking about a complex and multi-dimensional social network. Harwood and McCrehan's (1996) breakdown of the community into various layers is adopted, with some changes in terminology and the use of South African examples. Since Harwood and McCrehan's (1996) breakdown of 'layers' is rather 'flat' and one-dimensional, participants are also encouraged to think of other ways of analysing the community (along such

dimensions as 'traditional life', 'business life', 'sport', 'culture' and so on; and along the dimensions of community of 'place', 'interest' and 'circumstance')¹⁰. Thus, while the discussion of the maps is intended to sensitise participants to the selective nature of their respective views of the community, the ideas of community 'layers' and 'dimensions' are intended to provide them with a set of conceptual tools to begin building a wider and more inclusive picture of their community. In order to root this conceptual exercise in the participants' own lived experience, they are presented with the idea that within their own geographical region, there are places corresponding to these layers and dimensions that station personnel can and should visit, in order to find out more about their community. While still in the workshop venue, participants are first encouraged to list all the places they can think of in their specific community, which correspond to the various schemas presented.

Next, Harwood and McCrehan's (1996) breakdown of various types of community leaders is presented ('official leaders', 'civic leaders', 'catalysts', and 'connectors'), in addition to the category of 'experts', which I added. In this section the value of ordinary people as sources of news and views is also highlighted. These concepts are intended to illustrate to the participants that as producers and presenters, they should be interacting with, interviewing and involving people at all levels of the community and not only those with official titles and positions, such as municipal councillors or managers of large organisations. Again, the participants are asked to list names of all the various types of leaders they can think of.

These discussions and exercises are precursors to field excursions during which the participants go out in teams to various areas and neighbourhoods within the station's broadcast footprint. The purpose of these excursions is to enable participants to gather first-hand intelligence about the areas visited: where people gather socially, what people talk about in these places, what the important issues are in that area, who the key community leaders are. Participants are provided with sample questions to ask the people and leaders that they meet. Thus, through the field visits, participants are gathering information about specific places and people that they and their colleagues will be able to approach, in future, in the search for programme content and local news. Following the series of research excursions, the participants organise a community focus group. They are asked to invite several ordinary community

¹⁰ The suggestion to introduce other dimensions was made by Guilfoyle, an experienced trainer at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (personal communication 07/07/2002).

members to the workshop venue for a discussion based around questions provided. The questions are designed to facilitate an in-depth discussion related to the station's community: what the important issues are, what community members expect from the station, how community members would like to be involved in the station, and further places and people the station members can turn to for input into news and programming.

Throughout the process the participants are encouraged to consolidate the information they have gathered. Once the research exercises are complete, the participants go about designing and compiling their community or civic 'map'. This is essentially a data-base of contacts, places and issue or story ideas that the radio station personnel can use as a reference tool, intended to guide them to a wide range of community members, voices and stories for inclusion in news and programming.

Once the map is complete, the participants are taken through a 'stakeholder identification' exercise based on one developed by Guilfoyle (1999) for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. This is intended to assist the participants to identify a range of perspectives from which any given story can be tackled. Discussions are also held, focused on ideas about what news is, based on concepts central to public journalism as outlined by Rosen (1999).

1.2.2. The second level of participatory research

The second level of participatory research refers to the process of observation undertaken by me, in order to assess and evaluate the first level. According to Wimmer and Dominick (1987), Dick (1999) and Jankowski (1991), both case study and participatory action research involve the use of multiple sources of evidence. It is in the 'triangulation', or cross checking, of these multiple sources of evidence that rigour is sought in participatory action research, rather than in the attempt to control variables and experimental conditions. In accordance with this practice this study made use of interviews, questionnaires, field notes, audio recordings of on-air material and the end product of the mapping activities, the community map/file, as sources of evidence about the value of the techniques applied and process followed. During my initial visits to the station I interviewed key members of station management in order to assess their attitudes to issues of community participation and to the proposed research and to get an idea of their needs in terms of building a greater understanding of their station's community. Prior to the onset of the

participatory research process, participants completed a pre-workshop questionnaire. This questionnaire asked for participants' descriptions of their station's community, and their perspectives on the station's relationship with the community. It also asked for their assessment of programming at the station and of the station's knowledge needs. Furthermore, this questionnaire asked participants to explain what they hoped to gain from the process, for themselves and for the station. The field notes were used to record key events, interactions and comments during the participatory workshops. They were important in tracking participants' changing perspectives on the community and the station's relationship with that community. Post-workshop questionnaires were used to gather participants' comments on the value of the research process, what they had gained from it and how they might use their new knowledge and skills in order to improve community participation at the station. The final community map was assessed and evaluated as one of the prime outcomes of the intervention. Participants' programmes recorded before the participatory community research process, were compared with programmes recorded at the conclusion of the process, in order to assess whether the research had had any immediate impact on the station's programming.

Section Two: Execution of the Research

2.1. The selection of the case study

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) the initiative for an action-research project ideally comes from members of a community who want some problem solved. Sometimes, however, the social scientist has information that is not available to a community, but which may be of benefit to it, or which may make a community aware of an unseen danger. As Bless & Higson-Smith (1995) put it, "...In these cases, the social researcher is obliged...to make information available and to formulate the problem so that communities may respond to it" (1995:57). Thus, it is possible that an action-research project can begin with an initiative by a social scientist, rather than with a community request, provided the researcher approach the community in a manner that is conducive to the development of trust and cooperation (Kelly & van der Riet, 2000). In the context of community radio, Nell and Shapiro (2001) have made it clear that outsiders are indeed sometimes able to accurately identify needs

that stations themselves are unaware of. In their evaluation of training provision in the South African community radio sector, Nell and Shapiro (2001) indicate that there are areas where training is needed, but where stations themselves do not identify this need: "Our feeling is that even when a station did not...indicate a need, this does not mean it would not identify such a need if it understood the issues better" (Nell & Shapiro, 2001:82).

With respect to this study, no specific request for an intervention was made by the community radio sector or the specific station involved in the case study. Rather, I identified the need for community radio stations to be able to research their communities, in order to boost participation. This occurred as the result of my reading of literature in the field, as well as through my work with a range of community radio stations across the country over a period of years. Furthermore, during a fellowship at the Kettering Foundation in the United States, I was introduced to a range of techniques that seemed potentially useful in helping stations meet this need. I then identified a station that seemed an appropriate site for a case study in the application of these techniques. The station that formed the focus of the study was selected as a theoretical sample, rather than a probabilistic one (Mouton, 2001). I chose the station for specific reasons linked to the aims of the study, and did not attempt a random selection process, as this would have been inappropriate. Several factors made Radio KC suitable as the focus of a case study. The station is situated in Paarl, a semi-rural community with an economy based largely on agriculture and tourism, and experienced many of the problems faced by other stations in rural areas or small towns. The difficulties the station experienced with respect to community participation were typical of many stations in South Africa and corresponded to many of the challenges that community stations face in general, as outlined in Chapter Two. These factors made Radio KC a good theoretical choice. In addition to this, despite its semi-rural environment, the station's position within easy driving distance from Cape Town meant that it was conveniently situated to enable me to make numerous visits to the station during the research process.

In their study of training needs in the community radio sector, Nell and Shapiro (2001) cite Radio KC as an inspiring example for the manner in which it managed to survive financially for some six years without a licence by acting as a production house for outside organisations and other stations. The station was granted a four-year licence in late 2001, and went on air in early 2002. Although it had been a

struggle to survive without a licence and the station had to battle to keep community interest alive, the fact of being on-air permanently brought with it new challenges. While the station was born in the coloured part of Paarl, and had catered mainly to the coloured community, it had relocated to the town's central business district since being granted a licence.

At the time of my initial contact with Radio KC, I became aware of other factors that made it a good choice for the research project. As will be shown in Chapter Four, the station management was aware of the need to include the community more fully, including the black and white sectors. Women, blacks, whites and people with disabilities could be found in various key roles. In the process of improving participation, however, the station still had to deal with racism – coloured racism against blacks, and white racism against both. Since the station was broadcasting predominantly in Afrikaans it also had to work out the best way to accommodate English and isiXhosa speakers in its programming. While the majority of staff members and volunteers were coloured and perhaps understood the issues that that section of the community faced, they had to deal with their own prejudices and preconceptions as they tried to understand the needs and issues of other sectors of the community¹¹. In addition to this, many of the people involved with the station, while coming from disadvantaged communities, were from relatively less disadvantaged sectors. Most lived near to the town centre, had completed school and lived in formal housing. They therefore did not necessarily represent, or understand, the interests of farm workers, or those who lived in shacks and informal settlements in outlying rural areas. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that station members and volunteers were generally not so privileged as to have ready access to transport and so experienced difficulty in contacting and reaching the more marginalised community members. Furthermore, while most station workers did not get paid, the fact of being involved with the station provided access to training, travel and other opportunities, which increased workers' relative level of privilege.

Another way in which the station could be said to be a typical South African example, is that the pressures of providing and funding a 24-hour radio service had led to a stronger differentiation between the full-time management team, part-time volunteers, and the community at large. Volunteer presenters and some of the

¹¹ I will expand on these points in Chapter Four, based on participants' questionnaire responses, my interviews with managers and my notes taken during workshops.

station's founding members had expressed frustration at feeling squeezed out of decision-making circles as the result of attempts by the management team to tighten control of sales and marketing and achieve a greater degree of 'professionalism' in programme planning and production in order to attract listeners and advertisers. For their part, members of the management team had expressed frustration at presenters' lack of cooperation and discipline and at being constantly interrupted during the day by community members demanding their time and attention.

The station also seemed a good choice because the staff and volunteers at Radio KC clearly felt the lack of, and the need for, the skills and resources that would enable them better to deal with the challenges outlined above. This ranged from the lack of language skills that would enable staff members to communicate with people from other language groups and lack of transport for reaching outlying communities, to the lack of skills in community research and in how to include diverse voices and perspectives during radio programme production. For example, presenters struggled to understand why listeners would often flood the switchboard with calls to make musical requests, but failed to call in to talk shows when so-called 'important issues' were being discussed. Because of this there was a felt need for research since while the station did try to cater for community needs and interests, these were generally "...perceived needs, rather than researched needs" (F.Huizies, interview 29/08/2002).

2.2. Managing the relationship with the research participants

2.2.1. Initiating the research project

According to Bless and Higson-Smith, participatory action research "...demands that social scientist and community are equal partners in the planning and implementation of the project" and each brings valuable resources to the undertaking (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:56). While the two parties cooperate on a project, they each have differing reasons for doing so and each aim to achieve slightly different goals. This corresponds to the dual level of the research as outlined above: the community does its research to solve a specific problem and the scientist facilitates this research, while, at another level, aiming also to find a more general solution to problems faced by other communities. The initial stages of the participatory action research project thus involve some negotiation or dialogue (Kelly & Van der Riet, 2000) as researcher and community clarify their respective goals and their respective resources. In many

cases this results in a contract, whether written or verbal, which outlines what each party brings to the project and what each can be expected to gain.

In the case of this particular study, the research project began with an initial meeting with the station manager of Radio KC, Franklin Huizies, on 29 August 2002. At that meeting, I discussed with Huizies the station and its needs and presented the idea of a research process focusing on community participation. Huizies invited me to facilitate part of a workshop on Saturday 14 September, to be attended by all the station's producers and presenters. During that plenary workshop, I could begin the process of discussion about the station and its role in the community. The initial map-drawing exercise was carried out at that workshop. It became clear that a number of station members present at the initial plenary workshop were stimulated by the ideas presented and were interested in beginning a longer, more specialised series of workshops focusing on community participation at the station.

2.2.2. Selecting the participants¹²

Following discussions with the station manager and news editor, the volunteers for the workshop were identified. They were: Sonwabile Dwangu (news editor), Annelie van der Merwe (programme manager), Rebecca Moahloli, Levona Samuels, Georgette Frolick and Donna Godfrey. The team of research volunteers was predominantly female, with only one of the six participants a male. There was an even racial balance: two of the six were white (Godfrey and Van der Merwe), two black (Dwangu and Moahloli), and two coloured (Frolicks and Samuels). There was also one disabled person (Samuels). These participants were station volunteers and full time members involved in programme production and presentation. All of the participants had expressed interest in being part of the proposed research process and had agreed to participate in the full workshop series.

¹² The participants' real names are used in this thesis, as is common practice in research of this nature. As the research contract (below) indicates, the participants and station workers understood that I would be documenting the process, and did not raise any objections to their names being used. In any event, it would be impossible to hide participants' identities without also hiding the name of the station and the town, since the identities of the role players at Radio KC at the time were common knowledge in the region.

2.2.3. The research contract

The first-hand knowledge of the ‘situation on the ground’ that the participants brought to the process in this case was primarily knowledge of the station’s problems, needs and strengths with respect to community participation, in addition to their knowledge of the community by virtue of being long-term residents. The problem they sought to solve was the fact that, despite being community members themselves, they felt they needed much more knowledge and understanding of the community than their personal experiences and interactions had given them. As station presenters, journalists and producers, they felt out of touch with the community and its needs and concerns. They wanted research to change this situation, and the skills to continue with ongoing research once the workshop process was over¹³.

What I brought to the process was academic knowledge and skills: knowledge of the issues faced by other stations, and the skills and a framework for training the participants in the skills they required. What I wanted to receive from the process was the opportunity to test the framework at the station as a case study. This would provide insights about whether the developed framework could be usefully applied at other stations and about what aspects of the process succeeded and what aspects failed, so that the framework could be adapted for future use.

The research contract between the facilitator and the participants in this case is set out as follows, along the lines of the example provided by Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:58):

¹³ The participants’ expression of the need for research may be strongly linked with the fact that I had brought the issue to the fore in my interactions with them. This does not mean, however, that they did not genuinely agree with the importance of research.

Table 3.1: Research Contract

	Station Participants	Researcher: Brett Davidson
To Provide:	Active Participation in discussions and in research excursions Punctuality Candid feedback Existing records of community contacts. Existing knowledge of and insight into the community. Ideas, language skills, organisational skills	Active Participation Academic knowledge and theory, specifically relating to the workshop curriculum developed. Computer access, to type up community information gained Internet access (access to information from the municipal demarcation board for example). Food and refreshments Skills training Smoke breaks
To Receive:	A community map to keep as a station resource, for use in programme and news planning. Training in research skills. New concepts and ideas relating to 'community'. Ideas for participatory programming.	Increased understanding of the problems faced by stations in terms of community participation. Insight into the value of the specific community research tools in terms of assisting other stations to improve community participation. Material for MA thesis

The value of this research contract was that it set out clearly the desired outcomes of the participatory process, specified what was expected from each party and reminded everyone of what they stood to gain from their involvement.

I met with the participants at the station for an introductory and planning meeting on Saturday 5 October 2002. This meeting finalised the negotiation phase of the research project as discussed by Bless and Higson-Smith (1995). At that meeting all of the participants, myself included, clarified what they would be bringing to the process and what they wished to get from it. This included the drawing up of ground rules and agreement on a workshop schedule. The participants decided on the following ground rules:

- Be on time, inform others if you won't be able to make it, or will be late.
- We will have a smoke break of 15 minutes during the session.
- We will have something to eat and drink at each session.
- Say what you mean, and mean what you say.
- Fulfil your commitments.

Initially, it was agreed that four workshops would be held on successive Tuesday afternoons: the 8, 15, 22 and 29 October. Later, however, it became apparent that more time would be needed and two extra workshops were scheduled for 26 November and 3 December 2002.

2.3. Gathering the research data

2.3.1. Data collection at the first level of participatory research¹⁴

In the process of collecting the research data, both the participants and I faced some difficulties in achieving our objectives, as will be described below. Nevertheless, the implementation of this stage of the research plan proceeded relatively smoothly. I believe that this was due to the strength of the workshop curriculum in providing the participants with an exciting learning process. This in turn was reflected in the deep level of commitment to the process by most of the participants.

The group decided that it would meet at the station premises on the agreed dates. Since the station did not have a large meeting room and the newsroom was small and cramped, we were given the use of the manager's office for our meetings. At the first of these smaller workshops, on 8 October 2002, the maps drawn by participants in the large plenary workshop were pinned up on a wall and used as the focus for a discussion about the participants' perception of their community. The discussion moved on to cover the concepts of community layers and various types of leaders, as outlined in the workshop curriculum. I provided charts for the participants to begin to identify places and people they already knew in their community and list them along the lines of Harwood and McCrehan's (1996) categorisation of the kinds of places and people who could be visited and contacted as sources of information and content for the radio station.

Much of the time during the following sessions was devoted to research excursions to various places falling within the Radio KC broadcast footprint. Following each excursion the group would hold a discussion back at the station in which the members shared their experiences with one another, discussed what they had learned, and tried to come up with ideas about how their insights could be implemented in the station's news and programming. The feedback sessions were also used to evaluate the research excursions in order to improve on the process in

¹⁴ As discussed above, this refers to the process of community research undertaken by the small group of volunteers from the station.

subsequent excursions. In this manner, the activities came to reflect the cycles of reflection and research characteristic of action research.

Although the process is described more fully in Chapter Four, there were some problems with the workshops that are worth mentioning briefly at this point. These problems illustrate some of the limitations of using the case study approach when it comes to the validity of drawing generalised conclusions about the intervention process. For example, it is often difficult to distinguish whether problems or successes in the intervention were due to the specific individuals and unique circumstances involved, or to the pre-planned exercises and processes.

During the workshops, things were often chaotic. The workshops hardly ever started on time and it took some effort to collect everyone together. The use of the station offices as the workshop venue proved to be a bad idea. We met in the station manager's office and although it was one of the bigger rooms in the station premises, it was very cramped. At Radio KC, the walls dividing offices from one another and from the central reception area, do not reach all the way to the ceiling – which meant that noise was a constant distraction. Because we met at the station, it was easy for interruptions and distractions to arise. Participants were easily diverted by other station activities such as ad-hoc meetings, minor crises and 'urgent' messages. In addition to this one of the participants, the programme manager, was very inconsistent in her attendance and slowly disengaged from the process, while consistently insisting that she was still interested. This had some effect on the other participants, as will be described in Chapter Four.

During the research visits I found that the participants had to be continually reminded to take down the full names of people they spoke to, along with contact details such as addresses and phone numbers. This was important if these people were to be listed in the community map as future contacts for programming and news content. In addition to this, while I had provided them with lists of questions to ask during research visits as well as during the community conversation (based on questions compiled by Harwood & McCrehan, 1996), the participants almost never used the pre-prepared questions. This meant the type of information gathered during the research excursions varied substantially from place to place, depending on who happened to be doing the research and what questions they happened to ask respondents.

I had planned to have the group develop the format for their community map as the result of a process of discussion amongst themselves, but the concept was too new and unfamiliar and after a few sessions it became obvious that they would need some guidance. I therefore took on the task of typing up the participants' findings and presented the format to them for discussion and approval. The final workshop session, on 3 December, was devoted to the presentation and discussion of the researched community map. At the close of that session, the participants also spent time filling in questionnaires evaluating the process.

2.3.2 Data collection at the second level of participatory research¹⁵

The data collection at this level of the research was aimed at capturing the richly layered information relating to the participants' experience of the first level process. Since the various sources of data on the process and their respective importance are described in Section 1.2.2 above, a summary will suffice at this point. The participants in the workshops were given questionnaires prior to the start of the workshop series: the initial questionnaires were directed at discovering participants' areas of involvement with the station, their perceptions of the community and their expectations for the workshop process. The participants who were personally involved in programme production and/or presentation were also asked to record and hand in a sample of their on-air programmes. During the workshop process, as well as during the initial interviews and meetings, I took detailed notes, recording the process, the context, and the comments and remarks of participants. At the penultimate workshop session, participants who had submitted an audiocassette of their programmes were asked to record a second sample of their on-air work. The initial and subsequent recordings were used in order to gauge whether any noticeable changes had occurred in programme style and content during the course of the workshops. At the final workshop sessions, participants filled in post-workshop questionnaires, which asked for their assessment of the value of the process both for the station and personally. Having the participants complete the questionnaires during the session ensured that they would feel they had a dedicated period of time for this task and would thus be able to devote full attention to it. In addition, it ensured that I would receive a completed questionnaire from all present.

¹⁵ As discussed above, this refers to the process of assessing and evaluating the first level of research.

2.4. Analysing the data, and presenting and writing up the research results

The following material was thus available for analysis: the notes taken during my initial interviews with key station members; the maps drawn during the large plenary workshop; participants' answers to the pre- and post-workshop questionnaires; my notes taken during the workshop process; the final community map or file produced as the outcome of the participatory research process; and the recordings of on-air programmes. The material was analysed in a qualitative fashion, with the data grouped chronologically and thematically. Finally, based upon the analysis, conclusions were drawn about the value of the research process for other stations, and ways in which it might be adapted and improved in future.

One of the consequences of the adoption of the participatory action research design is that the research process becomes as important as the result. This needed also to be reflected in the report on the study. The emphasis on process, combined with the participatory nature of the research, called for a narrative style in which the first-person perspective is freely used, along with the active voice. As Mouton (2001) points out, the passive voice used in much academic writing has its origins in the positivist approach, which "...claimed that such an approach makes the text more neutral and objective" (Mouton, 2001:130). As I have already pointed out, the participatory-action research approach makes no claim to, and even rejects, the positivist requirement of neutrality and detached objectivity on the part of the researcher (Kelly & Van der Riet, 2000). The use of the passive voice in this case would have proved extremely difficult and would have resulted in absurdly convoluted prose. In addition, a story-telling approach was crucial to enable me to capture the richness of the research data by describing the unfolding of events, the responses of the research participants and the complex and layered nature of their interactions with one another. However, the story-telling is not left to stand on its own. In Chapter Four, while the intervention at Radio KC is narrated in chronological fashion, an attempt is made throughout to highlight thematic threads, to analyse the interactions and events and to draw conclusions about what occurs. In Chapter Four, the descriptions and analysis of the process at Radio KC are used as a basis for developing more general recommendations for a model that could be applied at other community radio stations.

Section Three: Conclusion

This chapter has described the conceptualisation of the research project, outlining the choices made in terms of research design and approach. The participatory action design was most appropriate for this project, given the research aims and context. Such a design presents challenges in terms of ensuring the validity and reliability of research results, however. The involvement of the researcher in the very process being studied creates the possibility for errors. Interviews could be affected by interviewer bias, or by the ongoing relationship of the interviewer with those being interviewed, for example. Field notes and the interpretation of events could be distorted by bias and selective perception on the part of the researcher. The lack of anonymity could affect questionnaire responses. One way in which these problems are addressed in participatory action research, is through the use of multiple sources of data, which allows triangulation, or cross-checking of data. It is important to bear in mind however, that in the case of participatory research, no attempt is made to eliminate the so-called 'researcher effects' from the research data. On the contrary, the impact of the researcher on the situation and circumstances being studied, is understood to form an important part of the entire process. Thus reflexivity is built into participatory action research, through a cyclical process of research and reflection. This process is also used as a means of evaluating and improving the research process. For example, one of the benefits of the ongoing process of reflection is that the participants are able to comment on the researcher's observations and interpretations. In the case of this study, the design involved two levels of research. The explicit aim of the second level of research was to assess and evaluate the first level. The process and results of the research are described and analysed in detail in Chapter Four, while conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Radio KC's premises are on the first floor of the Nantes Building, at the corner of Fabriek Street and Jan Phillips Square in the Paarl Central Business District (CBD). The central location is an ideal position for any radio station and particularly a community station. What is more, the large corner window in the broadcast studio looks out over two of Paarl's most important and busiest shopping and business streets, giving broadcasters a feeling of direct contact with the hustle and bustle of daily life below.

It was not always like this. Radio KC had its origins in the town's coloured community and initially had offices in the predominantly coloured part of town. When the station started in 1996 it had missed the cut-off date for the first round of one-year licences (Nell & Shapiro, 2001). It therefore had to survive for some six years on a succession of special-events licences¹⁶. From its inception it was well rooted in the community – it was situated in a well-used community centre, had a dedicated team of staff and volunteers and gathered 4 000 signatures of community members in support of its licence application. This community support no doubt helped it to sustain itself in the long wait for a permanent licence. When the licence was finally granted, the station moved to its current location.

The move to a different location was not the only change that occurred with the station's going on air. For most stations, once they are on air, there is usually a rush of people wanting to claim their place in the limelight. At Radio KC, the group of stalwart members who had diligently contributed to the station's survival in the years without a licence, now had to deal with the arrival of numbers of community members who had renewed interest in being involved with the station. Changes in membership took place, and new agendas began to come into play.

To the casual observer, Radio KC appears to be a model example of what a South African community radio station should be. Its membership certainly appears to be representative of the community it serves. The workers at the station are roughly

¹⁶ During the first round of licensing of community radio stations, they were granted one-year temporary licences, which had to be renewed each year. Stations that had missed the cut-off for applications for these licences could apply for short-term 'special-events' licences of 30 days' duration. These could not be renewed each month.

representative of the demographics of the region¹⁷. On closer examination, however, it would appear that the representative nature of this membership does not guarantee that the relationship between this station and its community is ideal. It is such an examination that is represented in this chapter.

The chapter describes in detail the findings that emerged from the research process conducted, as part of this study, at Radio KC. Firstly, I present my observations on the way in which members of the station understood concepts of 'community' and 'participation' prior to the community mapping workshops. These observations are based on initial interviews with members of the station's management team, interaction with station workers in general, the first map drawing exercise and the responses to the pre-workshop questionnaires filled in by the small group of participants in the longer research process. Following this, I track the changes in the perceptions of participation and of community that occurred within the smaller group of KC members who, after the initial mapping exercise, volunteered to take part in the community mapping process. As explained in Chapter Three, my description of these shifting perceptions is based on field notes taken during the community mapping process, as well as participants' responses to the post-workshop questionnaire. I then discuss the short-term impact of research on programmes broadcast on the station. This discussion is based on an analysis of two sets of live programmes broadcast on the station – one set recorded before the start of the workshops and one set recorded at the end of the workshop series. Finally, the chapter goes on to explore the way in which the community mapping process was framed by broader events that were unfolding within Radio KC more generally and argues that the relationship between the mapping process and this broader context has important implications for the research findings.

¹⁷ According to figures available for the Drakenstein Municipality (<http://www.demarcation.org.za>), which makes up a significant proportion of the Radio KC broadcast area, coloureds make up about two thirds of the population, with whites and blacks in almost equal numbers, making up most of the rest. The predominance of young coloured staff members and volunteers matched the overwhelmingly young, coloured population. Small numbers of blacks, whites, elderly and disabled people were also present. There seemed to be a good gender balance too, although not at management level. The station manager and his deputy were male, as were the training manager and the news editor. The programme manager was female.

Section One: Perceptions of Community and Participation

1.1. The views of the station's management

1.1.1. Views of the Radio KC community.

My first visit to Radio KC in connection with the research was in August 2002. My aim was to better acquaint myself with the station and to discuss my proposed research project with the station's management. In late August and early September, I held discussions with three individuals from the management team, which provided me with initial impressions about the approach to community and participation among the station's leadership and the ways in which the station might benefit from the proposed community research. The managers I interviewed were the station manager, Franklin Huizies, the programme manager, Annalie van der Merwe, and the news manager, Sonwabile Dwangu¹⁸.

During these interviews certain themes began to emerge in the way that the managers spoke about 'community' and 'participation'. These themes would later be echoed in my interactions with station workers in general. Firstly, while the station's broadcast footprint encompassed a large geographical area including several towns and numerous farms, the managers seemed frequently to talk about the main town, Paarl, as if it were the 'community'. For example, during my initial meeting with Huizies (interview, 29/08/2002), when I asked him for his views on the community served by KC, he spoke only of social conditions in Paarl. While Dwangu spoke of other towns, most of his references too, were to Paarl itself. This was the first indication that station workers were differentiating between the station's geographical community, defined by its broadcast footprint, and the 'community' in a lived experiential sense. This could be seen as a difficulty in linking the language and concepts used to talk about community radio in legal or definitional terms, with the more complex reality on the ground. As is described in Section 1.2.1 below, this same kind of differentiation would emerge later in a more graphic way, when I asked station workers to draw maps of the 'community.'

¹⁸ The members of the management and news teams represented a range of racial and economic backgrounds. Huizies is a coloured Afrikaans-speaking male, while Van der Merwe is a white, Afrikaans-speaking female with strong connections in the well-off white community. Dwangu is a black isiXhosa-speaking male from a poor, rural background and at the time of my research living in Mbekweni, a township just outside Paarl.

Another theme that emerged in my interviews with the managers was a concern with social divisions within this 'community'. These divisions were defined as primarily racial and economic. For example, speaking of Paarl, Huizies told me that the town was divided along lines of both race and class. He felt that the primary divide was between the east and west sides of Main Street. As he saw it, the rich upper middle class residents on the west side of the street (who also happened to be white) distanced themselves from, and looked down on, the lower middle and working class community on the east, no matter their race. In addition to this, Huizies said that there were racial divisions within the community on the east side of Main Street.

According to the news manager, Sonwabile Dwangu (interview, 03/09/2002), the Radio KC community¹⁹ was predominantly coloured and Afrikaans speaking; in his estimate this group made up about 75% of the population of the region, and lived in places such as Paarl, Wellington, Saron, Gouda, Klapmuts and Stellenbosch. He calculated that blacks made up about 10% of the population in the geographical area served by Radio KC, with most of them living in Mbekweni. He felt that, as isiXhosa speakers, the station did not serve black residents very well. Dwangu felt that the small, Afrikaans-speaking white community in Paarl kept itself very separate, although he pointed out that there were some white presenters at the station. According to Dwangu, the 'white community' was still racist and, to a large extent, still retained most of the power in the economic and political life of the town.

1.1.2. View of the relationship between the station and its target community

My interviews with members of the station's management team made it clear that they had already begun thinking about this issue of community participation at the station. They had also done some thinking about the relationship of the concept of 'community' with concepts more familiar to the staff of radio stations such as 'listenership' and 'target markets.' It was here that differences between the managers' thinking began to emerge. It was clear that each was thinking about the relationship between the station and its target community in divergent ways.

All three members of the management team interviewed expressed the view that the community the station was mandated to serve was indeed broader than the

¹⁹ The 'Radio KC Community' refers to the community the station is licensed to serve: the population within the geographical area covered by the station's broadcast signal.

station's existing, primarily coloured, support base and that the station needed to take specific steps to address this. All three talked of the need to include blacks and whites more. They had very different ideas, however, about what greater inclusion of different parts of the community might mean. This seemed to be because each manager understood the role of the station in its community very differently. Depending on who was speaking, the emphasis alternated between the need to include the often ignored and relatively more disadvantaged black community and the need to reach out to whites, who remained largely in control of business and sought-after ad-spend. The (white) programme manager, who was also attempting to secure sponsorship and advertising for the station, seemed to feel that in order to attain a broader appeal, the station should project a more 'professional' and upmarket image. Specifically, she was concerned that presenters should not make in-jokes or use language and slang that would perpetuate the impression that Radio KC was 'just a coloured' station (A. Van der Merwe, interview 03/09/2002). Although she was the programme manager, Van der Merwe spoke in the language of a marketer. When she discussed research, she linked it to the need to market the station to secure sponsorship and financial support from the white members of the community. She did, however, also mention the need to cater for black residents. The (black) news manager's concerns about community involvement were informed by his role as the news manager. For him, community participation was an essential resource if he was to achieve good news coverage. Unlike Van der Merwe, he placed emphasis on the station's role in community development and he stressed the need to include black isiXhosa speakers.

As the manager of a community radio station, Huizies had been trying to come to grips with the 'community' conceptually. Unlike Van der Merwe, Huizies was aware of the distinct task of community broadcasters to promote community development, but found it difficult to find a neat way of defining the station's audience within this context, saying: "...It's much easier to be a copy of a commercial or private station". He explained that commercial stations had a simpler task in the conceptual sense, since they could select and focus upon a defined 'target market'. A community station, on the other hand, had to serve the entire geographical community in which it was based. This meant that it was far more difficult to define the target audience coherently, either in terms of marketing or developmental principles.

Huizies' stance seemed to fall somewhere between the perspectives of Dwangu and Van der Merwe. This was perhaps because, as a coloured man, he was part of the 'majority' group at the station and he thus felt able to take a disinterested position, or perhaps because, as station manager, he felt acutely the tension between the need for financial viability and the need for political credibility. Like Van der Merwe, Huizies saw the need for strategic partnerships in order to advance the interests of the station. Unlike Van der Merwe, however, Huizies explicitly talked of the station as an important resource for the community, rather than a 'brand' to be marketed. He emphasised the need for the station to begin engaging with non-governmental (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) as potential partners in reaching the broader community. He expressed concern that the local government and service providers appeared not to perceive that the station could play an important role in assisting them to communicate with the community on issues such as the local integrated development plan. For him, an important aspect of the proposed community research was that it would assist the station to identify CBOs and NGOs within Radio KC's geographical area. The station would then be able to engage these organisations in order to produce programming on issues related to development and democracy. He added that, in order to fulfil its obligations to bring about community participation, the station needed the skills to be able to identify key development needs in the community and to work out a strategy for prioritising key community issues in programming (F. Huizies, interview 29/08/2002).

Franklin Huizies expressed concern that the station was not properly addressing issues of community participation. He felt that the station had a responsibility to explain its role to the community and to educate people about the various avenues of participation open to them. He felt the station was failing to do this:

Seventy percent of the community will say they are listening to Radio KC, but they are not educated on how to use the station. People come with complaints, but there's no strategy from the station's side (F. Huizies, interview 29/08/2002).

The programme manager, Annalie van der Merwe, saw community or listener participation in a more limited fashion. For Van der Merwe, participation could occur in only two ways: community members being invited onto programmes as featured

interviewees for a maximum of 15 to 30 minutes at a time, and through call-in programmes.

If call-in programmes were thought of as one of the principal means of community participation, however, then the station clearly had a problem in getting people to participate in programming dedicated to community development – which, after all, was its key mandate. The station manager, Huizies, commented that listeners often flooded the switchboard with calls to '*versoekies*' (request) shows; they seldom called in to talk shows with a current affairs focus:

Topics like [delivery of] basic services don't get many responses, but when it comes to entertainment [such as musical requests], the lines go crazy...somehow we are not hitting it, or our approach is wrong. There's no strategy to capture the voice of the people. There's a need to research what people call in about and so on (F. Huizies, interview 29/08/2002).

Like Huizies, Sonwabile Dwangu, the news editor, (interview, 03/09/2002) expressed concern about community participation at the station and felt there was a need to educate the station's target community about the station and its role. Unlike other managers, however, Dwangu saw the gathering and broadcast of local news as a key way for the station to engage with the community. Limited funds for transport and telephones meant original news generally had to be gathered from places within walking distance. He felt that the news team's job could be made a little easier if the community participated in the news gathering process. Unfortunately, he said, listeners rarely took the initiative in this regard by calling in to alert the station about important local issues and events. Dwangu said:

The audience is passive. There is a lack of community participation. The community is sleeping. The community is not aware of the role they can play in community media (S. Dwangu, interview 03/09/2002).

Dwangu said members of the black and white communities barely participated in the station. As for members of the coloured community, Dwangu agreed with Huizies that, while coloured listeners participated enthusiastically when it came to musical dedications, they did not participate in programmes dealing with current issues. Dwangu speculated that perhaps people were not sufficiently informed about current events and thus lacked the confidence to raise their voices in relation to serious issues. Another idea expressed by Dwangu was that people had been so used to being told

what to do that they preferred to keep quiet and “keep their heads down” – they had “...cultivated a culture of silence”²⁰ (S. Dwangu, interview 03/09/2002). Dwangu felt that even if there was a so-called ‘culture of silence’ among listeners, the station should accept a large part of the blame, because it had not done its part in reaching out to the community:

Either it’s them or us who are responsible for the lack of participation. The presenters think they know everything, but they should actually facilitate. The understanding of media out there is about glamour. They don’t realise it’s hard work (S. Dwangu, interview 03/09/2002).

Dwangu summed up the situation rather dramatically: “We don’t know our mandate here. We have lost focus. We are no longer missing the boat, we have missed the whole harbour”²¹ (S. Dwangu, interview 03/09/2002).

1.2. The views of the general membership

1.2.1. The community maps: a brief description

The managers had enthusiastically welcomed my proposal for the community research process and, as an initial step, Huizies invited me to facilitate a session at a general workshop for station workers, scheduled for the 14 September. At this plenary workshop, attended by all of the station’s producers and presenters, I asked those present to draw maps of the ‘Radio KC community’ from their heads. I divided people into seven groups, and each group produced a map. These maps were later used as a means of stimulating discussion about similarities and differences in people’s understandings of the community. At face value, the maps indicate a large

²⁰ This view of Dwangu’s corresponds to a degree with Paulo Freire’s observation that at a certain stage the “oppressed” are often self-deprecating and fatalistic, apt to “react in a passive and alienated manner when confronted with the necessity to struggle for their freedom and self-affirmation” (Freire, 1995:46).

²¹ I had the opportunity to experience first-hand the lack of participation that Huizies, Dwangu and Frolicks talked about when I sat in on a talk show on the evening following my meeting with the news team. The programme was called *Feite met Frolicks*. The presenter, Steven Frolicks, said that the guest he had set up had cancelled at the last minute. To fill in, he spent the programme discussing sexual harassment, based on a newspaper article about the experience of Dr Margaret Orr at Unisa. During the hour of the programme, not a single listener called in and Frolicks’ discussion was interspersed with large interludes of music. In my estimation, on this occasion the explanation for the lack of participation did not seem to be that people were afraid to speak out. The language Frolicks used was complex and academic, as he read large passages verbatim from the newspaper article with the obvious intent of educating the listeners. It seemed to me that, because of the manner in which the show was presented, most listeners would struggle to make connections between the programme’s content and their own lives and experiences. It seemed clear that if many listeners were indeed reluctant to comment on current topics, the programme was not geared towards helping them get over that hurdle.

degree of shared understanding about the nature of the present relationship between the station and the community. In later discussion of the maps, however, it became apparent that there was far less shared understanding of what the future relationship between station and community should be and what community participation should entail²².

Map 1 depicts the community according to a grid containing a series of concentric squares. Radio KC is represented by the central square and Paarl by the adjacent, encompassing square. The names of other places and towns within the Radio KC broadcast signal are included in the other squares radiating from the centre. There is a rough correspondence between the position of place names on the grid and the distance of places from the Radio KC premises. For example, Gouda, one of the towns on the extreme outskirts of the station's broadcast footprint appears in the outermost level of the grid on the map. In addition to the place names, various symbols are dotted randomly around the grid. These symbols represent "churches", "schools", "the elderly", "the youth", and "prisons". The symbols are in red, while everything else is in blue²³. An additional symbol is included, representing "family". Unlike the other symbols, this one is drawn in blue, and appears only in the square representing Paarl.

Map 2 also depicts Radio KC at the centre. Spokes radiate outwards from this point and among these spokes there are labels describing various issues, such as "child support", "fraud", "jobs", "housing" and so on. The issues do not appear to be placed in any particular order. Two large labels bracket the cluster of issues: one at the top of the page, in blue, reads "religion", while the label at the bottom, in red, reads "negativity". At the left and right of the page are labels depicting various station activities or attributes: "music", "humour", and "marketing" on the left, and "outside broadcasting", "communication", and "public relations" on the right. On the outer edges of the page, in dark black and surrounding everything else, are some place names from within the Radio KC broadcast area. These include "Paarl", "Saron", "Mamre", and "Mbekweni."

At the top of Map 3, there are some lines in blue and red, forming a rough sketch depicting mountains and valleys. Parts of this sketch are labelled "Paarl

²² Copies of the maps are included in Appendix A.

²³ The selection of colour is not necessarily significant, since different groups landed up with various colours arbitrarily. Where maps include more than one colour, however, the choices made about colour may indeed reflect choices related to the emphasis and importance allocated to various map elements.

Mountains” and “Paarl Valley”. Underneath this, the Radio KC community is depicted in the shape of a wheel or a pie. Once again, Radio KC forms the centre. Spokes radiate outwards, dividing the pie into segments. Each segment is labelled with the name of a type of community facility or institution. Examples are: “factories”, “bioscopes”, “banks”, “municipality”, and “police station”. The pie and its segments are in red. At the left and right of the pie, in blue, are some place names, such as “Wellington”, “Saron”, “Klapmuts” and “Stellenbosch”.

Map 4 also depicts the Radio KC community in the shape of a pie, but in this instance the radio station is not at the centre, but forms one of the segments of the pie. Other segments have labels such as “hospitals”, “police”, “cemetery”, and “Paarl Post”. Everything is in red.

Map 5 is drawn entirely in blue ink. This map in fact contains two smaller maps. On the left hand side of the page the words “Radio KC, 107.7 FM” appear in a circle. From this circle, two lines emerge, one taking roughly the form of a spiral. Along these lines there are points at various intervals, labelled with place names. The names, such as “Hermon”, “Malmesbury”, “Lwandle”, and so on, represent places which, according to the understanding of the map-drawer, fall within Radio KC’s broadcast footprint. On the right hand side a smaller map appears, in similar form. It appears to be, in effect, an ‘inset’ representing a section of the larger map, in more detail. Here lines radiate in spiral fashion from a circle in which the words “*Paarl Se Eie*” (Paarl’s Own) appear. Again, points along the lines are labelled with place names – in this case, places within the Paarl region.

Map 6 is labelled “Paarl”. Radio KC is depicted in a circle in the centre of the page, next to the “Berg River,” which runs from top to bottom on the page. Lines link Radio KC to bubbles at various points on the page, in which various aspects of the station and the community are described. One bubble lists: “Children, youth, adults, veterans, the elderly,” while another lists “Whites, Coloureds, Blacks”, linked to the word “Faiths”. There are other bubbles, containing names of problems (“poverty, crime”), station attributes (“friend, entertain, uplift...”), and station issues (“finances”). There is also a bubble containing the word, “Demotivation”. Everything is in black, besides the map name and the outline of the river, which are in blue, while the river’s name is written in red. Around the “Radio KC” circle, there is a large heart, drawn in red.

Map 7 is more geographically orientated than the others. Radio KC is depicted near the centre of the page, off the Town Square, near Main Street and Lady Grey, in the business area. A supermarket (Pick 'n Pay) is also shown. Geographical features are drawn in black, while labels are generally in green. At the edges of the page there are various labels pointing the direction to places not drawn on the page. For example: “suburbs”, “Mbekweni”, “farms”, “Wellington”, and “other reception areas”. Overlaying this, covering the entire map, a wheel or target shape has been drawn in red. Radio KC is at the centre of this, encircled in red, while spokes and concentric circles radiate out from this point. It seems that these red lines refer to the Radio KC broadcast signal, radiating out from the station.

1.2.2. Views of the Radio KC community

There is at least one important correlation in the way in which the various maps depict the community and this links with the theme of a divided community that emerged in my interviews with station managers. The depiction, in many of the maps, of various social categories of people, such as “blacks”, “whites”, “the elderly” and so on, seems to indicate an awareness of social division and stratification and possibly of the station’s potential role in addressing these in some way. This awareness was certainly reflected in station members’ conversations during the workshop. There was no doubt that they understood their geographically defined community to be a divided one. As was the case with the managers, these divisions were primarily understood as racial and economic, although age, gender and disability were also reference points.

Another similarity between the maps relates to the differentiation between the concept of ‘geographical community’ and the ‘community’ in an experiential sense, which I noted during my interviews with the managers. In the case of the maps, this emerged in the lack of specific information included relating to the lived experience of the community. With the exception of Map 4, the drawings all contain some geographical information, albeit very little. Most combine this geographical information with a range of labels naming issues, categories of people, and facilities or institutions. Where they occur, these labels are randomly placed, not correlating to any specific geographical area. For example, while churches, prisons and hospitals are referred to they are not given specific names and are not situated with any geographic precision (with the exception of Map 7). Places such as towns and neighbourhoods are situated with only a vague awareness of their actual geographical orientation with

respect to one another. Nor are issues identified with specific geographical areas: for example, the problem of 'housing' is not linked to informal settlements.

The example above illustrates one of the key points to be made about the maps. The station workers seemed to derive much of the non-geographical content of the maps produced in the initial map-drawing exercise from some pre-existing idea about what 'a community' includes, without careful observation of the unique characteristics of their own, specific community. Since the workshop participants lived in that community they would no doubt have had a great deal of specific knowledge of their own community (they would shop at specific stores, take their ill children to specific hospitals), but when asked to provide a picture of their community, their responses, aside from the provision of basic place names, seemed to have been drawn not from their fund of local knowledge, but from a more general, abstract sense of what belongs in 'a community'. This disconnection between the abstract and the concrete also emerged in the way that participants spoke about the role of the station. When asked, "What is it that you do?" station workers did not raise examples of their own day-to-day work at the station, but responded using generalised, abstract phrases such as: "we inform and empower our community". It was as if refrains about the mission of community radio stations and the definition of 'community' had been drummed into the participants as rote learning (whether as part of in-station training or interaction with outside trainers or role-players). The result of this was that the participants were discounting their own experience of their specific community, conditions and practices in favour of the kind of language and expression that one tends to find in mission statements and text-book definitions of 'community radio', 'community' and 'participation'.

This indicates that station members were not drawing connections between their awareness of important social issues and problems in general and the ways in which the station might connect to these issues and problems in the particular community. This lack of specificity in the maps also served to mask differences in members' perceptions about the community. These differences began to emerge in the workshop discussions. It was easy for the station workers to agree that the community was divided. It was less easy for them to agree about the meaning of those divisions for the station – about which sub-sections of the community the station should focus on in its efforts to boost participation. For example, many of the maps mark out 'the youth' and 'the elderly' as important and distinct sectors of the station's community.

There was little discussion in the workshops, however, about the fact that most station workers were youths and that this might mean that they were overlooking the needs of the elderly in news and programming.

These differences were exacerbated by the presence of important ‘blind spots’ in station workers’ perceptions of the community. While station members often displayed awareness of the difficulty of defining their community when it came to issues of race or ethnicity, they showed less awareness around other issues. A key example is the rural-urban divide. The area falling within the Radio KC broadcast footprint is characterised by a large degree of agricultural activity and figures from the Municipal Demarcation Board (www.demarcation.org.za) indicate that by far the most land in the region is used for agriculture. On many of the maps drawn by station members, however, the Radio KC community as a geographical entity was depicted as defined almost exclusively by the *towns* falling within the broadcast footprint, as if the area in-between towns were uninhabited. Except for one small exception, farms were not identified at all on the maps produced. This could indicate the invisibility of farm workers as an important part of the Radio KC community in the eyes of the station participants. Given that farm workers are a very disadvantaged group – isolated, poor, and facing numerous social problems, this is a significant omission. This example provides vivid illustration of the point made by Down and Stea (1977) and quoted in Chapter Two, that cognitive maps are shaped by value systems which often lead to “an unspoken agreement to ignore certain aspects of the environment” (Downs & Stea, 1977:79). It illustrates once more the disjuncture between rhetoric about ‘community’ and the lived experience of the station’s specific community. The divisions that station members acknowledged were those that are commonly acknowledged in public debate in South Africa. Thus, divisions of race, class and age received attention, while others, such as the rural/urban divide were, in the main, ignored. The omission of agricultural workers is also patently in the interest of station workers, who were all town-dwellers.

1.2.3. Depicting the relationship between station and community

These maps, and the participants’ discussion of them, also illustrate the way in which the workers at Radio KC perceived the role of the station in the community. What seems clear from the design of the maps is that station workers seemed, first of all, to agree that the relationship between station and community was defined as a one way

process by which the station impacted on the community, rather than vice-versa. With a single exception (Map 4) all of the drawings position Radio KC directly at the centre or as an originating point²⁴, from which all the other elements emerge. One way of reading these maps would be to say that the radio station is depicted as the most prominent element of the community. One could also argue that they privilege a particular geographical point of view – the perspective of people for whom the Paarl CBD is indeed a central point. This perspective is reinforced by the way in which Paarl is positioned in the maps. In many cases the town is shown as central. In other cases, the entire map is labelled as a map of the town, and other areas within the Radio KC broadcast footprint are omitted altogether. A strong example is found in Map 1, where an icon representing ‘family’ is placed in the square representing Paarl. This privileging of Paarl in definitions of the ‘Radio KC community’ echoed some of the comments made by the station’s managers and was also reflected in comments made by station members. Frequently, when people talked about the ‘community’, what they meant was the town of Paarl and its immediate environs.

A prominent element of many maps was the presence of lines or spokes radiating out from the centrally positioned station. Whether or not these lines were meant to represent the station’s broadcast signal, it is possible to argue that the message is a more abstract one – of some unnamed influence, spreading out from the station into the broader community. This could indicate that station members probably view the station as influencing and acting on the community, rather than the other way around. Indeed, this perception was reflected at the station in many other ways. The station’s mission statement, for example, reads:

We strive to inform, empower and to transform our communities through broadcasting relevant developmental programs by partnering with likeminded development organizations and focus groups in our broadcast area. (Radio KC mission statement).

The language used by station workers certainly reflected this orientation. Workers often spoke of the community as “passive” and “disadvantaged”, needing to be “uplifted” by the station and those working for it. In discussions in the plenary workshop, people said the station’s role was to “uplift”, to “change mindsets” and

²⁴ See Map 5 in Appendix A

“educate the grassroots”(workshop notes 14/09/02²⁵). Despite the rough correspondence of community demographics with that of the station staff and volunteers, this kind of language indicates that station personnel did not view themselves specifically as representatives of that community. Rather, they seemed to see themselves as ‘set apart’ in some way – as better-informed and more educated, as imparters of knowledge to the community ‘out there’. This indication that the station workers saw themselves as an elite group within the community, provides an illustration of Servaes’ (1996b) point, cited in Chapter Two, that centres and peripheries develop at all levels of society, thus complicating efforts to bring about participatory development²⁶.

This view of the communication process as something flowing primarily in one direction, from station to community, is reflected in the way that station members spoke of community participation in the workshops and interviews. Participation was conceived of within a very narrow range of options, and station members seemed to equate community participation exclusively with the act of listeners calling in to request or talk shows. This emerged in the discussion during the plenary workshop, where participants were concerned that problems with the studio phones were blocking greater participation. It also emerged in concerns expressed about the relative popularity of music request and serious talk shows. Once again, these views echoed those expressed by managers in my interviews.

It is also significant that while the station is depicted in many of the maps as having an impact on social factors such as poverty, racial divisions and unemployment, these factors are not shown as having an impact on the station. This is another way in which the station workers seemed to see themselves as ‘set apart’ from the community. In reality, these social factors had a very real impact on the station, and on the way in which station workers related to one another. As will be described in Section Three below, the social divisions in the community indeed played themselves out during the research process. It became apparent that station members coming from different social groups held very different perceptions about the

²⁵ Copies of the workshop notes are available from the author (brett@idasact.org.za).

²⁶ That the language station workers used indicated that they saw themselves as an elite group, is borne out by the striking resemblance of their attitude to what Martin (2001) argues was the stance of the coloured elite under apartheid: “...they wanted to distance themselves from the ordinary people in order to demonstrate their ability to enter into a dialogue with the white rulers; but at the same time, they claimed that their mission was to ‘uplift’ the community and that they had a right to speak on behalf of all coloureds” (2001:253).

community and participation; these differences in turn were linked to very different responses to the workshop process on the part of key individuals.

1.3. Implications for the community research project

My initial contacts with the members of Radio KC highlighted several issues of importance to community participation at the station and to my research. It was clear that station members, with one or two exceptions, thought of community participation in a very limited way – as listener behaviour during call-in shows. Even this limited form of participation, however, was not operating in the way the station personnel desired. As a result of this problem, as well as other challenges (such as the need to market the station), many station members had already been confronted by their own limitations in understanding the community. In general, people expressed frustration with the limits of their knowledge about their community and with the absence of strategies, within the station, for expanding this knowledge. For example, a coloured presenter might express knowledge about aspects of the coloured community, but admit ignorance about Africans living in the township, Mbekweni. Encouragingly, station members were open to possibilities for addressing the sources of this frustration. This meant station members were open to my proposal for a participatory community research project. Key leaders at the station were also receptive to my proposal, recognising in this a way of taking the process of critical reflection on which they had already embarked forward in a constructive way – individually, if not as a team. The news manager, Sonwabile Dwangu, also felt the station as a whole had a very limited understanding of its community and that research into this community was sorely needed. Huizies said the managers were trying to come up with ways of eliciting more calls to serious programmes, but that in the absence of detailed research into the Radio KC community, planning was being done on the basis of a wide range of assumptions about listeners' interests and needs: "... We are thumbsucking. For example, we are planning a disability programme, but we are doing programmes because of perceived needs, not researched needs" (F. Huizies, interview 29/08/2002).

The awareness of limitations and the openness to finding solutions was encouraging. However, there were also warning signs. The lack of attention given to how social divisions in the 'community' might impact on the station was one such warning sign. If station members were not talking about their social differences and how these might have a bearing on their respective approaches to their work, these

differences could not be actively addressed. Indeed, my initial interviews provided indications that key managers were thinking about research from quite different perspectives – and it did not appear as if there had been much discussion of these differences. The contrast in perspectives was most marked between the respective approaches and concerns of the news manager, Sonwabile Dwangu, and the programme manager, Annalie van der Merwe. The differences in perspectives between managers seemed strongly related to their socio-economic backgrounds and provided an indication that the historically unequal social, racial and economic power relationships of the broader community were playing a role within the station.

Section Two: The Participatory Workshops and Their Impact on the Research Participants

2.1. Initial perceptions: the pre-research questionnaires

This section deals with the next stage of the intervention at Radio KC, subsequent to the initial plenary workshop. As outlined in Chapter Three, I began working with a small group of station members who had committed themselves to participating in a process involving a series of research workshops over several weeks. These participants were Sonwabile Dwangu, news manager, Annalie van der Merwe, programme manager, Levona Solomons, a magazine show presenter, Rebecca Moahloli, talk show host, Georgette Frolicks, news reader, and Donna Godfrey, talk-show host²⁷. The group included the perspectives of management, (represented by Dwangu and Van der Merwe), as well as of ‘ordinary’ workers (Frolicks, Godfrey, Solomons and Moahloli).

It was during these smaller, participatory workshops that more detailed insight into perspectives at the station began to emerge, through the discussions that took place in workshops, the comments made about field trips, and the participants’ responses to the questionnaires. The process threw light on existing attitudes towards community and participation and allowed me to track how these began to shift.

At a planning meeting on 5 October 2002, I gave each of the six participants a questionnaire and asked them to complete it and hand it to me by the start of the first

²⁷ The inclusion of programme presenters was appropriate since community radio presenters tend to take responsibility for the production of their own shows, including research.

research workshop on 8 October. These questionnaires asked the participants for their perceptions and expectations prior to the onset of the workshop series²⁸. The questionnaires provide some insight into the views on the community within this team at the start of the research process. To a large extent, the answers to the questionnaires mirror the points made in the plenary workshop. This indicates that the group of six research participants indeed represented a microcosm of the larger group of station workers. For example, the questionnaire answers reflect an understanding of the community as being divided along racial and economic lines, as well as the view that the primary direction of communication or influence was from station to community, rather than the other way around.

One benefit of the questionnaires was that they provided more detail on some of the positions articulated in the plenary workshop. In particular, this detail provided an illustration of the observations made in Chapter Two, related to the slippage of meaning in the use of the word 'community'. When asked to define the Radio KC community, the participants responded from varying vantage points. Some participants' answers reflected the kind of geographical definition that might appear in the station's licensing documentation. For example, Annalie van der Merwe, the programme manager, described the community as "the general public of the reception area". In response to a question about the identity of the station, Levona Solomons (presenter of a daytime magazine programme called *Levona's World*) also defined the community geographically, but did this by naming specific areas. She provided a small diagram listing place names such as Mbekweni, Wellington, Pniel, Klapmuts and so on. In contrast, some of the other participants moved away from a description of place, to focus more on the social and demographic characteristics of the 'community'.

As was the case with the group of managers, and the station workers more generally, many of the participants reflected a high level of concern over the social divisions within their community. In addition to this, the questionnaires revealed links between individuals' selective focus on specific characteristics of the community and their personal interests and perspectives; for example, Solomons, who is a disabled woman, singled out women, children and the disabled as specifically important for her programme. In a stark example of one of the 'blind spots' mentioned earlier,

²⁸ See Chapter Three for a detailed discussion of different workshops and research activities that took place at Radio KC.

Georgette Frolicks (the news reader), who is coloured, described the community as being made up of 80% coloured and 20% white people – omitting blacks altogether.

The responses of the managers who formed part of the participant group once again reflected many of the issues raised in the initial interviews. The differences between the perspectives of Dwangu and Van der Merwe, first observed during the interviews with management members, became apparent here once more. Their questionnaire responses illustrated contrasting perspectives on social division and issues of power and inequality. Sonwabile Dwangu, the (black) news editor, was the participant whose questionnaire answers most clearly foregrounded social divisions and unequal power-relations as key elements by which the community could be identified. He spoke of the community as divided by various factors, including race and levels of education, and expressed frustration at what he perceived as the passivity of the community (at one point he compared the listeners to “robots”). The (white) programme manager, Van der Merwe, also raised the issue of diversity, but her picture of difference was one free of conflict and inequality. She said she saw the Radio KC community as a “... typical country community with diverse cultures and listeners”. The difference in perspectives expressed by Dwangu and Van der Merwe at this early stage in the research process, foreshadowed a dramatic contrast between their behaviour and attitude with respect to the research process that would unfold over the following weeks. This is described in greater detail below.

While participants’ descriptions of the community were all highly selective, privileging specific sub-sections of the community over others, the questionnaire responses did indicate that within the group there was, as with the larger group of station workers, a general commitment to the idea of change. Several of the participants’ responses referred to the community the station was actually serving as opposed to a larger, more inclusive group that it ought to serve. Donna Godfrey (presenter of an evening talk show) said that the station primarily served middle and lower income groups and primarily coloured and Afrikaans-speaking people, but commented that the station should try to reach a broader listenership. Solomons said that, while the station primarily served “...Afrikaans Christian coloureds”, it should reach out to other cultural, religious and racial groups.

In response to questions about their perceptions of what was required in order to build a more comprehensive and inclusive picture of the community, the participants mentioned the need for a database of contacts, the need for more insight

into the historical background of the community, and a desire to understand communities' hopes and dreams. The participants highlighted the need for research into listeners' needs, their likes and dislikes and their feelings about the station, presenters, and topics tackled on specific programmes. As was the case with the larger group of station workers, these responses indicated a positive attitude towards the research process and receptivity to what it might teach them.

2.2. Shifting perceptions: the workshops, field trips and other exercises

2.2.1. Reviewing the maps: a process of reflection

The first of the participatory workshops took place on 8 October 2002. During this workshop, we explored the participants' perspectives of community and participation in more detail, using the maps drawn at the plenary workshop as a focus for this discussion. Since all of the research participants were present at the plenary workshop, they had all taken part in drawing the maps. The purpose of this activity was to use the discussion of the maps as a means of holding up a mirror to the group, enabling them to confront and examine their own preconceptions about the community. The aim was, further, to assist the participants in understanding that their construction of the 'community' excluded a great deal: it excluded certain groups of people, and aspects of the lived experience of those people.

I began the discussion of the maps by commenting on the centralisation, in these maps, of KC and Paarl and pointed out that the danger of this was that station workers might neglect to consider how other community members' perspectives might differ from their own. I asked questions to stimulate discussion, such as where a person living in Saron (on the edges of the Radio KC broadcast signal) might place the station on their map. These kinds of questions were designed to enable the participants to think about what implications their preconceptions – and exclusions – might hold for their ability to strategise around community participation at the station. The ensuing discussion focused on the weaknesses in the station's relation to its community and how this might be addressed. The group discussed ways to involve people who might feel alienated from the station, such as isiXhosa speakers and white members of the community. The participants acknowledged that they knew very little about the smaller places situated near the edge of the Radio KC broadcast footprint and expressed an interest in visiting some of these spots.

The remainder of the first session was taken up by a discussion of the concept of ‘community layers’ and the various types of leaders, as outlined in the workshop curriculum²⁹. As described in Chapter Three, these concepts were intended to illustrate that the station workers should be talking to people at all socio-economic levels, and not only those with official titles and positions. Thus, after the participants had discussed the gaps in their understanding of the community, these concepts provided them with a set of conceptual tools to begin to enable them to fill in those gaps.

2.2.2. Face to face with the KC community: the field visits

Once the group had reflected on their own assumptions and put together a plan for addressing those assumptions, they were ready to start expanding their knowledge of their community by using their new conceptual tools. An important part of this was spending time in that community. This took the form of field visits to various places falling within the Radio KC broadcast footprint. The second and subsequent workshop sessions were primarily devoted to these research excursions. Since it would obviously be impossible to cover the entire area during the few workshop sessions, the participants identified certain spots as priorities. The selection of sites to visit was not made according to any coherent plan. Some choices seemed to reflect the personal interests of participants, while other choices were made because of convenience³⁰.

The research excursions began during the second workshop and the first place the participants chose to visit was Saron – a small town at the very edge of the Radio KC broadcast footprint. Only three of the participants had turned up for the workshop: talk-show host Donna Godfrey, magazine-show presenter Levona Samuels and newsreader Georgette Frolicks. The decision to visit Saron was the result of personal curiosity on the part of Samuels and Frolicks, who said that they had often spoken on the phone to listeners from Saron, but knew little about the place. They recalled a talk show in the past, during which a Paarl listener had made a comment about Saron being a “one-street town”. Some listeners from Saron had called in to complain about

²⁹ See Appendix C and the discussion of the workshop plan in Chapter 3.

³⁰ For example, the group tried to choose places that could be reached easily within the timeframes available.

the misconceptions about their town, and Samuels and Frolicks felt that they now had an opportunity to see for themselves and thus to help clear up these misconceptions.

The journey to Saron was in itself an insightful experience. I undertook to drive the three participants to Saron in my car. It soon emerged that none of the participants knew the way, and after a wrong turn we had to stop at a tourism information centre in Malmesbury, a larger town, to ask for directions. The participants went off to make their enquiries, leaving me in the car. When they returned, the participants commented that Saron was not featured at all on any of the maps available at the tourism office and they had had to ask the attendant for directions. Their displeasure at Saron's omission from the maps seemed not only to derive from the inconvenience to us, but from the insights into mapping that they had gained as a result of the discussion of the drawings the week before. They wondered why Saron was omitted from tourist maps, while other small places in the region were not.

The drive to Saron took about 45 minutes, along quiet rural roads. During our journey I pointed out that, aside from one or two minibus taxis, there appeared to be no public transport between Saron and Paarl. Certainly, none of the participants would have been able to visit Saron had I not been able to drive them there. This revealed clearly to the participants that people in Saron would have great difficulty in participating in radio station activities. As I pointed out to the group, if the people in Saron were to draw a map of their community, Paarl and Radio KC would be unlikely to appear in the centre of the page. I asked them to consider what this might mean for the way in which people in Saron perceived the station. Once in Saron, we parked at what seemed the town centre, containing municipal offices, a post office and some other buildings. Levona and Georgette began talking to a post office clerk, who guided us to the local advice centre. There we met a Mr Freek du Toit, who talked a great deal about the kinds of problems and issues faced by residents of Saron. Du Toit was a member of several committees in the area and thus had links to the religious, development and civic aspects of life in Saron. When we made ready to depart, he provided the participants with his contact details.

The field trip to Saron was followed by visits to several other areas. In order to cover more ground, the participants split into different groups and would then brief one another on their return to the station. On 22 October, for example, I went with Dwangu and Frolicks to a small informal settlement in Klapmuts, about 15 minutes'

drive from Paarl. On the same day, Samuels and Godfrey visited Spookytown and Fairyland – residential areas of Paarl. In Klapmuts the residents of the informal settlement, dubbed ‘Mandela City’, were very pleased to receive a visit from representatives of the station. They showed us their homes, which were make-shift shacks built from wood and corrugated iron, and talked about the problems they faced. They said they had numerous health problems, which could be traced to the malfunctioning communal toilets and a large pigsty located just behind the settlement. In Spookytown and Fairyland, Samuels and Godfrey spoke to residents who were happy to have recently received houses – some after waiting for several years. The visit to Mandela City proved an eye-opener, as the participants had not even been aware of the settlement’s existence until we came across it by chance on our drive through Klapmuts. The encounters with happy, first time homeowners in Spookytown and Fairyland provided evidence that there was good news as well as bad to be found in the encounters with members of the community.

2.2.3. Back at the station: new insights and ideas

After each interaction with members of the ‘community’, such as occurred during the field excursions, we took some time to reflect on what had transpired so that the participants could discuss the insights they had gained and share their thoughts with the rest of the group. When I asked the participants for their comments on the Saron visit, Georgette reported that the community leader, Mr Du Toit, had subsequently begun calling her regularly with news from his small town and suggestions for programme topics. Moreover, the general feeling was that the visit had been an “eye opener” and that the issues people faced in Saron were quite different in many ways from the issues in Paarl. At that feedback session, Lavona commented: “You hear about Saron, but it doesn’t mean a thing, but now they are real people. The problems there are different from here.”

That comment, and others like it, displayed a growing awareness on the part of the participants that the ‘Radio KC community’ was more diverse and complex than they had originally thought. Such comments became fairly common, as did remarks showing that the participants were seeing the benefits that the community research process could have for their on-air work. For example, after the research visit to Spookytown, Godfrey commented that the workshops were changing the participants’ mindsets: “Instead of sitting in the station and thinking about what we want to talk

about on air, we are actually going into the community to find out". At one stage Frolicks commented that these workshops were very exciting and different from any other workshops she had attended; the participants were getting out into the community, and it was "very practical."

At one of the sessions, Georgette Frolicks said that she had noted a marked increase in the number of on-air calls from listeners in Saron – a development she attributed directly to our research visit to Saron a few weeks earlier. She felt that, aside from helping the participants to gather research, the visits were helping raise the profile of the station in the community and remind people of its existence – particularly in the outlying areas. This insight about the value of station visits to different areas was translated into action almost immediately. In order to reinforce its new links with Saron, the station decided to send an official delegation and outside broadcast unit to a large community party held in Saron on 7 December.

As the participants began to develop personal links with people they had spoken to during their field trips, they began to expand their ideas about how community participation in the station might take place. The ongoing connection with Du Toit, the community leader who had begun regularly calling the station with news of his town, provided a concrete example of what was possible. The participants put forward several other ideas for ways that the station could begin to engage with the community. Dwangu suggested outreach activities such as setting up a table in a shopping centre over the weekend, where shoppers would be able to stop and chat to station workers and share their ideas and concerns. Although to my knowledge this was not carried out, the suggestion did provide an indication that the participants were starting to think about community involvement in new and creative ways beyond simply having listeners call in to talk shows. Indeed, even when it came to talk shows, the participants began thinking that perhaps one reason more people were not calling in was because the listeners did not feel that the topics or the ways they were dealt with, were relevant to their lives. They began to think of ways to change this.

As the research project proceeded, participants began to comment that the field visits had begun to open their eyes to their relatively privileged status, relative to many other members of the community. The example of Levona Samuels is particularly striking. Samuels is physically disabled - the result of polio. She was a respected and popular volunteer presenter at the station, where she hosted a daily morning programme called *Levona's World* – an activity she clearly enjoyed and

found fulfilling³¹. She came from a poor household, however, and she had expressed to me her frustration at not being able to secure a paying job, despite having marketable skills. She attributed this to discrimination as a result of her disability. Yet, she commented that as a result of the field visits, she had begun to realise how fortunate she was, after seeing what others had to deal with. Samuels also remarked on the fact that the people spoken to during the research visits were clearly appreciative that members of the station were taking the trouble to visit and talk to them. These insights seemed to strengthen her understanding of the value of her programme in helping raise and discuss important community issues.

The insights gathered during research visits also led to ideas about programming and scheduling changes. An example of this occurred following a visit by Levona Samuels to Franschoek, a nearby town. Although she was in Franschoek for a reason unconnected with the research workshops, Samuels nevertheless had decided to undertake some research while she was there. During her visit, Samuels met a woman who had commented on how much she and her husband liked listening to *Levona's World*. However, the husband was unable to listen to the programme since he was away at work. The wife would record the programme for the husband to listen to when he returned home in the evenings. Samuels' story led to a discussion in the group about whether Radio KC should repeat selected popular daytime programmes in the evenings – either the full programmes, or shorter, edited versions.

During the visits to some of the places further from central Paarl, the participants discovered that many people were experiencing problems receiving the station's broadcast signal. The participants had not known this problem existed, and they planned to raise it with the station manager. This information also led to some re-adjustment of their vision of the broadcast community. For example, prior to the research visits, they had assumed that Saron fell firmly within their broadcast footprint. Now it seemed that most people in Saron could not in fact receive the station's signal and, while many people were enthusiastic about the station, it emerged that they could hear it only when they travelled to neighbouring towns such as Gouda.

In one instance, a problem with the broadcast signal also served as an illustration of the importance of the station in people's lives. During Samuels' visit to Franschoek, she had discovered that not everyone in the area could receive the

³¹ Early in 2003, Samuels left the station, reportedly after an argument with the station management over sponsorship for her programme.

station. She found out that many of the people without access to Radio KC would phone friends in other parts of town, for an account of what had been happening on the radio. The participants found this to be positive reinforcement for the on-air work they were doing.

2.2.4. Processing the insights gathered during field trips

Through various exercises I began to facilitate ways in which the team could make the most of the new information and insights that they were gaining. One technique I used was that of the stakeholder exercise developed by Guilfoyle (1999), as outlined in the workshop curriculum. On 29 October 2002, the same day as the fourth workshop, the Paarl city council was to vote in a new mayor, following the completion of the floor-crossing process,³² which had given the ANC/NNP alliance control of the municipality. This provided the perfect opportunity to use the stakeholder exercise, since the participants wanted to discuss ways in which they could cover the story of the mayor's election. The exercise enabled the participants to organise and cluster the perspectives and interests of the various people they had met during their research. They then developed each cluster of interests into a perspective, or angle, from which to report on the matter of a changing local government. The following week, the group reported that the coverage of the election of the mayor had gone extremely well. Donna Godfrey also reported that she had been able to make contact with the deputy mayor, who had promised to come in for some interviews on the station. The participants saw this as somewhat of a breakthrough (I had heard from the station manager as well as the research participants that relations with the local government were generally not good – the station manager in particular had said he felt the local government regarded the station with a degree of fear and suspicion).

Another important participatory process was the community focus group, referred to as the “community conversation” in the workshop curriculum. This was held during the workshop on 29 November. Two of the participants brought along friends and family members who were Radio KC listeners. Although the ideal would have been to have a more diverse range of community members present, the discussion did enable the participants to engage in a deeper, more extended conversation about the station and programming, and gave rise to several new

³² A change in legislation had provided municipal representatives with the opportunity, within a specified time-period, to change their party allegiance without losing their seats

insights. For example, the focus group members felt strongly that all programmes on the station should include a mix of languages, instead of having each language given its own dedicated block of time. They felt that this would enable them all to continue listening throughout the day, rather than having to switch on and off at set times for those programmes that they would be able to understand. In addition, the community members confirmed the participants' suspicion that many call-in shows were simply not dealing with the real issues that people wanted to talk about. They commented that people might want to talk about very local and seemingly small matters, rather than the standard 'big' issues, such as crime, jobs and the like. The focus group participants felt that when these national issues were discussed, they should be dealt with in a particularly local context³³. This observation reinforced the importance of the community research process, since if station producers are to deal with local issues, or discuss national and even international issues in a local context, they first need to achieve a good understanding of what the local context is.

2.2.5. The final workshop

The final workshop was held on 3 December 2002. At this workshop all the participants had the opportunity to see the completed community map, produced as the culmination of the participants' research process. The participants were able to present the map to the station manager and to discuss with him how the station might make use of it. Finally, time was allocated for the participants to complete the post-workshop questionnaires.

The community map served as a concrete representation of the information and insights the group had gained. It contained a summary of the group's research, and was intended as a resource the entire station could use. The map consisted of a lever arch file, into which were inserted pages, divided into sections, outlining the information gathered about the Radio KC community. The initial section contained general statistics on the Drakenstein Municipality, along with summaries of general views gathered on the radio station and its programmes³⁴. Also in the initial section was a summary of the insights gained during the focus group, or 'community conversation'.

³³ Other issues raised will not be discussed here, as the content of the focus group discussion is summarised and included as part of the final community map.

³⁴ The full community 'map' is attached in Appendix D.

Subsequent sections were divided according to geographical area. These each consisted of an initial page outlining the nature of the area, key places, the most important issues, and key leaders and their contact details. The following pages offered a more in-depth description of the place and the issues faced, and a subsequent page listed possible story or programme ideas for the station to tackle with respect to the specific area. The participants had taken photographs in some of the areas visited and these were included in the relevant section, within a plastic folder.

When presented with the community map the station manager, Franklin Huizies, said he was pleased and impressed by the work the group had done. He and the workshop participants then shared several ideas about how the community map might be used. One suggestion was that copies of the map should be kept in the programming and news offices as a reference tool during programme and news planning. Another suggestion was that the map could be used as part of the training and induction process for new station volunteers, particularly with a focus on programme planning. Huizies also commented that the map could be used as a resource for presentations to potential sponsors and advertisers, since it was a rich source of demographic and other information about the community. Finally, a good deal of time was devoted to discussion of how the results of the process could be communicated to the other station workers. Some promising ideas emerged – such as the suggestion that summaries of the research could be put up in poster form in the station's reception area, or that the participants could hold a feedback meeting for the other station workers.

In the final questionnaires, completed at the last workshop session, the participants' responses conveyed their assessments of how the research process had affected their view of their community. In their responses the participants indicated that they had gained a great deal of knowledge and understanding about the community as result of the workshops. Georgette Frolicks, for example, commented, "...I learned stuff about different places, that I never dreamed of," and when asked for examples, said: "...Like the problems in Klapmuts and Saron. One would never know what lies beneath the pretty sight." Rebecca Moahloli, presenter of a talk show in isiXhosa, stated that: "I was born here in Paarl and I didn't know anything about Paarl, but I now know because of those map (sic)".

The participants also commented on the fact that, aside from providing them with new content information about the community, the research process had altered

their sense of priorities. In response to a question asking about the most important things they had learnt during the research process, Godfrey remarked, for example, "...[the] real people are the most important." This comment illustrates that Godfrey had grasped one of the points the workshops were designed to get across – namely, that the station members should be talking to ordinary people and airing the views of ordinary people, rather than just carrying the views of officials and formally designated leaders. Moahloli indicated that she had learnt something about the stations' relationship to its community, which had direct implications for herself as a black person. She said, "This workshop really changed everything because at first I thought that Radio KC was for the coloureds, but now I know it's for everyone."

The questionnaire responses indicate that the participants' views on community participation had also changed as a result of the knowledge and insight they had gained during the workshop process. Godfrey, for example, commented that contact with the everyday "Joe Public" had provided her with different perceptions for her call-in programmes, in contrast with the politicians and organisations she was accustomed to dealing with. All the respondents commented on the value of the research in providing them with new insights for the purposes of programming. They also highlighted the importance of ongoing research in the community to ensure good programming. They mentioned the importance of the news and current affairs focusing on local issues and getting the comments of local people daily. Godfrey also introduced the idea of presenters sharing information among themselves, for mutual enrichment of each other's programmes. She commented on the importance of using the research gathered in order to aid the planning of programmes about "real people, real issues."

At the same time, the participants also indicated their awareness that the research process had been incomplete and that many groups had been left out or been inadequately researched. In this regard, Samuels mentioned black people and the news editor, Sonwabile Dwangu, highlighted farm workers, gays and lesbians and sex workers. Donna Godfrey, herself white, commented that the white, affluent business community had remained elusive. Godfrey, however, displayed a strong awareness that the research process could never be complete, and that the station's investigation of its community must be an ongoing process. In what could be a textbook definition of action-research, Godfrey described the participatory community research process as a cycle of research, feedback, reassessment and new research.

2.2.6. The impact on Radio KC programmes

In order to assess whether the participatory research process had any immediate and direct impact on the station's programmes, the participants in the workshops were asked to record two copies of any programme they were directly involved in – one copy from a programme produced at the start of the process and one of a programme produced near the end of the workshop series. Not all of the participants were involved in specific programmes, while some forgot to record and submit their programme copies. This meant that I ended up with 'before' and 'after' programmes from two of the participants: Donna Godfrey and Levona Samuels.

Godfrey presented a call-in programme called *Delivery: Let's Make it Happen*, which was broadcast on three weekday evenings, between 8 and 9pm. The first programme was recorded on the evening after the first participatory workshop, on 8 October 2002. In that programme, Godfrey devotes most of the hour to requesting listeners to call in with suggestions for topics for discussion. In what is a reflection of some of the discussions held at the workshop earlier in the day, Godfrey lists for the listeners a range of places falling within the Radio KC broadcast signal – such as Paarl, Wellington, Saron, Robben Island, and so on. She pleads with listeners to call in and discuss issues that are important to them, commenting that, "we're all community – whether we like it or not". She also asks for listener comments on the station itself. During the hour, Godfrey receives only two calls. One is from a man named Pikkie, who calls to talk about franchising and the high cost of consumer goods. The second caller is named Jimmy, and is obviously a regular. He and Godfrey discuss the various social divisions within Paarl, which apparently are marked with reference to three geographical features which divide the community along socio-economic and racial lines: Main Road, the river, and Charleston Hill.

In her second programme, recorded on 26 November 2002, Godfrey co-presents with Steven Frolicks. During that programme they receive no calls from listeners. They do have a studio guest, however: a female police inspector who talks with them about crime in the community and the local police forum.

Levona Samuels presented *Levona's World*, which was broadcast on four weekday mornings (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) between 10am and 12pm. *Levona's World* consists of interviews interspersed with musical breaks. The first programme Samuels recorded was broadcast on 15 October 2002. The programme features two sets of studio guests: two educational advisers introduced as

Cas Pretorius and Petrus and guests from a project against crime, named Operation Sunrise. The second programme, recorded on 15 November 2002, features a regular female guest who is an expert on insurance. Later on in the programme, Samuels talks to two fellow presenters on Radio KC, named Rita and Karel. These guests talk at length about the singer, Manuel Escorcio, who was due to perform in a Christmas concert in Paarl.

Godfrey's initial programme seems to reflect some of the discussions on community that took place at the initial participatory workshop on 8 October – the same day as the first programme she recorded. Aside from that, however, none of the recorded programmes indicate any direct influence from the workshops, or use of any of the community information gathered by the participants (including Godfrey and Samuels) in the workshop and research process. Specifically, none of the programmes indicate any significant degree of community participation. The only participation that does occur takes the form of phone calls from two people during Godfrey's first programme. No one calls in to the second one. Furthermore, all the studio guests during Godfrey's and Samuel's programmes are drawn from the official or 'expert' realm of the community, or from the circle of station insiders – experts on insurance and education, community policing officials, and fellow presenters. Thus the programmes do not as yet reflect any increased participation of members of the wider community: so-called 'ordinary people', or their views and perspectives. However, on her programmes, Godfrey consistently pleads with community members to call in to the show, to make their views heard.

The lack of any immediately observable impact on Radio KC's programmes is perhaps not surprising, and it was probably unrealistic to expect any immediate changes. The value of the research process was rather on the impact it made on the team's perceptions of their community. This could be seen clearly in the final workshop, both in the map produced and in the responses to the questionnaires, as described in Section 2.2.5 above.

What was disappointing, however, was the fact that despite the discussions during the final workshop about how the station could use the map and about how the participants could communicate their insights to other station workers, none of these suggestions were ultimately implemented. Several months after the completion of the workshop process a new programme manager was appointed and Van der Merwe was shifted to a different post. I personally tried to work with the new programme

manager to schedule a feedback workshop for all producers and presenters, but was not able to do so. Although the station manager had repeatedly expressed his enthusiasm for the process, this did not seem to extend to ensuring that all station staff and volunteers were aware of the community map and shared ideas on how it might be used effectively.

The continual flux at the station was one of the biggest problems with respect to implementation. The change in programme managers is just one example of this. Shortly after the completion of the participatory research project, several big changes took place, with a large degree of staff turnover within the ranks of presenters and producers. Most significantly, one of the research participants, Levona Samuels, left the station a few months after the end of the workshop process. This was a setback because, as a popular magazine-show host, Samuels would have been in a strong position to make use of the community map in her programme.

On a more positive note, however, one of the workshop participants in particular, Sonwabile Dwangu, for many months following the end of the workshop process, consistently pushed for better use and implementation of the community map and the information it contained. He did report some success in explaining its importance to the new programme manager. Several months after the conclusion of the workshop process, I received a request to facilitate a workshop for the entire contingent of station staff, in order to present to them the community map, and to assist them in working out practical measures by which it might be utilised. This was subsequently postponed indefinitely. Dwangu himself left his management position at the station to take up a full-time job, several months later; he did maintain a relationship with Radio KC, however.

Section Three: Organisational Dynamics at Radio KC

It would seem, then, that the mapping project at Radio KC was a valuable experience for those who were directly involved in it. It is less clear what the value of the project was – and will be – for the station as a whole. Although the research team experienced a dramatic shift in their understanding of their own community and were able to generate very valuable newsroom resources in this respect for their station, the immediate impact on the programmes produced by members of this team was

minimal. The reason for this was, clearly, that a flow of new ideas and insights into the station was not, on its own, going to result in change. Change would depend on the extent to which these new ideas were being accommodated within the broader negotiations and decision-making processes taking place within the station as a whole.

In this section, I will therefore look at this bigger picture, to illustrate how the mapping project was positioned within broader processes taking place at Radio KC. An examination of this broader context reveals how change and meaningful community participation can be blocked when power and personalities become entrenched at a community station (Hochheimer, 1993). The participatory research at Radio KC took place within the existing organisational dynamics of competing agendas, power struggles, and day-to-day issues of practical concern. The research process had an impact on these dynamics, and was affected by them.

Following the session I facilitated at the initial plenary workshop on 14 September (the workshop involving all the station's presenters and producers) the training manager, Ernest Loth, unveiled a new programme schedule. This entailed some major changes in presenters and programme line-up. Loth has an entertaining and theatrical style of presentation and he was initially warmly received. However, as it became clear that the changes had already been decided on by management and that Loth was not going to allow space for debate and discussion, the mood began to change. Some participants began to ask questions, challenging him over the basis on which the decisions had been made and complaining that major changes had been made arbitrarily, without research into the listeners' views and preferences. Instead of addressing the questions, Loth brought the meeting to an abrupt end, saying that the venue had to be vacated for another group. As members of the next group soon began to arrive, it was clear that Loth had been telling the truth. The brief time for which the venue was booked did, however, indicate that Loth had not intended to place the programming decisions up for discussion during the workshop. As people began leaving, some angry verbal exchanges took place between small groups of individuals. This incident made it clear to me that many station workers saw an urgent need for the kind of community research process I was about to embark upon with a small group of volunteers. The incident also served as a warning, however, that not everyone would welcome the results of the research, or the participatory ethos it sought to encourage.

The incident did indeed have important repercussions for the participatory research process that I was about to facilitate. The events at the workshop proved important in motivating some individuals to volunteer themselves as participants in the community research workshops. Among the changes Loth had announced was the station's decision to reduce the current affairs programming. Moreover, instead of producing news in-house, the station was to sign a contract with *Newsflash*, an agency that provides many stations in the Western Cape with a 'rip and read' news service. Agency-provided news was not likely to have much local content related specifically to the Radio KC community. While this decision was based on the fact that the two-person news- and current affairs team had been struggling to do their job with few resources, it also had the effect of shutting down some of the specific programming areas in which I had envisioned the participatory research making a difference. This incident was an early indication that the success of the participatory research process might depend less on its own merits, than on the outcome of power struggles and political battles within the station.

Indeed, throughout the participatory research process, participants' conversations and discussions with me indicated that struggles were constantly taking place at the station over decisions on programme content and studio guests. Donna Godfrey (talk show host), Levona Samuels (magazine show presenter) and Georgette Frolicks (news reader) in particular complained that the programme manager, Annalie van der Merwe, would intervene at the last minute, demanding that presenters of talk shows cancel the guests they had arranged weeks before and take guests she had organised as part of an anti-crime project she was running in co-operation with the local police service. Godfrey, Samuels and Frolicks regularly commented that they were learning a great deal about the community and about how the community could be brought more into the process of programme and news production. It seemed, however, that their ability to implement their learning was being hamstrung by their superior. The irony was that this superior was, in principle at least, part of the same learning process.

In reality, although Van der Merwe was supposed to be a part of the participatory research process, she attended only one or two of the initial workshops and progressively disengaged from the research process as the weeks went by. She would regularly offer apologies for her absence, saying she had other appointments which clashed with the workshops and which she could not avoid. In the same breath,

she would go on to insist that her behaviour should not be seen as a lack of interest in the community research, as she fully supported the process. It was therefore difficult for the other participants to address their issues with Van der Merwe during the workshops and to tackle these problems in the context of the research process. In addition to this, Van der Merwe's disengagement and lack of commitment to the research process had a de-motivating effect on other participants. Clearly, the participants' various levels of investment in the research process and their different agendas were beginning to clash with one another. The participants' declining motivation may have been the result of a realisation that, since the programme manager was clearly not interested, their work in researching the community would not be taken seriously and applied within the station. Dwangu's comments to me during informal conversations suggested that this was indeed the case, although other participants did not always explain it explicitly in these terms. Godfrey, for example, tended to explain things in psychological terms rather than structural or social ones. Her speech was peppered with language and jargon associated with what might be called the 'self-help' or 'new-age' movement. At one point, after missing one of the planned workshops, Godfrey admitted that she had felt a little guilty about cancelling in favour of taking up a paying freelance assignment. She said she had found herself justifying her absence by thinking that if the programme manager, Van der Merwe could miss so many workshops, she (Godfrey) was entitled to do the same. Godfrey went on to say that she had reprimanded herself for that thought, for allowing herself to be influenced by another's "negativity".

Godfrey's example highlights the issue of attendance, which was an ongoing problem. Although they had agreed to commit themselves to attend all the workshops, many of the participants missed sessions. Sessions also often began late, as participants arrived at the station 30 minutes or more after the designated starting time. While some of the late-coming and absenteeism may be put down to a lack of time management skills or dedication on the part of the participants, to a large degree this behaviour also illustrates one of the problems identified in Chapter Two: that participation in station activities carries an 'opportunity cost' that volunteers and community members in general, may struggle to bear. For example, Godfrey's absence from the workshop in question had less to do with the de-motivating influence of Van der Merwe than with her own economic situation. Godfrey, like most of the station workers, was a volunteer without a permanent job. Out of

economic necessity, she had to drop her commitments at the station if they clashed with opportunities to engage in paid work. Godfrey's situation was a very common one. For example, although Sonwabile Dwangu played an important role in championing the research process at the station, he was absent from a large part of the final workshop. The session clashed with a meeting Dwangu had set up, related to a private project he was working on.

Rebecca Moahloli's case is a further example of how participants' own conflicting agendas hampered the research process. Moahloli proved a valuable member of the team, as she spoke Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa and served as a sort of go-between between the coloured and black communities. Her research in Mbekweni also added some important content to the community map. During the research period, however, she was given her own isiXhosa programme which happened to be on air during our scheduled meeting times, and so she was absent for two or three of the workshop sessions. Moahloli's programme, *Thetha*, was a positive development for the station as it meant isiXhosa speakers were being given a significant programme slot. Unfortunately this meant that the research team missed out on her contribution for some of the time.

Despite the absenteeism, other events illustrated that most of the participants had in fact invested deeply in the research process. My own work commitments meant that I had to be away from the Western Cape for two weeks and we had agreed to halt the workshops for that time and resume them on my return. When the workshops did restart, it emerged that some of the participants had continued with their own research visits in my absence. The indication of individual initiative and enthusiasm was very encouraging.

Also encouraging was the ongoing commitment to the research process displayed by the news editor, Sonwabile Dwangu, in particular. Dwangu played a crucial role in championing the process, not only with the station management, but also with the other participants. Dwangu would organise the meeting space in the manager's office, encourage the other participants to attend and to arrive on time and play a role in mediating disputes.

The contrasting behaviour of Van der Merwe and Dwangu and their respective impact on the research process highlights the extent to which the success of a research project such as this one depends on the commitment of individual station members. It is significant that these two members of the management team also displayed

contrasting perspectives on 'community' and 'participation' prior to the research process. This raises questions about the importance of a shared vision of 'community' and 'participation' amongst the management team, in determining the success of such interventions.

Section Four: Conclusion

The account of the research project at Radio KC highlights and illustrates the points made in Chapter Two: that for community stations, the key concepts of 'community' and 'participation' are highly complex ones and that stations need to apply these concepts in their everyday practice. The account of the intervention at Radio KC shows that while the process was beneficial for the individual research participants, it did not make much impact on the station as a whole. Many of the reasons for this lie in the organisational dynamics of power and personality at Radio KC. While the specific details and issues naturally vary from station to station, it is not unreasonable to assume that similar dynamics confront a large number of community stations. Armed with insights gained from the successes and failures of the research at Radio KC, I turn in the next chapter to the development of a model for the application of similar participatory community research projects at other stations.

Chapter Five: Recommendations

The original problem that my research set out to address was the disjuncture between the rhetoric of community radio as a site of democratic participation and the reality of managing a community radio station from day to day. As argued in Chapter Two, such rhetoric can often hide important conflicts and differing agendas, inhibiting stations from coming to terms with their status as sites of struggle. This in turn hinders their ability to develop appropriate operating strategies.

The aim of the case study was to explore the value of community mapping techniques as a way of addressing this disjuncture. The assumption has been that such research techniques could be used to encourage station workers to reflect on the concepts of 'community' and 'participation' as these apply to the practical realities of making programming decisions. The case study described in Chapter Four describes and evaluates my attempt to achieve this aim at Radio KC. In light of the strengths and weaknesses of the Radio KC project, this next chapter presents recommendations for the development of a model which could be applied at other stations.

Section One outlines general conclusions about the implications of the Radio KC example for improvements to the process that I have developed. In Section Two specific recommendations are made with reference to the way in which this process could be introduced more effectively at stations. The key recommendation presented in this section is that, instead of offering such a mapping process to stations as a training or skills development project, it should rather take place within the context of an ongoing strategic planning process around programming and news. Section Three focuses on recommendations for improving the mapping process itself. Recommendations as to how the broader strategic planning process might then take place are presented in Section Four.

Section One: General Conclusions

As explained above, the research conducted at Radio KC was intended to facilitate a process of reflection among station workers, during which they considered the manner

in which they thought about the concepts of 'community' and 'participation'. The idea was to heighten awareness amongst station members of the way in which their approach to these concepts worked to either enhance or inhibit the station's chances of successfully achieving one of the key aims of community radio: community participation. Chapter Four argued that the process that took place at Radio KC was in many ways successful in achieving this objective, since the group of research participants did become more aware of the complex and contested nature of the terms 'community' and 'participation'. In particular, the chapter describes a growing awareness amongst participants, as a direct result of their involvement in the mapping project, with regards to the inequalities and differences that can be hidden when the concept of 'community' is used as a "catch-all" term (Downing, 2001:39). We also saw that, through the field visits and focus group, the participants began to develop a richer and more detailed understanding of their particular community. It was, furthermore, evident that they learnt skills for researching their community and developed a resource for their station, in the shape of a community map that could act as a reference tool on their target community. There was, however, as we saw, very little impact on the day-to-day operation of the station: programming and news, for example, were not much affected. Thus, the research at Radio KC did not meet one of the key objectives of participatory action research – namely, to empower participants to bring about changes in their own circumstances (Kelly & Van der Riet, 2000).

One could therefore argue that the intervention at Radio KC did not address all aspects of one of the key challenges identified in Chapter Two – that is, to find a way to tackle the agendas, investments and power relations that define the activities of individuals at a given community radio station – what Hochheimer (1993) talks about as the entrenchment of power and personalities. The fact that the KC intervention did not do this effectively enough is, possibly, because in its design, it addressed only the knowledge, skill, and attitudes of individuals and did not adequately consider the broader context of the station as an organisation. In this respect, the model could be said to fall into what Kelly and Van der Riet identify as one of the major traps of the modernisation approach – "...the injection of resources into an otherwise unchanged system" (2000:4).

In order to address this issue, the model must be expanded to allow for an intervention into the organisational structures and power relations at the station generally – as has already been pointed out in the previous chapter, the model needs

to take greater cognisance of the fact that community radio stations are by necessity sites of struggle. More specifically, the model must be adapted in order to allow it to explicitly address two key issues raised in Chapter Two: the fact that conflicting agendas necessarily define community participation in stations and the fact that stations operate in a broadcasting environment defined by commercial imperatives that are in conflict with the developmental imperatives of community radio.

It is my observation that, both at Radio KC and other stations, the programme schedule tends to be a primary focus of the struggles that take place around the role of the station in its community. I would therefore argue that, in order to address the power relations that exist within stations, the community mapping process would benefit greatly from dealing directly with the status of this schedule within decision-making processes. I would argue, furthermore, that a focus on the programme schedule should take place in context of strategic planning rather than training – with the community mapping exercises falling within this broader process. One implication of this change in emphasis from training to planning is that a more ambitious project is called for, both in terms of time and the allocation of resources. It also means that the research contract should reflect a more far-reaching ‘buy-in’ from the station right from the start of the process. All the key official stakeholders and decision-makers should, in other words, be involved.

In the rest of this chapter, I illustrate these points by returning to the model described in my methodology chapter – this time in the context of the description, in Chapter Four, of the model’s implementation at Radio KC. I will pay attention to each stage of the plan, to show how improvements might be made to incorporate the principles identified above.

Section Two: Improving the Way the Process is Established

If participants are to be empowered to bring about changes in their own circumstances (i.e., changes in the way the station operates), then there is a need for some important conceptual shifts within the research model. Firstly, while a small group of participants might undertake specific tasks, such as community mapping, the entire body of station members must be thought of as participants in the broader process of strategic planning around programming. In order to enable this broader group of

station members to participate, there is a need to build in a set of procedures around decision-making. These decisions will concern not just the development and implementation of solutions, but also the identification of what the problems are, that the strategic planning process seeks to address. Based on the findings at Radio KC, as described in Chapter Four, I have some ideas about how this might be done.

Firstly, because a consideration of the broader context of the station is so important, it is crucial that the researcher spends some time participating in station activities, getting a feel for the 'culture' at the station: the norms, habits (the way things are done at the station) and the way in which power operates – the networks of influence and decision-making.

When the time comes to initiate the strategic planning process, an initial workshop (or perhaps a series of workshops) should be set up with all key decision-makers at the station. At this meeting, the proposed intervention should be set up or explained to those present as a strategic planning process rather than one of training. The implications of this, in terms of the time and resources that would be required for the process to be worthwhile, need to be clearly spelled out in order that the station decision-makers can make an informed decision about whether they are prepared to embark upon the process. If a broad base of key station decision-makers supports the process, this would make it more difficult for one or two managers to undermine or sideline it should they feel threatened by the changes proposed. This would help avert the kind of situation that occurred at Radio KC, where the programme manager's behaviour served to undermine the mapping process. As part of the initial workshop, an extended period of time would have to be devoted to the negotiation of a contract between the researcher/facilitator and the station, to allow for the necessary 'buy in' to take place. This workshop (and subsequent ones) should, furthermore, take place in a neutral, separate venue, where people would not be distracted by the daily demands of their workplace, as occurred at Radio KC. At this initial workshop, the map-drawing exercise would still play a useful role, given the success of this in the case of Radio KC.

As illustrated in Chapter Four, the drawing of maps, coupled with the subsequent discussion, played an important role in making the participants aware of the damaging nature of the disjunction between the rhetoric about 'community' and the 'reality' of their specific community. In the example of Radio KC, the maps increased the participants' awareness of two important aspects of their own

perspectives on the station's target community. Firstly, the maps illustrated the way in which the participants elided their own local knowledge – just as, in their rattling off of phrases relating to community radio, they elided or left out of consideration their own aspirations for the station. Secondly, the exercise provided vivid illustration of the points made by Downs and Stea (1977), as discussed in Chapter Two, by foregrounding the way in which the participants' own cognitive maps of their community operated to include some people and social experiences, and exclude others.

As Kelly and Van der Riet (2000) point out, the introduction of critical perspectives into specific social contexts is a crucial but often overlooked aspect of participatory research. It is thus important that the facilitator guide the discussion in such a way that workshop participants are confronted by critical perspectives on their cognitive maps of the community. It is not enough that the gaps, biases, distortions in participants' representations of their community are seen and understood. There also needs to be a focus on what the gaps mean, what can be done about addressing them, and how the gaps and distortions link to the way in which centres of power develop within a community. A possible shortcoming in the map-drawing exercise as it took place at Radio KC is that it does not yet go far enough in making visible, issues that relate to the way in which station workers think about 'participation'. The discussion of the maps needs to address the issue of participation more explicitly. In addition to this, other exercises would be needed to address issues of power and how power operates at the station. An example would be an exercise that allows the participants to examine the internal organisational 'culture' at the station. The additional exercises should assist to make people aware of the point that, as much as their own local knowledge of their community should not be elided, neither should their own agendas for being at the station and their own aspirations for the station. One way of initiating this process of self-reflection might be to include an exercise subsequent to the discussion of the maps, where participants must work together to construct a common map. In order to achieve this, people would have to deliberately negotiate with one another and make compromises around the different perspectives on the community, and different agendas, that each person brings to the task.

Once the map is completed, the facilitator could ask the participants to reflect on the deliberations, arguments, and decision-making processes that occurred during the making of the joint map. This could lead into a discussion of the idea that

community radio, and the programme schedule in particular, is necessarily a site of struggle and that this is inescapable and even healthy. The exercises and discussions should provide a way of moving the group from their assumptions about themselves as 'privileged insiders' who run the station in a neutral fashion FOR the community, to a vision of themselves as community members who are OF the community and as such are participants in the struggle.

I would propose, further, that the negotiation of the contract between station and facilitator should take place after the processes outlined above have been worked through. The contract should outline the contribution that individuals will bring to the process. It should also specify the benefits that individuals, as well as the station, hope to gain. In outlining the proposed benefits to the station, the contract should specify concrete outcomes related to programme scheduling and content. It would, I believe, also be crucial that throughout the process of research and planning, opportunities are created for station members to re-visit and re-negotiate the contract. Since participatory research is in fact a creative process, many of the consequences and implications of the process will not be apparent to the station members at the outset. In order to ensure that there is ongoing commitment, therefore, and that everyone's concerns are aired and considered, it is important that there are periodic opportunities for discussion about, and reflection on, the process itself. It should be noted that these discussions may well be occasions during which conflicts are aired and tensions revealed. This should be seen as healthy. It should be emphasised that, rather than hoping that conflicts will go away, the station needs to develop ways of managing them that are consistent with the identity of community radio as a democratic and participatory institution. The importance of bringing station workers' knowledge and agendas into the open is that this enables the struggles over issues such as the programming schedule to take place in the open and thus to be waged in a more democratic and inclusive manner. This would, hopefully, be a way of averting the kind of problems that were observed at Radio KC, where individuals in powerful positions sought to avoid democratic debate by railroading their own plans through. At Radio KC, because the struggles over the programming schedule occurred separately from the mapping process, the intervention was unable to have an impact on programming debates, while the struggles over the programming schedule served to sideline that intervention.

Section Three: Improving the Mapping Process

The importance of the community mapping research lies in the extent to which it assists the station to attain the specific goals related to programming scheduling and content that are outlined in the contract. Given their success at Radio KC, the field visits, focus group exercise and the development of a community map or file would remain important, as a way of enabling station members to research their community, as a first step towards making informed programming choices.

The field visits proved fruitful in providing insight into the issues faced by people in the different geographical areas that fall within Radio KC's broadcasting footprint, and led to the participants identifying new contact people who had the potential to provide the station with news, insight and information from those areas. Feedback during the research process and by means of the questionnaires indicates that the participants found that their existing understanding of the community was expanded and challenged. The community map produced as the end product of the process gives evidence that the participants did indeed identify a wider range of people and issues for potential inclusion in news and programme content, while comments by the participants during the workshops also indicated that at least some of them were also making attempts to include the newly identified voices and perspectives in on-air content³⁵. Furthermore, because the community research was a participatory process, the station participants were able to gain the skills they needed in order to continue researching their community beyond the initial workshop period. Indeed, at the final workshop session, the participants expressed their intention to continue with the process and they set a date by which to have started this. There is thus no doubt that the research process and the resulting community map did indeed stimulate thinking about 'community' and 'participation' at radio KC, and resulted in the identification of a range of issues and voices for inclusion in programming. There are, however, several areas in which the process could be improved.

While the community map produced by the workshop participants at Radio KC does provide a significant amount of information about the community that the station and the participants did not have prior to the research process, there is a great

³⁵ Georgette Frolick's contact with Mr du Toit from Saron is a good example – see discussion of this point in Chapter Four.

deal that it does not include. As has been outlined in Chapters Three and Four, the participants had to make choices about which areas to research because of limitations in time and resources. This kind of situation is inevitable – one of the key points that has been made in this thesis is that ongoing research and discussion is vital, since it is not possible to achieve a final, full and complete picture of a community.

Nevertheless, more could have been accomplished during the participatory workshops, with better planning and more efficient use of time; for example, through better organisation, the group could have undertaken research visits to more areas.

The usefulness of the community map as a communal reference tool could also have been improved through the inclusion of participants' existing contact lists. This too could have been accomplished with better planning and organisation.

The workshops could also be improved by reviewing the role of the classifications of various types of community layers (official, informal, etc.) and leaders (official, catalysts, connectors etc.) as set out by Harwood and McCrehan (1996). These were intended to help participants realise that 'news and views' can be found in many areas of the community beyond the 'elite' layer of officials, politicians and business leaders. Participants' comments indicate that they found these useful, and that the classifications served their intended purpose to a degree. It was my observation, however, that the participants tended to focus on classifying a place or a person 'correctly', rather than viewing the classifications simply as a useful tool or device. The danger is that these classifications could end up becoming just another rigid framework through which station members view their community, rather than as a means to stimulate debate and constant reflection. The role of a facilitator in directing discussion around these categories is crucial if participants show a tendency to reify the categories and become overly concerned with categorising people and places as if this activity were important in itself.

While the list of questions provided in the curriculum for use in research visits and during the community conversation may appear very pertinent and useful in principle, they were almost totally ignored by the participants during the research process. It may be more worthwhile to build a question-development exercise into the workshop process so that the participants come up with their own questions, phrased in terms meaningful to them and designed to meet their own knowledge needs.

Questions relating to community members' programming preferences could also be included. This question development process would be preferable to having

participants simply go into the field unprepared, as this could lead to haphazard questioning, and participants might find on their return to the workshop venue that they have failed to gather the information they set out to collect.

The involvement of station members in developing their own terminology and drawing up their own questions, is another way of ensuring that the entire process is participatory – it is another way of avoiding the ‘injection of knowledge’ pitfall identified in Section One. The development of categories and questions also provides an opportunity for negotiation and dialogue during which critical perspectives on the process can be introduced and considered. For example, the facilitator can make use of such occasions to remind participants to consider, and be open about, their own reasons for undertaking research into the community – part of the ongoing process of bringing hidden or unconscious agendas into the open.

Another area in which the workshop process could be improved relates to strategic thinking that has to take place in order to avoid the logistical problems experienced at Radio KC, such as erratic attendance and the interference of the participants’ private interests in the achievement of the research goals. Some of these problems could be avoided simply with better planning and foresight. The use of a separate, neutral venue, as proposed above, would, for example, eliminate many of the unnecessary interruptions. The allocation of adequate funding, in particular a dedicated budget for the research process, could also go a long way towards eliminating some of the problems experienced at Radio KC. A transport budget, for example, would make it easier for participants to undertake field visits, particularly to areas far away from the station premises. If participants were provided with some kind of nominal financial support, this would also help to reduce absenteeism – this could be as basic as providing participants with taxi money and lunch on workshop days. The allocation of a dedicated budget to the research process could prove beneficial in another way: this is in line with the commonsense notion that ‘you appreciate what you pay for’. If the station management allocates some of the station’s finances to the project, it might seek to justify the expense by making sure that good use is made of the community research.

Section Four: The Strategic Planning Process

As outlined at the start of this chapter, the community mapping process should be implemented in the context of an ongoing process of strategic planning related to programming and news at the station. This context should be set up from the very beginning with key station decision-makers during the first workshop/s. The community mapping process, such as the one undertaken at Radio KC, would then be seen as research that would be used to inform the strategic planning.

As pointed out in Chapter Two, participation at community stations is difficult to achieve. In the absence of alternatives, community radio stations generally look to the broader media environment for their models and ideas about programme formatting and content (Hendy, 2000; Peruzzo, 1996). This is probably one of the reasons why, in the case of Radio KC, the intervention was not seen to produce any major changes in participants' programmes. In addition to the community mapping, therefore, the participants in the research process should also be guided through a process of mapping and discussing the media environment in which the station operates. This would, firstly, open the way to discussion about the fact that the station operates in a competitive media market, and thus allows for discussion of the tensions between the commercial and development imperatives facing community stations. It would also enable the participants to exercise their minds on the question of what it is that makes the community station unique and important in the lives of members of the community – and on what makes it fundamentally different from other media. It might also be useful to play the participants some examples of material recorded from community radio in other countries. This could help to provide an alternative reference point – good examples they can aspire to – other than the commercial examples they turn to from their own media landscape.

Following the media mapping process, the next step could possibly be for the small group of research participants to present the knowledge and insights they have gained to larger workshop attended by station members and involving all key decision-makers at the station. The aim of this meeting would be to use the information gained through the research in order to develop strategic objectives for news and programming at the station. For this, it would be valuable to include an exercise where station members deliberate over, and negotiate around, the competing agendas represented by: station members' own aspirations for the station (gained from

the initial workshops), community members' aspirations and needs with respect to the station (gained from the community mapping) and the imperatives of operating in a competitive media environment. These negotiations would also need to address another of the tensions raised in Chapter Two: the tension between the need for the station to survive financially and the need for the station to remain true to its mission and identity as a community station. This tension was visible at Radio KC in the conflicts between those eager for the station to appeal to white business interests, and those who believed that the station should focus on the poor.

Once the list of strategic programming objectives has been successfully negotiated and 'buy-in' has been obtained from key stakeholders, the final step could be for a working group to develop a set of detailed programming strategies. These would be designed to translate the strategic objectives into practical action steps, along with time frames for implementation. These steps should ideally include specific techniques for participatory programme making.

Section Five: Conclusion

As the theoretical discussion in Chapter Two seeks to argue, and as the example of Radio KC illustrates, the way in which stations define their 'community', and implement 'participation' are major sites of conflict and tension. The programming schedule is also an important site of struggle. The success of a community radio station must be measured, then, by the extent to which station members manage to tackle these day-to-day conflicts and tensions in an open and democratic manner.

If interventions are to be made in order to assist stations in this difficult task, it is important that these are undertaken in a reflective manner. There is a need for detailed examination of what occurs at specific stations and under specific conditions, so that lessons that are of more general use might be drawn.

This is precisely what the community mapping research process at Radio KC sought to accomplish. While the process was a mixed success in terms of its impact on Radio KC, it was most useful in providing a detailed example of the dynamics at work during interventions of this nature. It became clear, above all, that such interventions cannot be approached simply as training exercises. If they are to have any meaningful impact they must involve elements of organisational development and

strategic planning as well. In this chapter, based on the insights gained from Radio KC, an attempt has been made to develop recommendations for a more comprehensive model along these lines.

As argued in Chapter Two, one of the things that makes community radio so valuable is that, as an element of civil society, it provides ordinary people with the opportunity to learn the habits and values crucial to democracy (Carpentier, Lie & Servaes, 2003). Moreover, since community radio stations are also broadcast institutions, they are faced with the challenge of implementing democratic habits and values in the realm of communication and media. This is no easy task, as the writings of scholars such as Habermas (1992) and Hochheimer (1993) indicate. This means community radio, as a whole, must be understood not as a noble endeavour, the failure or success of which is judged in wholesale terms, but as a site of struggle. It is inevitable that conflicts and tensions will arise. Not only are individual station workers continually competing for power and position, but the interests and forces at play in the broader community also make themselves felt within the context of the station.

One of the key lessons of this thesis is that the implementation of democratic habits needs to occur not only in the context of the station's relationship with its 'community', but also within the station itself. As the recommendations made in this chapter would indicate, participatory research projects designed to assist stations in this task require extended involvement on the part of researchers, and large investments of time and money. Such investments are hard to come by in a funding environment where results are often measured in terms of quantity, not quality. The kind of model that has been developed in this thesis can obviously not be applied on a large scale. Nevertheless, if such a process can be undertaken successfully at just one station, that may prove invaluable as an example of best practice, and an inspiration to others. Hopefully, then, the recommendations presented here might be taken up and applied, in a further cycle of research and reflection.

Bibliography

- Ang, I. 1991. 'Wanted: Audiences. On the politics of empirical audience studies'. In: Seiter, E., Borchers, H., Kreutzner, G., & Warth E-M. Eds. 1991. *Remote Control: Television, Audiences and Cultural Power*. London: Routledge. Pp. 96-115.
- Arnst, R. 1996. 'Participation Approaches to the Research Process'. In: Servaes, J., Jacobson, T.L. & White, S.A. Eds. 1996. *Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 109-126.
- Ascroft, J. & Masilela, S. 1994. 'Participatory Decision-Making in Third World Development. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S., & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp. 259-294.
- Bless, C. & Higson-Smith, C. 1995. *Fundamentals of Social Research Methods: An African Perspective*, 2nd ed. Kenwyn: Juta.
- Boafo, S.T.K. Ed. 2000. *Promoting Community Media in Africa*. Paris: Unesco.
- Bonin, M. & Opoku-Mensah, A. Eds. 1998. *What is Community Radio? A Resource Guide*. Johannesburg: AMARC Africa and Panos Southern Africa.
- Bordenave, J.D. 1994. 'Participative Communication as a Part of Building the Participative Society'. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S. & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 35-48.
- Boyte, H. 1995. 'Beyond Deliberation: Citizenship as Public Work.' *PEGS*, Spring 1995:15-19.

- Broadcasting Act No. 4 of 1999* (South Africa). Available online at <http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/legislation/1999/act99-004.html>. Accessed: 19.07.2001.
- Carey, J., Professor of Journalism at Columbia University. New York, Conversation with the author, 3 May, 2002.
- Carpentier, N., Lie, R. and Servaes, J. 2003. 'Community Media: Muting the Democratic Media Discourse?' *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 17(1):51-68.
- De Villiers, S. 2001. *A People's Government. The People's Voice: A Review of Public Participation in the Law and Policy-Making Process in South Africa*, Cape Town: Parliamentary Support Programme.
- Dick, B. 1999. *Sources of Rigour in Action Research: Addressing the Issue of Trustworthiness and Credibility*. Paper read at the Association for Qualitative Research Conference, Melbourne, Australia, July 1999. Available online at: <http://www.sch.edu.au/schools/sawd/arr/rigour3.html>. Accessed: 15.09.01.
- Dominowski, P. & Bartholet, A. 1997. *The Listener Survey Toolkit*. Available online at <http://www.wksu.org/toolkit>. Accessed: 04.07.2001.
- Downing, J. D.H. 2001. *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.
- Downs R.M. and Stea, D. 1977. *Maps in Minds: Reflections on Cognitive Mapping*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Duncan, J. 2001. *Broadcasting and the National Question: South African Broadcast Media in an Age of Neo-Liberalism*. Johannesburg: Freedom of Expression Institute and NiZA.

Dwangu, S. News manager at Radio KC, Paarl. Personal conversation with the author, 03 September, 2002.

Fraser, N. 1992. 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.' In: Calhoun, C. Ed. 1992. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Pp 109-142.

Fraser, N. 1997. 'Rethinking the Public Sphere'. *Kettering Review*, 15 (2) Winter 1997:23-34.

Frederickson, H.G. 1999. *How the Community Works: Officeholder Perspectives on Democratic Self-Government and the Community*. Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation.

Freire, P. 1995. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Friedland, L.A. 2001. 'Communication, Community and Democracy: Toward a Theory of the Communicatively Integrated Community', *Communication Research*, 18 (4):358-391.

Girard, B. 2001. *A Passion for Radio: Radio Waves and Community*. Published electronically: Bruce Girard & Comunica. Available online at <http://www.comunica.org/passion>. Accessed: 14.05.2002

Guilfoyle, D. 1999. Interviewing Level II, Unpublished trainer's manual of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Guilfoyle, D. Trainer with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Email sent to author. Accessed: 07.07.2002.

Gujit, I. 2001. 'Gender and Participation: Bridging the Gap'. *Development and Gender In Brief*. (9):Gender and Participation. Available online at <http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/dgb9.html>. Accessed: 25.03.02.

- Gumucio Dagron, A., 2001. *Making Waves: Stories of Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation.
- Habermas, J. 1991. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. 1992. 'Further Reflections on the Public Sphere'. In: Calhoun, C. Ed. 1992. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Pp 421-461.
- Harwood, R. & McCrehan, J. 1996. *Tapping Civic Life*. Published electronically: Pew Center for Civic Journalism. Available online at <http://www.pewcenter.org/doingcj/pubs/tcl/intro.html>. Accessed: 15.01.2003.
- Hendy, D. 2000. *Radio in the Golden Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hochheimer, J.L. 1993. 'Organizing Democratic Radio: Issues in Praxis'. *Media, Culture and Society*. 15(1993): 473-486.
- Howley, K. 2001. 'Talking about Public Affairs Programming: WFHB and the Legacy of Listener-Sponsored Radio'. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 21(4):399-. Available electronically at: Expanded Academic ASAP/A79210637. Accessed: 21.03.2003
- Hughes, I. & William, R. 2001. *Planning your Action Research Project*. Available online at: <http://www.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/reader/hughes3.htm>. Accessed: 09.15.01.
- Huizies, F. Station manager of Radio KC, Paarl. Personal conversation with the author, 29 August, 2002.
- 'Independent Broadcasting Authority Act 153 of 1993 (SA)', *Government Gazette* 340 (15185), October 1993.

- Jacobson, T.L. 1994. 'Modernization and Post-Modernization Approaches to Participatory Communication for Development'. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S., & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp. 60-75.
- Jankowski, N.W. 1991. 'Qualitative Research and Community Media', In: Jensen, K.B. & Jankowski, N.W. Eds. 1991. *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*. London: Routledge. Pp 163-189.
- Kelly, K. & Van Der Riet, M. 2000. 'Participatory Research in Community Settings: Processes, Methods, Challenges'. In: Seedat, M., Lazarus, S., & Duncan, M. Eds. 2000. *Theory, Method and Practice in Community Psychology: South African and Other Perspectives*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
Available online at: <http://www.cadre.org.za>. Accessed: 10.10.2003.
- Kumar, K.J. 1994. 'Communication Approaches to Participation and Development: Challenging the Assumptions and Perspectives'. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S., & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 76-94.
- Mano, W. 2001. 'Taking the Roof Off: Chakafukidza Dzimba Matenga: Popular Talk Radio'. Unpublished paper read to the Radiocracy Conference, Royal Hotel, Durban, South Africa, 20-24 September, 2001.
- Mansbridge, J.J. 1983. *Beyond Adversary Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Maps and Visions of Africa* (audio recording) 2002. Cape Town: Democracy Radio, Idasa. Produced by Brett Davidson.
- Martin, D-C. 2001 'What's in the Name 'Coloured?'' In: Zegeye, A. Ed. 2001. *Social Identities in the New South Africa*. Cape Town: Kwela. Pp. 249-267.

- Mathews, D. 1999. *Politics for People: Finding a Responsible Public Voice*, 2nd ed. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press.
- Mattes, R. 2002. 'South Africa: Democracy without the people?' *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1) January 2002:22-36.
- Mattes, R., Davids, Y.D. & Africa, C. 2000. *Views of Democracy in South Africa and the Region: Trends and Comparisons*. Cape Town: Idasa.
- Mattes, R., Keulder, C., Chikwana, A.B., Africa, C. & Davids, Y.D. 2003. 'Democratic Governance in South Africa: The People's View.' Afrobarometer Paper No. 24. Available online at: <http://www.afrobarometer.org/abseries.html>. Accessed 21.01.2004.
- Matthews, P. 2001. Chairperson's address to the NCRF Annual General Meeting 2000/1. Grahamstown, South Africa, 24 June, 2001.
- McChesney, R.W. 1998. 'Making Media Democratic'. *Boston Review*, Summer 1998. Available online at <http://bostonreview.mit.edu/BR23.3/mchesney.html>. Accessed: 04.03.2002.
- McKee, N. 1994. 'A Community-based Learning Approach: Beyond Social Marketing'. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S. & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 194-228.
- McQuail, D. 2000. 'Audience Theory and Research Traditions'. In: *Mass Communication Theory*, London: Sage. Pp 360-382.
- Misa: Media Institute of Southern Africa. 2001. *Role of Community Broadcasting*. Available online at <http://www.misanet.org/broadcast.community2.html>. Accessed: 10.08.2001.

- Melkote, S. R. 1991. *Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Mouton, J. 2001. *How to Succeed in Your Master's & Doctoral Studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mwangi, S.C. 2001. *International Public Journalism*. Unpublished report prepared for the Kettering Foundation, Dayton, OH.
- Nell, M & Shapiro, J. 2001. *First Footprints of the African Renaissance: An Evaluation of Training Provision in the Community Radio Sector in South Africa 1997-2001*. Unpublished report commissioned by the British Council, CAF, the Heinrich Boll Stiftung, NiZA and OSF-SA.
- Olorunnisola, A.A. 2002. *Community radio as participatory communication in post-apartheid South Africa*. Unpublished manuscript. Available online at: www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/a/x/axo8/Joburg/manuscript.htm. Accessed: 22.04.2003.
- Opubor, A.E. 2000. 'If Community Media is the Answer, What is the Question?' In: Boafo, S.T.K. Ed. 2000. *Promoting Community Media in Africa*. Paris: Unesco. Pp 11-24.
- Page, B. 1996. *Who Deliberates? Mass Media in Modern Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Peruzzo, C.M. 1996. 'Participation in Community Communication'. In: Servaes, J., Jacobson, T.L. & White, S.A. Eds. 1996. *Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp. 162-182.
- Reimer, B. 1997. 'Texts, Contexts, Structures. Audience Studies and the Micro-Macro Link'. In: Carlsson, U. Ed. 1997. *Beyond Media Uses and Effects*. Goteborg University: Nordicom. Pp. 41-60.

- Rockefeller Foundation. 1997. *Communications and Social Change: Forging Strategies for the 21st Century*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation.
- Roefs, M. & Liebenberg, I. 1999. *Notes on Public Participation in South Africa*. Paper read at the SAPSA Congress, Saldanha, South Africa, July 1999.
- Rosen, J. 1999 *What Are Journalists For?* New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Rosen, J. Head of the Journalism School, New York University, New York, Conversation with the author, 3 May, 2002.
- Sainath, P. 1996. *Everybody Loves a Good Drought*. London: Headline.
- Sanders, L.M. 1997. 'Against Deliberation'. *Political Theory*, 25(1997): 347-76.
- Scannell, P. Ed. 1991. *Broadcast Talk*. London: SAGE.
- Schaffer, J. 2001. *Civic Mapping*. Presentation to the Morris Communications Workshop, Augusta, Georgia, USA, 22 May, 2001. Available online at http://www.pewcenter.org/doingcj/speeches/s_augustacivicmapping.html. Accessed: 15.01.2003.
- Servaes, J. 1996a. 'Introduction: Participatory Communication and Research in Development Settings'. In: Servaes, J., Jacobson, T.L. & White, S.A. Eds. 1996. *Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 13-28.
- Servaes, J. 1996b. 'Linking Theoretical Perspectives to Policy'. In: Servaes, J., Jacobson, T.L. & White, S.A. Eds. 1996. *Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 29-43.
- Servaes, J. 2000. 'Development Communication – for Whom and for What?' *Communicatio*, 21(1). Available online at www.unisa.ac.za/dept/press/comca/211/contents.html. Accessed: 15.10.2001.

- Servaes, J., Jacobson, T.L. & White, S.A. Eds. 1996. *Participatory Communication for Social Change*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Sirianni, C. & Friedland, L. 2001. *Civic Innovation in America: Community Empowerment, Public Policy, and the Movement for Civic Renewal*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Stavitsky, A.G. 1993. 'Listening for Listeners: Educational Radio and Audience Research'. *Journalism History*, 19(1) Spring 93:11-18. Available electronically at: Academic Search Premier/9601116787. Accessed: 11.10.2003.
- Stiglitz, J. 2002. *Globalization and its Discontents*. London: Penguin.
- Strelitz, L. 2003. 'Global Media and Symbolic Distancing'. *Equid Novi* 24(2):136-156.
- Taylor, C. 1995. *Philosophical Arguments*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Thomas, P. 1994. 'Participatory Development Communication: Philosophical Premises'. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S. & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp. 49-59.
- Van der Merwe, A. Programme manager at Radio KC, Paarl. Personal conversation with the author, 3 September, 2002.
- Van Zyl, J. Ed. 2003. *Community Radio: The People's Voice*. Johannesburg: Sharp Sharp Media.
- Wanyeki, L.M. 2000 'The Development of Community Media in East and Southern Africa', In: Boafo, S.T.K. Ed. 2000. *Promoting Community Media in Africa*. Paris: Unesco. Pp. 25-41.

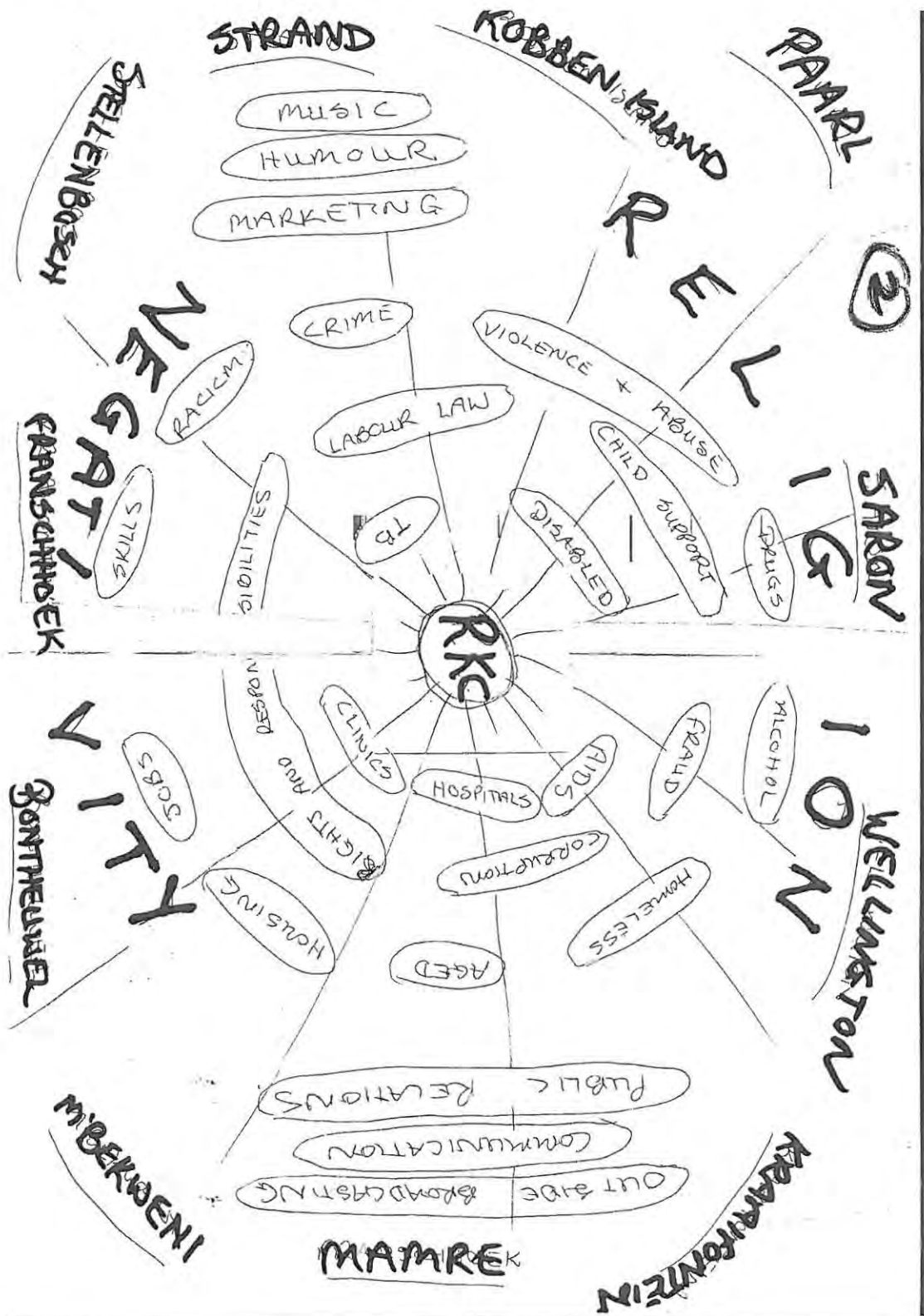
- White, R. 1994. 'Participatory Development Communication as a Socio-Cultural Process. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S. & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 95-115.
- White, S. 1994. 'Introduction – the Concept of Participation: Transforming Rhetoric to Reality'. In: White, S.A., Mair, K.S. & Ascroft, J. Eds. 1994. *Participatory Communication: Working for Change and Development*. New Delhi: Sage. Pp 15-34.
- Wigston, D. 2001. *A Review of Community Radio in South Africa*. Paper read to the Radiocracy Conference, Royal Hotel, Durban, South Africa, 20-24 September, 2001.
- Wimmer, R.D. & Dominick, J.R. 1987. *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*, 2nd Ed. Belmont, Calif.:Wadsworth.
- Windhoek Charter on Broadcasting in Africa*. 2001. Available online at <http://www.article19.org/docimages/1019.htm>. Accessed: 13.08.2002
- Zegeye, A. Ed. 2001. *Social Identities in the New South Africa*. Cape Town: Kwela.

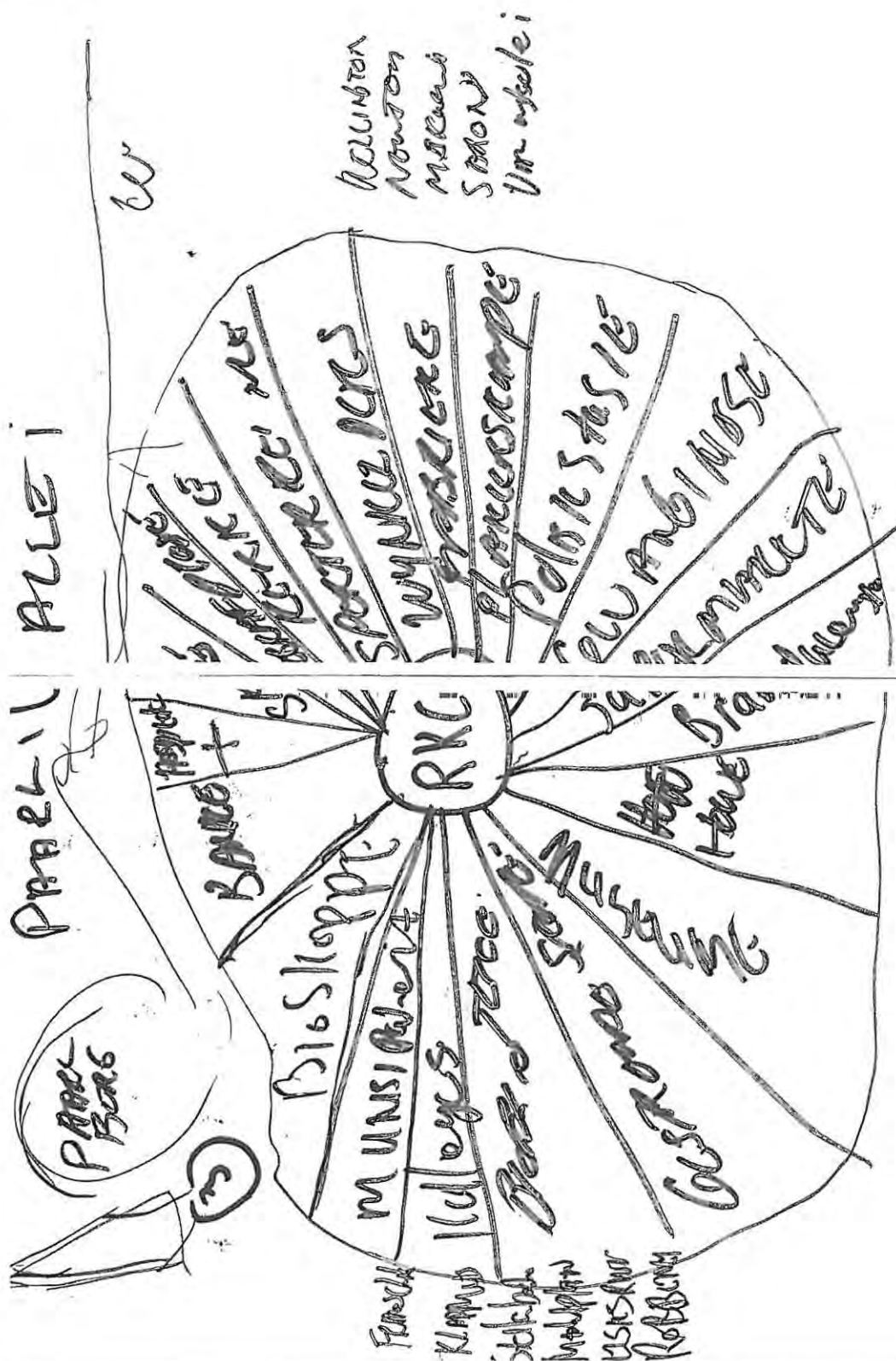
Maps drawn by station workers at first plenary workshop: 14th September 2002

[illegible]

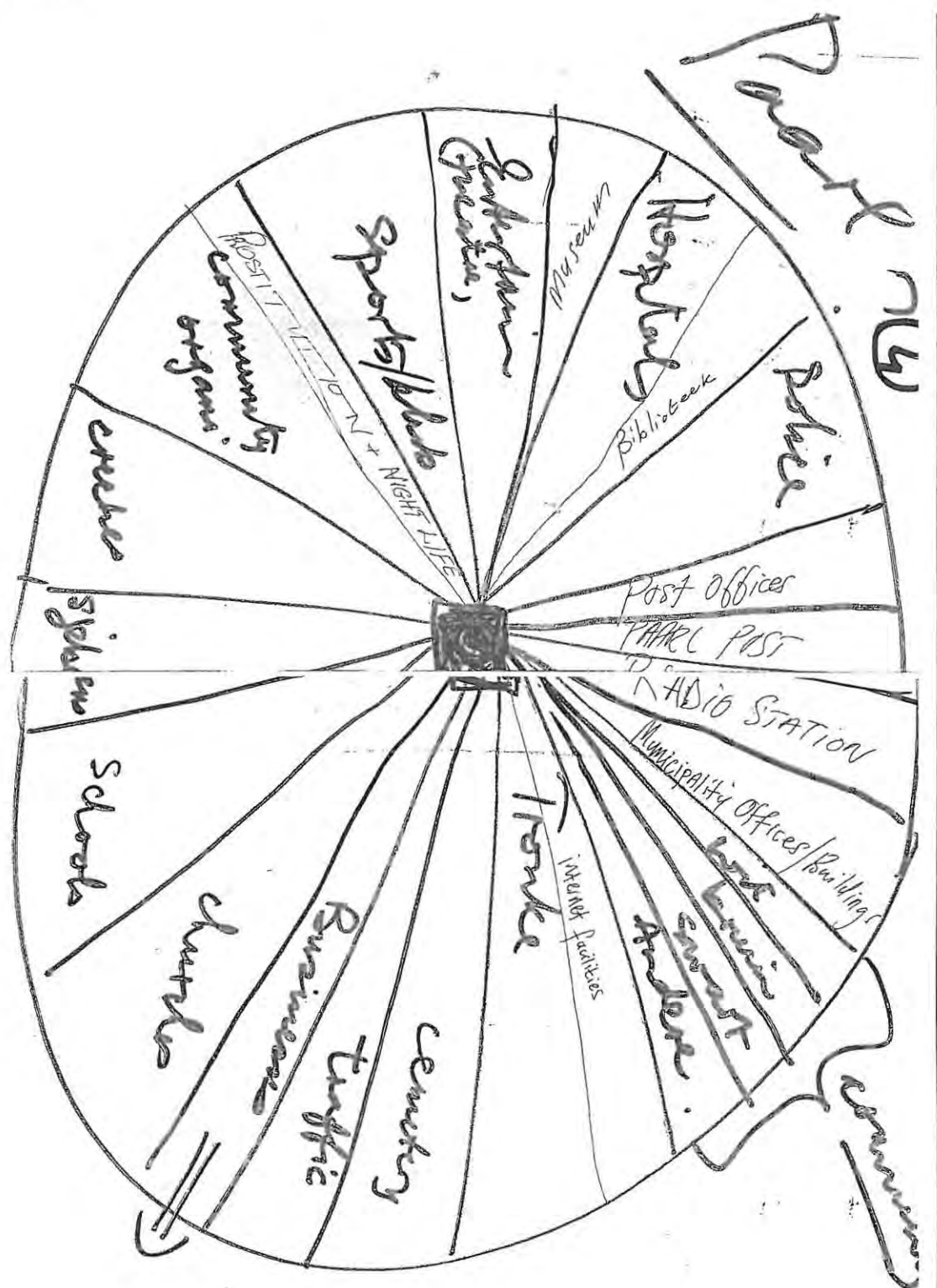
Keys
 + - Kok (church)
 S - School's
 O - Old Age
 Y - Youth
 Prison
 228 - Family

Map 2

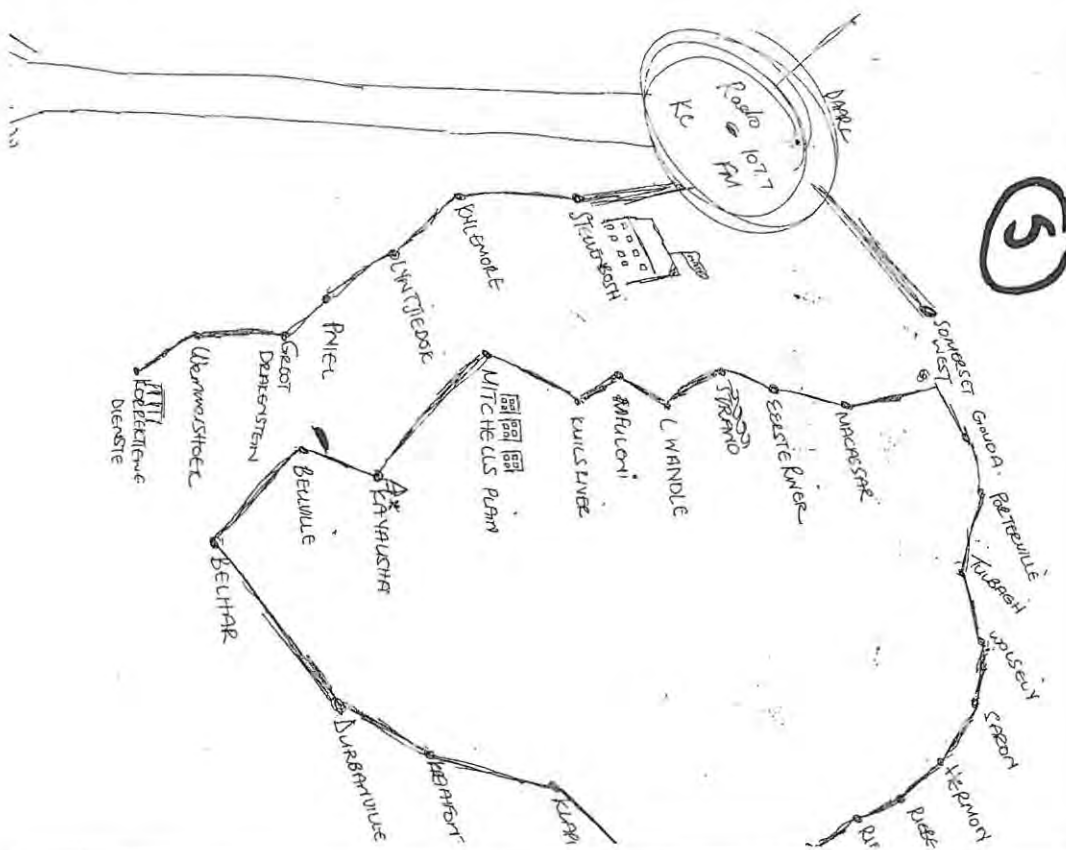




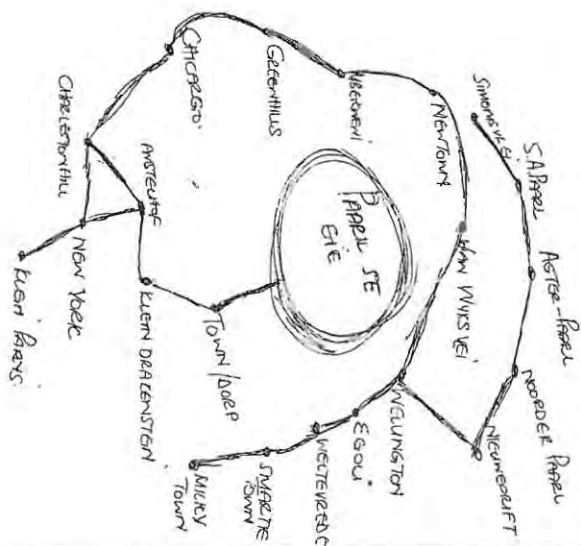
Map 4



Map 5

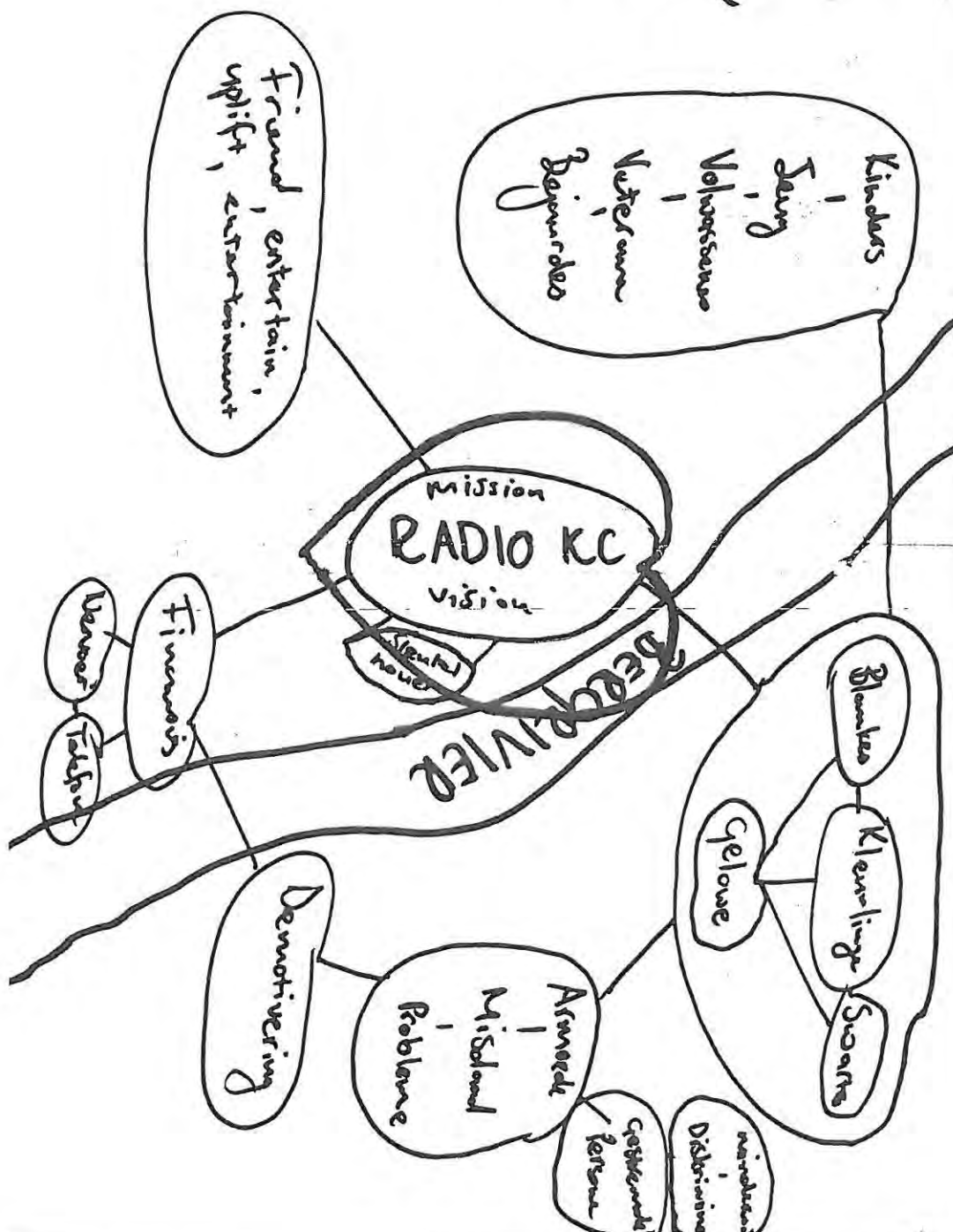


ATLANTIS
NANTUCKET
JAMES
ZOBODA
FOTEL

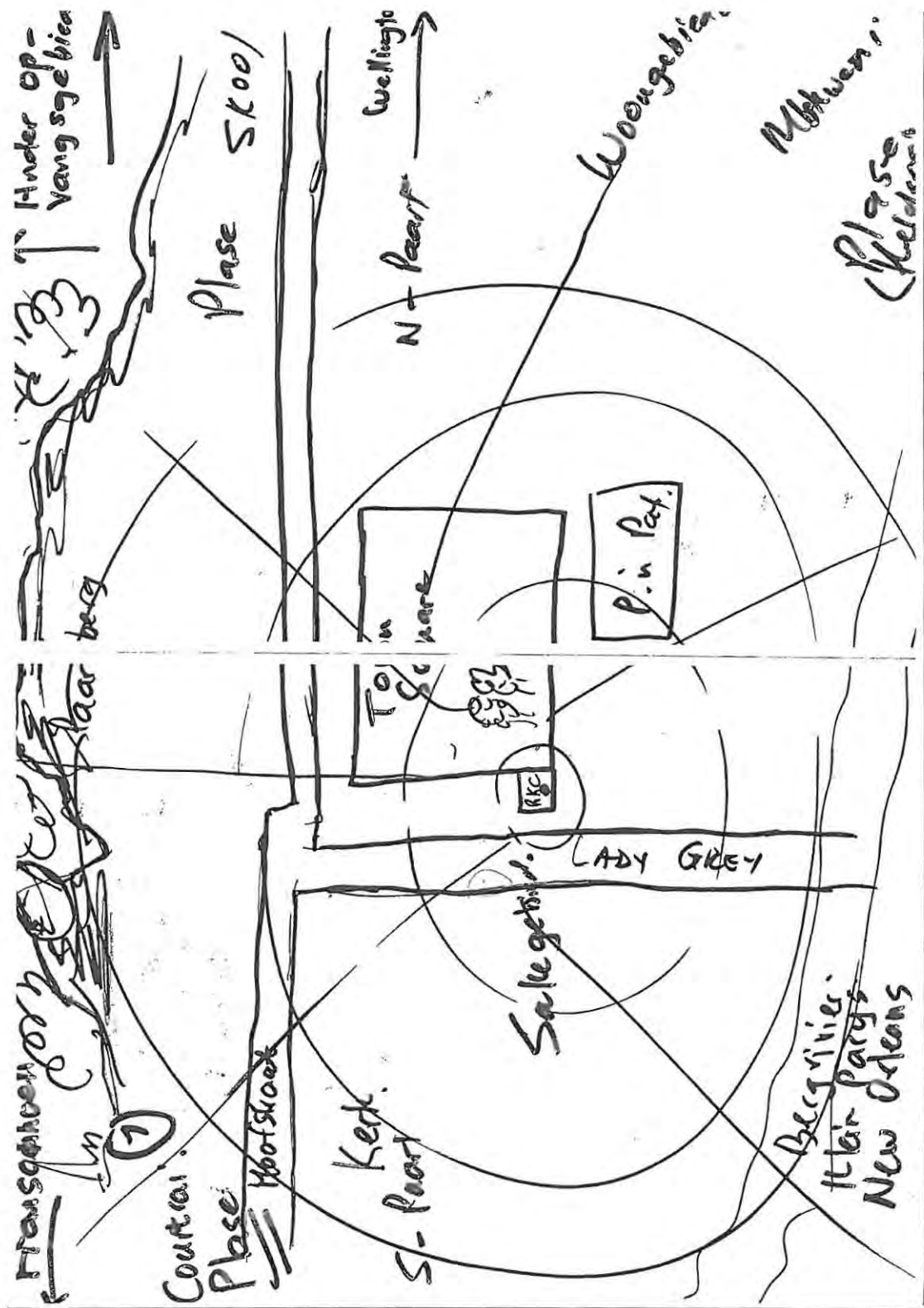


Ps. Karel
Michael
Georgie

PAARL ⑥



Map 7



Appendix B: Questionnaires

A transcript of the answers to the pre- and post-workshop questionnaires (2 & 3) is available from the author at brett@idasact.org.za.

1. Initial Radio KC workshop on 14th September: General answers to discussion questions

What kind of role do you think the media play in South Africa today?

Inform, exposing, empowering, freedom of speech, advocate, entertain, influence, destructive with respect to the youth, too explicit, helps transparency.

What kind of role do you think your station plays in this community?

Inform, grassroots, uplift and educate, awareness, reminds us of identity, promote positive attitudes, change mindsets, educates, it is a friend, creates opportunities, empowerment.

What is the most important information for you each day?

Current and international affairs, daily events, to understand the feelings, attitudes and beliefs on the ground.

What is the least information for you each day?

Gossip, idle talk, negative news, bickering with no solutions, self-promotion, requests and phone-ins.

How do you feel about the information that your station provides?

Too many request calls. A need to limit them but still satisfy the listeners' need for them. No calls on issues. News staff needs better means of news-gathering. Some ideas on how we can all contribute to this: put local news first, get internet access, make use of SMS messages, identify representatives of groups and organisations who can serve as news sources.

Some people say that community radio is the "voice of the voiceless". Is that true of your station? If yes, how does it play that role?

Some said 98% yes – it does play that role. Others said "ja-nee". "Unity in diversity" should be the motto. Is the community aware of this opportunity? A need to build networks in the community and with the community. Need to link with communities such as Mbekweni, Saron, etc. Station could do better. Need to know who we are talking about. Need to stay on track with original mission and vision.

What would you like to achieve by the end of today?

Refocus on vision and mission.

Get committed action plans.

Get motivation.

Ideas about community participation.

Deal with the little irritations that station volunteers experience.

Discuss how to fix the phone problem – studio phone blocked.

Sustainable decisions.

Focusing on serving.

Reassess internal support structures.

2. Pre-participatory workshops: Questionnaire 1

What are your general thoughts and feelings about Radio KC at present? (Think about your feelings as a role-player, a community member, and a listener.)

How would you describe the identity of the station? You can use words and/or draw a picture.

How do you feel about your role at the station?

What are your thoughts about the programmes on the station?

What are the strong and weak points when it comes to programming at Radio KC

If you are involved with a specific programme, how do you feel about that programme?

Can you please describe the community that Radio KC serves or should be serving?

What are the gaps in your and the station's knowledge about this community?
What more would you like to learn about the community?

What are your thoughts about how the station is serving this community?

How do you feel about community participation at the station?

According to your knowledge, who are Radio KC's listeners?

What more would you like to know about the listeners?

How do you feel about listener participation at the station, and in the programmes?

What are your thoughts on the way in which Radio KC is serving the listeners?

Why did you decide to participate in this project?

What knowledge, skills, talents etc can you contribute to this group and this process?

What would you like to learn during this project?

What are your expectations for the project and your participation in it?

What would you like the station to gain as result of this project?

3. Post-Participatory Workshops: Questionnaire 2

Do you think the Community Mapping process has been useful in helping you understand the community that Radio KC serves?

Can you give some examples?

What did you like about the process?

What did you not like?

How could we improve the research to get better results?

Thinking back to the community maps you worked on at the first presenter workshop, how has your view of the community changed since then?

What two or three things stand out as the most important things you have learnt while doing this research?

What have you learnt about how the station is serving the community, and how it can improve?

What questions do you still have about the community? Is there any knowledge you feel is still lacking in the research?

How could you and/or the team carry on working to try and get this knowledge/answer your outstanding questions?

During the process we talked about the various levels in the community, from official to private. Is this useful to you?

Have you been able to use this in your programming or news gathering?

During the process we also talked about various kinds of community leaders. Is this useful to you?

Have you been able to use this in your programming or news gathering?

Research visits to different areas of the community:

Were the visits useful?

What did you gain from the visits?

What did you learn?

How could this part of the process be improved?

Story planning and stakeholder exercise:

Were the stakeholder and story planning exercises regarding floor crossing useful?

If no, why not?

If yes, what did you gain from them?

How could you use these techniques in future?

Community map. Now that we've reached the end of the process we have a file which we can call the community map. Are you happy with the way this map has turned out? Why/why not?

What could we improve?

Where are the gaps and how can you work to fill them?

How could the station use the map to improve community participation?

Radio KC's listeners:

What have you learnt about Radio KC's listeners in general?

What have you learnt about the listeners' needs?

What have you learnt about listening habits?

What have you learnt about special groups of listeners (age groups, language groups, etc.)

What more would you still like to know about the listeners?

Is there any group of listeners or part of the community we still have not heard from? Whose voice has been left out? How can we try to include them in future?

How has this workshop and community research process affected the way you think about Radio KC? (think about your feelings as a role-player, a community member and a listener)

How can the station use the research we've done to improve programming?

If you think about the programme schedule from Monday to Sunday – do you think there should be any changes, based on what you've learnt during this research process?

Thinking specifically about news and current affairs – what, if anything, do you want to change or improve as result of the research?

Focusing on talk shows – what, if anything do you want to change or improve as result of the research?

Have you learnt anything about how you could increase the number of callers to talk shows?

Have you started using what you've learnt during this process, to improve the programme that you work on?

If yes, how?

Have you noticed any changes in listener response to your programme?

What three steps can you take to make sure that:

You and the station make use of the research:

The research can be continued to fill in the gaps, and stay up to date?

Thinking back to your own expectations at the start of the research:

Were your expectations met?

If not, why not?

Aside from the station, have you gained anything personally, from the research process?

What are your thoughts and feelings about your relationships with the other participants?

What are your thoughts and feelings about the role of the facilitator?

We have spent many hours and many weeks on this research process. Was it worth it for you? Why/why not?

What could be improved to make this process a better and richer experience for the participants personally?

Appendix C: Participatory Workshop Curriculum

Workshop: Mapping your community

EXERCISE: A COMMUNITY MAP

You have about an hour to an hour and a half for this. You can work individually or in pairs. Your task is to draw a map of your community - the community you live in, the one served by your radio station.

EXERCISE: DISCUSSING COMMUNITY MAPS

Take a look at your map, and notice:

What is central?

What is most prominent? Why?

What is on the edges?

What does this tell you about who is included and excluded?

What is biggest, what is smallest?

Where is there more detail, where less?

What perspective were you using?

How are the different parts of the map positioned?

Where are your listeners on the map? Where do they come from?

How much of this community are you covering in your news and programming?

What does this map show you about what you know and don't know about the community?

What are the gaps in your knowledge?

In this section, we will be looking at how to construct a map of your community that will take into account the kinds of things that we have been talking about. We will work on building a map that will be a rich resource for you as you go about your work, finding stories and involving the community in the programming at the station.

Let's take some time to think a bit about maps.

MANY KINDS OF MAPS

Take a look at some of the examples of maps in your file

What is a map?

- It is a guide.
- It is a description of something in a simplified way.
- It is an aid to understanding.
- It is a reference tool.

Anything else you can think of?

You get all sorts of maps.

A map of anatomy shows the details of the human body.

A geographical map shows physical features of a region, such as mountains, rivers and so on.

A road map shows the roads in a city, region or country, and is a useful tool for drivers.

A route map like a subway map or a bus route map can show commuters which train or bus to catch.

There are weather maps on TV each night and in some newspapers.

We could go on and on. Maps come in many forms – as charts, as books, as leaflets, as computer programmes, as three dimensional globes and so on.

The point is that there are different ways of organising information that is most useful for the intended purpose.

WHAT CAN A COMMUNITY MAP DO FOR A RADIO STATION?

During this workshop we will work on building a community map.

It could take many forms.

It could be a big chart, just like a town or country map, that hangs on the wall.

It could be more like a diary, with organised lists of contact people and important places.

There are two important things to bear in mind. For a good map you need:

- Good, useful information.
- A good, useful way of making connections between the information.

A map is a way of seeing the big picture, so that you can see the connections between things. Think about a city map. A series of photos of various buildings is not a map, but a chart, showing where each building is in relation to one another, is a map.

EXERCISE: MAPPING YOUR FRIENDSHIPS.

Take some time, and think about all the people that you know. There's your family, then there are your good friends. There are your friends' families and their friends, and the friends of friends. Try to draw a map showing how the most important people in your life are connected.

So you now have a clearer idea of what we are trying to do: we want to build a map what will give us a big picture of this community, and show the connections and relationships in the community.

Another important thing – the map must be expandable. Think of a ring file, rather than a book. You can add pages to a ring file, and take pages out as your information changes. You can't do that to a book. Your map needs to be able to change and grow as your information grows and your understanding of the community changes.

What we are going to do next, is look at different parts of the community and we are going to work at collecting information about these parts. At the end, you will use what we have collected to build your map, but in the meantime as we work, start thinking about what form of map will be most useful to your station. Do you want a file, with pages of information? Do you want a wall chart? Do you want a computer programme? Do you want a combination of these elements?

Next we are going to look at three elements of the community that will be important in building your maps:

- The layers of community life.
- The dimensions of community life.

- The kinds of community leaders.

Layers of community life

There are layers in this community, like there are in any community. There is what happens on the surface and what happens underneath. If we want to serve the community, and deal with the real issues that the community is dealing with, we have to get underneath the surface. If we want to make Sometimes, if we want the community to face up to these things so we can solve them and move forward, we have to start discussing them and bringing them out into the open.

How do we do this?

- Talk to new people.
- Talk to people in new places.
- Ask different questions.
- Deal with people in a different way.

The Layers of community life

If you think of the life of this community, one useful way might be to break it down into five layers:

Official: This is the layer where you find the official politics and institutions in a community. People participate in this layer in places like the municipality offices, for local government council meetings. Other government departments or services also fall under this category, such as police service, water utility, local constituency office and so on.

Semi-Official: This layer is made up of organisations and people who are involved in community organisations or citizen associations that have some kind of relation with the official layer. Examples are local trade union branches, or groups like Treatment Action Campaign, and so on.

Informal Meeting Places: This is where a lot of community life happens, where people get together to talk and do things together. These are places such as churches, youth groups, hairdresser salons, bars, and so on.

Incidental: This layer is much looser. It's the informal and unpredictable contact that people have with one another – at the café, or talking over the back yard fence, or chatting on the pavement.

Private: This layer is people's private homes. It's sometimes not seen as political or part of broader community issues, but can be seen this way, especially when it comes to child abuse, health issues, domestic violence and so on.

Usually we find ourselves going for issues, programme ideas and so on to the top layers – the official and the semi-official. Can you think of examples of this? Another layer we sometimes deal with is the private one – for example, when a child is killed in an accident reporters often go to the home of the parents to ask them how they feel.

There are good reasons for going to the first layer – official structures are important. Decisions that the local council makes are important and affect our lives. But we usually want more than one perspective on a story, and when we do, we generally go to the second layer, the semi-official. We ask leaders of organisations what they think about events or new policies. For example, if we do a story on new minimum wages for domestic workers, then we may go first to someone in government who is drawing up the policy (official), then we might go to the semi-official layer, and get comment from the head of the domestic workers' union. We might also try to go to the private layer, and go and visit a home to get a story from a domestic worker about her working conditions.

Where do our programmess usually originate?

Isn't it true that very often the programme starts at the top layer – the official one? The domestic worker story is a good example. The official layer makes a law, or announces a policy, or sends out a press release. We start with that, then work our way down – to the semi-official layer, and the others. We get them all to comment in reaction to what is happening at the official level. For talk shows, we often get in a guest from one of the top two layers, to talk about an issue, and then we ask listeners to call in. Often that might mean that we are focusing on topics that the official layer wants us to focus on, but that might not be what the listeners think is important or what they want to talk about. It is important to deal with some of the issues that the officials and experts want us to talk about, but if we don't do anything else, we are leaving big parts of the community out.

What programme ideas are we missing when we just rely on the official level? Are there ideas that we could get that START at any of the other levels?

What could we do to change the way we do things and get more issues and ideas that originate in these other levels?

One important thing to remember is that there are certain rules and roles to think about in each level, and that we also have to think about our ethical role as reporters, producers and presenters. For example, many people criticise journalists when they rush to the home of a parent who's child has just died. They are looking for a sensational story and creating more distress for the

parents. How about how we cover domestic violence – is it a private family issue, or a community one?

As radio people, while we want to be in touch with the community, we also have to be very respectful of the spaces and places and people that we come into contact with. We don't want to disrupt the spaces we enter. Part of being in touch with the community is understanding what is suitable and fair, and what is not.

MORE DETAILS: Layers of community life

OFFICIAL

Description: Official places and occasions for discussing issues, or official bodies serving the public. Public officials are usually in charge.

What Usually Happens: Formal proceedings followed. Very rule bound. Can be very divided along party lines. Often clear cut differences between "for" and "against." Decisions made about public life. Responsible for implementing delivery or carrying out official tasks.

Examples: City council sessions, town forums, police service, water utility etc.

Who's Involved: Public officials (eg: mayor, councillors, civil servants (bureaucrats, police officers), interest groups making submissions.

Public Perceptions: People may want to participate but don't know how they can. People don't think councillors are interested in their views and don't understand how the official structures work. People are cynical about politics. People want to be consulted. The public is sceptical about delivery or performance.

Their Perceptions of the Station: May see it as a channel to communicate with the community. May try to use it for their own purposes. May see station as a nuisance, always trying to make them look bad, or just getting things wrong. Way of airing community views which provides valuable feedback on popular opinion.

Radio Station's Role: Report on decisions, processes and conflicts. Good place to get the official story and opinions of organised interests. Explain official issues to citizens.

SEMI-OFFICIAL

Description: Formal citizen input into political life. Leaders are clearly identified. Formal meetings and events are held.

What Usually Happens: Often more discussion about various options. Meetings can range from very formal to semi-formal and even informal. Usually meetings are chaired, with planned agendas.

Examples: Neighbourhood associations. Community organisations, youth groups, *stokvels*, NGOs, cooperatives.

Who's Involved: Community activists, leaders. Officials might visit. Some people might be part of official level too.

Public Perceptions: Sometimes seen as representing real community interests. Can be questions about who leaders really represent.

Their Perceptions of the Station: See it as a community organisation like theirs. See it as a way of influencing public opinion, to then influence officials. A way to publicise their activities or to drum up support. Would like more coverage, but are sensitive to criticism.

Radio Station's Role: Report on these groups. Inform community about events and activities. Educate community with help of these organisations (such as those working on social issues). Give these organisations access to the airwaves to help educate the community. A source for expert or critical opinion on events and decisions within the official level.

INFORMAL COMMUNITY SPACES

Description: Part of daily life. Comfortable public meeting places where people choose to spend their free time. Usually there's no formal leader, but some people are catalysts.

What Usually Happens: Not formally political, but people often talk about politics informally, or about the issues and problems of everyday life. Exchange of gossip, stories, jokes. Important information source for many people. Often talk about sport and similar issues.

Examples: Hair salons, bars, cafes, pavements where people regularly gather.

Who's Involved: Community catalysts. Citizens who have things in common, share common concerns (community, family, friendship, sports and other ties).

Public Perceptions: Some realise these are important community spaces. Not seen as linked to politics. Some official actors may be unaware of them.

Their View of the Station: Station may be tuned in where people meet. A source of gossip and news and background music. Reporters acting as reporters in these spaces may be resented, feared or seen as too nosy. Source of useful information and education. A point of community pride and identity.

Radio Station's Role: Station programmers, reporters and presenters are part of these spaces too, in everyday life, but as station workers, we must be careful not to change the nature of the space by intruding or violating people's trust. These places may be great for picking up ideas for talk shows, discussion points, documentaries, news stories, and so on.

INCIDENTAL

Description: Random, everyday encounters between friends and acquaintances (not in gathering places).

What Usually Happens: People gossip, tell stories, chat. Important information source for most people. Talk about current political, social and sports events. People may link their private concerns to community or political issues.

Examples: Meeting someone in the queue at the shop, talking over the back fence, or on the way to school.

Who's Involved: Immediate neighbours, acquaintances, friends of friends, sometimes strangers one starts chatting to.

Public Perceptions: Much broader participation than previous layers. Not thought of as political but part of everyday life.

Perceptions of Station: May come up in conversation or be source of gossip.

Radio Station's Role: This layer is a source of community news and views, and so can be very fruitful for the station. But it's very dispersed because it is everywhere and also nowhere in particular. Station members need to be careful not to change the nature of the space. The radio station may form part of this incidental space, such as when listeners call in to send messages, or to make requests for friends and family members.

PRIVATE

Description: Inside the home. Family interactions.

What Usually Happens: Talk about private household issues. Also chit chat about politics, sport, community issues.

Examples: Your family, family meals, visits from friends.

Who's Involved: Family and friends.

Public Perceptions: Private, non-political.

Perceptions of Station: Station may be on in the home and may be woven into family life. Reporters and producers who come into the private realm may be resented as intruders.

Radio Station's Role: Source of 'human interest' interviews for news and programmes. This layer is sometimes included, while the middle layers are overlooked. Beware of violating privacy and personal and family space. It may be an important area of political and community interest when it comes to gender relations, domestic violence and so on.

Dimensions of community life

When we think of the layers of community life, we have been thinking vertically – a column going from top to bottom.

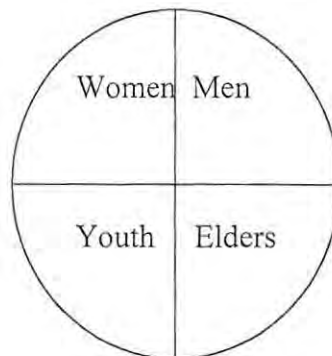
Official
Semi-official
Informal
Incidental

Private

To have a richer picture of the community, we need to also consider that community life has many dimensions. In addition to the political side of life, there is also business, traditional life, culture, sport, and so on. Your community probably has other elements too that make it unique.

Layers	Dimensions				
	Political life	Traditional life	Business	Sport	Culture
Official					
Semi-Official					
Informal					
Incidental					
Private					

This grid is one way of looking at the dimensions of community life, but it has its limitations. For example, the grid above doesn't give space to women's groups, the youth, the disabled, and so on. Perhaps a cube could accommodate this better. There are also other ways of depicting things. For example, the Lakota Indian community in the USA thinks of its community in the context of the Medicine Wheel, a powerful cultural symbol.



EXERCISE: THE LAYERS AND DIMENSIONS OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Come up with as many examples of each level and dimension in this community that you can think of. Identify the names of actual places and people for each. Try to identify places and people in all the different dimensions of community life. Draw up a chart and fill in the names there.

Come up with as many examples you can think of where the station had a programme that related to each level. Who generally gets ignored or left out? How can you involve people from all levels and dimensions in the station, get their voices on air, or get better community stories?

Types of community leaders

It is all very well identifying the layers of the community, but how do we get programme ideas and content from these places? Who do we talk to? Often in news and programming we tend to go for the leaders. Of course we don't only want leaders, but leaders a pretty useful bunch. They can offer us interesting insights, they can link us with other community people and so on. The trouble is, we sometimes have a pretty limited view of who leaders are.

We think of:

- Politicians.
- Businesspeople.
- Chairpersons of organisations.
- Mayors.
- Councillors.

Any others you can think of?

A group of researchers at the Harwood Institute in the USA has come up with a useful scheme for identifying various types of community leaders. They believe its possible to identify five types of community leaders...

TYPES OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

Official Leaders: People who hold elected positions, who work for government departments or are heads of large institutions. Examples are the mayor, town councillors, MPs, chief executives of big businesses, top union officials and so on.

Civic Leaders: These are the people who hold recognised civic positions in the community. For example, ministers, leaders of community groups or heads of NGOs, union organisers, and so on

Connectors: These people move between different levels of the community and different kinds of institutions and organisations. They spread ideas, messages and social norms, and link people to one another. Often they don't have any official titles or positions.

Catalysts: These are the ones that people turn to for leadership in everyday life. They are known for their good advice, their wisdom or historical perspective. They are good at encouraging and inspiring others to start projects or get involved in community life. Examples are respected neighbours, colleagues, or lay church leaders.

Experts: These people are leaders because of their specialised knowledge or abilities. Examples are professors, nurses and doctors, lawyers, scientists and so on.

Who do programme producers and journalists usually turn to? Usually we go to the official leaders, the civic leaders and the experts. They are easy to find because they have official titles and they often give us good quotes. They are good to use as experts for discussions, as they have a lot of information that we feel the listeners ought to hear. If we go to one expert, one official leader and one civic leader for a panel or a story it seems like we have a balanced programme with a diversity of views. But we often forget about the catalysts and connectors, who can bring us deeper insights into community life, or give us valuable historical background. They are also very important in telling us about events or issues that spark new ideas for programmes and stories.

What about those who are not leaders?

We don't only want to rely on leaders for our stories. This is also where connectors and catalysts come in. They can be the ones to help us link to a wider range of ordinary people. We can ask them to use their connections and links in the community to help us find the right person to interview for a story, or bring into the studio as a guest.

EXERCISE: IDENTIFYING THE LEADERS

Identify at least 5 people in your community who fall into each category of leader. Go back to the chart of levels and dimensions of community life. Can you find leaders in each dimension? Don't forget leaders from the different social groups too, such as women, the elderly, the youth, the disabled, and so on. If you look back at your map, and your list of community places, where are these leaders? If you think about the people you usually contact for programmes, does this expand your list of people

to contact? Where can we go, or who can we speak to, to get more names for our lists?

EXERCISE: "TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER"

Make an appointment with at least one person from each of the groups below, and ask them the kinds of questions listed below. You will use the information you gather to build your community resource map. This is not for a programme, but as part of the map-building exercise, to build up a resource of knowledge about your community.

Official and Civic Leaders: Here are some questions you could use. You may want to change them or add others. Right now this conversation is so you can build up better background on the community for your map, but you could also use this idea to ask similar questions about a story topic you want to cover.

- *How would you describe this community/town/area? How has it changed over the years? What are the differences/similarities with other communities/areas? How do you feel about these?*
- *Who do you turn to when you want to learn about how people think and feel about this community/area? Do you consult ordinary people or leaders? When you ask other people for information about this area, what do ask them?*
- *What do you hear people talking about when it comes to this community/area? What is most important to them, what do they seem to hold valuable? Why do you think this is?*
- *What could we as programme makers learn from the people and places you have mentioned?*

Connectors and Catalysts: Here are some questions you could use. Again, you might want to change them or add to them. Bear in mind that this group is very important in linking you with ordinary people that you could talk to. In this category, you might want to interview a church minister, a teacher, a barman, a hairdresser, etc. Right now this conversation is so you can build up better background on the community for your map, but you could also use this idea to ask similar questions about a story topic you want to cover.

- *How would you describe this community/town/area? How has it changed over the years? What are the differences/similarities with other communities/areas? How do you feel about these?*
- *Who do you turn to when you want to learn about how people think and feel about this community/area? Do you consult ordinary people or leaders? When you ask other people for information about this area, what do ask them?*
- *Where do you go to talk to these people? Can you name some specific places? Why do you like these places?*
- *What do you hear people talking about when it comes to this community/area? What is most important to them, what do they seem to hold valuable? Why do you think this is?*
- *What are some of the top things or issues that people are worried about, or interested in, that you hear people discussing?*
- *What could we as programme makers learn from the people and places you have mentioned?*

EXERCISE: COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

It is a good idea to regularly have a structured conversation with members of the community, to find out what they are thinking, what they feel about the station, what ideas they have for issues and stories to cover, what their values are and so on. It is important to get input like this from ordinary members of the community who are not in leadership positions or official office.

- Organise to hold the meeting at the station or at someone's house, or in a library or similar space.
- Invite 8-12 members of the community, or area of the community. Make sure your participants are representative of those who live there - have a mix of men and women, old and young, different professions and so on. You don't want a larger group as you want people to be able to talk in detail, and everybody to have time to speak.
- Reassure everybody that you would like them to participate and feel free to speak. Tell them this is not for broadcast, but is a discussion to help keep the station in tune with the community. They are free to disagree with each other, and to say anything they like.
- You can have such meetings to find out about the community in general, or about a specific topic that you are doing a story on.

Here are some samples of questions you could pose to the group. Make sure you have someone who is writing down what people say or recording it for future reference. You don't want to be shoving microphones in people's faces though, as this might interfere with the flow of discussion. If you want to tape the discussion put a single mic somewhere unobtrusive. Tell people you are recording it, but not for broadcast, only so you have a record of what they said.

Thinking of this community, how do you think of it? How would you describe your community? How has it changed over the years? What are the main issues and problems this community is dealing with right now? Do you see any similarities or differences with other communities? Who has the power in this community? Who always gets heard, and who gets forgotten? Is the community united or divided?

What are people saying when it comes to this community? What are peoples' values, what is most important to them and to you? What are your and other people's main worries, concerns and issues? What are people's hopes and aspirations in this community? What do you hear people talking about the most?

Where do you hear people talking about these things? Where are these places? How would you describe them?

If there were no radio, TV or newspaper, how would you find out what is going on in this community? Who would you go to for information?

If someone wanted to know who the real leaders are in this community how would they find out? Who do you see as the leaders in this community?

What do you think we as station members could learn from the people and places you mentioned? How else do you think we could understand the community better?

What do you expect from us in reporting news, or in our programming? What role do you see us playing in the community? What issues would you like us to report on or discuss? What would you like our programmes to focus on?

NATIVE VOICES: OFFICIALS AND FAMILIES

Native Voices is a newspaper that is making waves in the American Indian community in the United States. There are a handful of other newspapers serving this community, but Frank King, who is in his 30's, decided to try publishing a paper that really linked in with Native American cultural values. The new newspaper is much more visually appealing than the older ones, and it mixes more conventional news stories with articles that make use of the Native American oral history tradition. For example, feature interviews are presented in question-answer form, so that the readers can get the interviewee's direct words, while many articles try to remind readers of traditional values and customs through the use of stories that have been handed down from generation to generation. The paper has four sections: Native Voices, The Women's Voice, Voice of the Youth and The Elders' Voice, to give every part of Indian society a direct say and input into the paper. King knows that his community is faced with many problems, such as unemployment, poverty and youth suicide, and he believes it is vital that people reconnect with their traditional culture. But he is no stickler for tradition who wants to deny the modern world. For example, he recognises that many elements of traditional Indian culture are discriminatory against women, and through the pages of his newspaper he talks about the need for Native American culture to evolve and grow to stay in line with current concepts of human rights. "All tribes have to evolve," he says, "we can't keep laws from the 1800's which violate the civil rights of women."

King believes that only those journalists who really understand the dynamics of the Native American community will be able to understand where the real leaders are and be able to truly stay in touch with community life. "There are two kinds of politics – tribal politics, and family politics," he says. The tribal politics refers to the official leaders who are elected to govern the reservations, but "the family politics is more powerful." The more powerful family political world is hidden to outsiders though – hence the importance of being closely connected to the community.

Where are the true currents of power and leadership in your community, and how can you stay in touch with them, to make sure your reporting is really getting to the heart of things?

EXERCISE: BUILDING YOUR MAP

We have done a lot of hard work trying to understand the levels and leaders of our community, and where to find ordinary people to interview. We have also gathered a good deal of information. Now it is time to

actually start making your community map. The important thing is for everybody to work together on the one map that will be a resource for your station. You might want to make copies of it for everyone later on, but everyone should have the same map and be able to contribute to it.

The first task is to decide on the overall form your map will take, and later on you can allocate sections to individual people or groups if you like

Do you want a map in the form of a big chart for the wall? How will you do this? What equipment and material do you need? Where will you put it when it's done?

Do you want a map in the form of a file, which contains charts and details in various sections?

Do you want a map in the form of a computer document that everybody can access? Do you have the expertise and equipment to do this?

MAP MAKING TIPS

Bear in mind these tips for building your map:

- **Make it to the point.** Don't get buried in detail. Get to the point, make it easy to use.
- **Make it easy to update.** The community changes all the time, and so should your map. How will you make it so that you can accommodate changes? You will see that after we have worked through the next two sections, you will have more material you will want to add, for example.
- **Make it layered.** You might want several levels of maps - one that paints a very broad, brief overview, and sub-maps that go into more detail on certain aspects. For example, you might want a physical map of the layout of the community with the names of key places or levels at the right spot. You could have sub-sections in the form of charts of the leaders and issues you have identified (we will work on issues more in the next section).
- **Make it easy to use.** The map should be a helpful resource in guiding you where and how to find community stories.

EXERCISE: FRAMING STORIES

1. Read the news story that is handed out to you, and then make a list of all the stakeholders- everyone who is either directly or indirectly affected by the story.
2. Using coloured pens or markers, identify those stakeholders that share common interests.
3. Now, group the stakeholders with similar coloured marks next to them, into categories.
4. Try to find a name for each category. For each group, ask yourself: "If these stakeholders interests were to come under a general heading, what would it be?"
5. Think of each heading as a frame through which you can view this story. Taking each heading in turn, work out: What questions would you ask about this story? What would your major concerns be? What solutions might you propose?
6. How could you cover this issue in a programme, in a way that brings in some of these different perspectives?
7. Repeat this exercise, but this time instead of a newspaper story, use a burning issue in your community as a starting point.

EXERCISE: PLANNING THE PROGRAMME

As a group decide on an important issue for your station to focus on, and spend time applying this framework to that issue. Apply elements of the community map too in helping you decide who to include in the programme, where to get more information, what is important to people, and so on.

For each programme, prepare a chart like the one below. Use separate pages so that you can take as much space as you like for each section.

Programme Planning Chart

1. Name of issue:

(What exactly is the issue here? Is there a problem? What is the problem? Why is it a problem? What are its origins?)

2. Who to include:

(Who are the actors in this issue? Who are the stakeholders? What are the networks of people, organisations and institutions that are connected to this problem? Who is speaking and who is silent when it comes to this issue. Do we need to include those who are silent, and help them to speak? How? How have we been viewing the participants in our programme. Are there any stereotypes that we must watch out for?)

Actors:

Observers:

Stakeholders:

Who is silent?:

Stereotypes to avoid:

3. Framing the issue:

(What are the concerns of all those involved. Can we chunk these into 3 or 4 perspectives from which to view this issue? What are the pros and cons to each perspective?)

Perspective 1:

Perspective 2:

Perspective 3:

Perspective 4:

Others?

4. Positioning:

(How can we cover this issue in a way that positions our listeners as powerful, active and responsible, instead of powerless, passive, and dependent? How can we position them as citizens?)

Where are our listeners positioned in this story:

How do we position listeners as active citizens in this story:

5. Action:

What courses of action are open to citizens on this issue?

What possibilities can we point out?

What links can we make to other issues of importance to our listeners?

Appendix D: Radio KC Community Map

Drakenstein Municipality: Key Statistics

Population:	122 000 Coloured 31 120 White 29 000 Black 3 341 'Other' 462 Indian
Literacy:	Around 131 000 or over 2 thirds of residents have not reached matric level. Of these, over 20 000 have had no education at all, while 59 000 have finished primary school.
Employment:	Just under 13 000 people over 15 are unemployed. Just over 65 000 are employed.
Land use:	By far the most land in Drakenstein municipal area is used for agriculture.
Age:	Over two thirds of residents are under 34. The largest single age group is youth between 0-19. The elderly make up under 5% of the population.
Income:	Just under 40% of households in the municipal area earn under R18 000 a year (that's under R1500 a month).
Electricity/ Water:	Most households do get municipal electricity (35 000 out of 42114), water (30 775), and flush toilets (36 048).
Telephone:	Just under half (50%) of households have a phone at home.
Housing:	Most households live in formal housing, with just under 7 000 households living in informal or traditional housing.

General comments from Radio KC listeners

(These comments were gathered during various research visits to parts of the Radio KC community during October and November 2002, and during a focus group discussion with four Radio KC listeners at the station on Tuesday 26 November 2002.)

Generally the people the researchers spoke to were very excited about Radio KC. Specific programmes that were often mentioned favourably by people we spoke to, were "Thetha" with Rebecca Moahloli, "Levona's World", "Rapping Donkey", Donna and Frolicks, and the News (bear in mind that it was the presenters of some of the programmes that were doing the interviews -- and that could have meant that these names were at the top of respondents' minds.)

It became very clear during our research visits that the reception of Radio KC's signal varies quite considerably, probably because of the mountains in the region. Many people in places fairly near to Paarl, such as Klapmuts and Franschhoek said that part of the community can pick up the station, and part can't. In Saron, almost nobody could receive the station, and most of those people who heard it, listened when they visited other areas.

Language was also a big issue that listeners pointed out. A number of listeners turn the station on and off, depending on what language is being spoken during a specific programme. But Xhosa-speaking listeners also strongly support those programmes where it is spoken. It might be a good idea for KC to try to mix languages within all programmes (perhaps by having multiple presenters) so that listeners are encouraged stay tuned.

The people they spoke to felt that KC plays a very positive role in the community, helping promote racial understanding, and informing them on important issues. However, it was pointed out that the presenters and producers should not assume that hot political issues are hot issues for the listeners. Many of the issues that listeners care passionately about are more directly related to their lives - such as conflicts over land, jobs and resources for example, or issues facing local church congregations.

We also heard that some listeners hate missing their favourite programmes, because they are at work or out. This means that Radio KC can perhaps consider repeating very popular programmes at different

times – either recording and repeating them in full, or re-broadcasting edited versions.

Nov 26 Focus group

Focus group participants:

Listeners:

Mrs Valencia Fell (from Belhar 952-0158)
Thapelo Moahloli (from Mbekweni, 072-376-7243)
Andiswa Zweni (from Mbekweni, 083-520-8160; 868-2546 w)
Xolani Mvula (joined in later, from Mbekweni, 868-2866)

Radio KC:

Rebecca Moahloli
Donna Godfrey
Georgette Frolicks
Sonwabile Dwangu
Levona

How do you feel about the community?

All felt that it is a friendly community. Valencia felt that the station is friendly too. She has been a listener since the start. She feels 'at home here.' Thapelo and Andiswa also like Paarl and Radio KC. They particularly like Khululeka, Rebecca's programme: "You must know yourself, and speak freely". Rebecca said both at the station and in Paarl, black, white and coloured are together, and it wasn't like that before. She feels that Radio KC is changing Paarl.

Where do people go to find out what's going on?

Generally to friends. The name of Nellie Johnson came up as someone who's well connected in Mbekweni. She's a community worker, and a granny. Xolani Mvula is also someone who's seen as well connected, and a catalyst. (He arrived later to be part of the group.)

What are the concerns in the community, what do people talk about?

- There's controversy over the way that funerals have become fashion parades.
- In Belhar, people complain about smokkelhuise (shebeens) and drugs. It's a particular worry for parents during the school and end of year holidays.
- Inflation and food prices.
- Elderly people being neglected by their own children.
- HIV/Aids.
- House breaking, car theft.
- Farm murders and attacks (Important, since Paarl is an agricultural area).
- Gay people experiencing problems.
- Whites who feel superior. All participants talked about racism when shopping in white-run shops.
- Politicians who don't deliver.

Any Ideas for Programme topics?

- Women's health issues
- Poverty
- HIV and child rapes
- Bring back children's programmes during the afternoon.
- Guidance for young people - how to choose a career, study options etc.
- Helping people with entrepreneurship, learning self-reliance.
- Community work.
- Telling people about alternatives to crime.
- Refugees and xenophobia.
- Prejudice against people from the Eastern Cape.
- Issue of Dube houses in Mbekweni - a divisive issue over who has access to these houses.

What are your favourite programmes?

- Levona's World.
- Donna and Frolicks.
- Oordenking.
- News.

- Thetha is a favourite among isiXhosa speakers.
- "Please bring back Vernon Jacobs' programme *Liefde vir 'n Leefyd*."

Why do so few callers call in to talk shows?

One problem might be the language - if there's an English presenter, Afrikaans speakers might be afraid of calling. It also depends on the time of the programme - some people are at work during the day, for example, so can't call in, even if they're interested in the topic. Xolani pointed out that often we think that because we are discussing burning political issues, people will be interested. But he says most people are NOT interested in politics, but that other things get them hot under the collar. Therefore it's important to continuously do research about what is bothering and concerning people.

IDEA: Integrate a variety of languages into programmes, particularly talk shows, so that listeners who don't understand the language that's on at a specific time, don't need to turn off.

IDEA: When people call in for request shows (versoekies) ask callers 3 research questions before putting them on air. It's an easy way to continuously gain information about listeners, and can be used to update resources like this file.

When and how do people listen to Radio KC?

Generally in the home. Valencia listens from 6am to 2am the next day. The others generally listen in the afternoon (possibly because that's when the isiXhosa programme is on).

All the participants feel that KC is '*their*' radio station. They say that when they listen, they don't feel alone. 'If I listen to presenters like Sonwabile and Donna and I hear them giggling I know something's going on and I start giggling myself.'

Hulle praat my taal

Radio KC 'feels vibey, groovy.'

Their friends and family also all listen to KC.

According to Valencia, not all in Belhar get the station. She prefers KC to other stations because she feels more free to call in and get advice. "Hulle praat my taal", and RSG is too verkramp. For isiXhosa speakers, Umhlobo Wenene is still a powerful rival, but if KC could have more isiXhosa, people would prefer it. 'It could be more juicy' than Umhlobo Wenene.

According to Donna, many whites generally get home and have a drink or put on TV after work, rather than switching on the radio. The others felt that in their communities, TV is not a big rival to radio. 'If you put on the TV you have to concentrate. With radio you can do other things.'

Some feel the Indaba current affairs programme does not have enough local news, especially from the Mbekweni side.

Xolani feels the station needs to publicise itself more, and get out into the community more, do more programming in the field, and not so much in the studio. He feels there's a need for more voxpops, and a need to engage more people. He suggested a programme summit, involving the community.

'Have a programme summit involving the community'

Paarl Central

Main business and shopping area, where most of Paarl's formal institutions and resources are. It's the place in Paarl where members of the diverse communities encounter each other and rub shoulders. Home to Radio KC studios.

Main issues:

- Hawkers
- Safety and Security
- Customer service
- Racism
- Tourism
- Muggers
- Parking
- Dominance of whites.
- Split between above and below main road.

Main places:

- City Hall/Civic Centre
- Shopping Mall
- Churches
- Post Office
- Municipal Buildings
- Hospitals
- Schools
- Court houses
- Library
- Museums
- Pubs and nightclubs

Main leaders:

- Mayor:** Herman Bailey (NNP)
- Deputy Mayor:** Anthea Sheldon (ANC)
- Speaker:** Killian Cekiso (ANC)
- Councillors:** Koos Louw (DAP)
- Traffic Chief:** Japie Cornelissen
- Paarl Land Claims Committee:** John Martin (chairperson), Moutie Richards (secretary).
- Selwyn Sterling** (works at Westermans and knows all the gossip)

Paarl Central: Detailed Description:

Paarl Central is the commercial hub of quite a large agricultural district, which is also rich in actual and potential tourism. It is also home to the offices and meeting places of the Drakenstein Municipality. There is quite a lot of focus at the moment on upgrading the Paarl CBD. Those behind the moves seem to want to follow the example of Cape Town, emphasising the need for the area to be friendly to investors, foreign tourists, and consumers with money to spend. The Paarl Professional Association has engaged retail architect Jannie Meyer, to design an upgrade for the CBD. Meyer has been quoted in the *Paarl Post* as saying that the CBD is like a shopping mall without a roof - all it needs is to be upgraded and made consumer friendly by developing its existing squares. However, there are problems with this idea, because it seems that those behind the upgrade want to remove street people and vendors. Some people worry that 'upgrading' the CBS means 'sanitising' it, and making it unfriendly to the poor.

Following the recent Floor Crossing process, the Drakenstein Municipality changed hands from DA control, to control by the ANC/NNP alliance. A new mayor (Herman Bailey of the NNP), deputy mayor (Anthea Sheldon of the ANC) and speaker (Killian Cekiso of the ANC) were appointed.

There is also a new executive committee, consisting of 5 ANC members, 4 NNP members and one member of the DA. The members of the executive committee are: ANC: Appollis Solomons, Anthea Sheldon, Charlotte Stemela, Ndodomzi Mkabile and Sikhumbuzo Mgajo; NNP: Deon Swarts, André de Villiers, Bokkie Claasen and Bernardo Maralack; and DA: Koos Louw. (DA). Bailey chairs the committee.

There are also the following new committees within the council: Finance; Social Services; Planning and the Environment; Social and Economic Development; Economic Services and Public Works; Safety and Security; Human Resource Development; and Corporate Services.

There are 8 new representatives on the Boland District Council. They are: ANC: Harlan Cloete, Matty Paulsen, Boniswa Sihuba and Appollis Solomons; NNP: JT Basson and Chris Leander; and DA: Marion Julius and Johan von Wielligh.

Story ideas/Issues in Paarl Central

- Tourism and job creation
- Car guards in the central parking area - who owns the company and how does it operate?
- Aftermath of floor crossing - what does it mean for hard-won community projects?
- Keeping the city centre alive - is it an issue?
- Cars vs people - who is winning the battle for space
- Paarl has a wealth of history, tourist sites and museums - who uses them? Do members of disadvantaged communities know about/use what is available? How are they treated when they go to these places? Are institutions directed towards their needs/interests?
- Hawkers and street people - plans to copy Cape Town and crack down on the poor. How does KC deal with this issue?
- Christmas shopping ideas, based on what hawkers are selling.
- Land claims issues.

Saron

Isolated rural community on the outskirts of Radio KC's footprint

<u>Main issues:</u>	Jobs Young people at risk Bucket toilets
<u>Main places:</u>	Post Office Advieskantoor Church and Church halls
<u>Main leaders:</u>	Councillor: Matty Paulsen (ANC) Advice Office: Freek Du Toit Post Office: Oswald Solomon Teacher: Edwin van Biljoen

Saron: Detailed Description:

Saron is on the outskirts of the Radio KC signal area. Some parts get a signal but most people say they can't receive the station well. One of the people we spoke to said it would be good if they could get better signal and the station could get involved in the community.

Saron's population is about 7000. They are all coloured except for about 10 white families, who are more on the farms, though. There is a big problem with unemployment - those who do have work, must travel, and a lot of work is seasonal. Many men are absent for long periods because of this. A lot of money goes on travel to and from work.

Adults say the youth are very "losbandig". There is a big need for information about HIV/Aids and other issues linked to sexuality. The young people don't really have anywhere to party, but often use church halls for gatherings.

Councillor Matty Paulsen of Drakenstein Municipality (and Boland District Council) is very involved, but says since it's an outlying area local government doesn't really pay much attention. They should be getting a new police station in 2003. For the first time, they have a part with a few swings. When it comes to hygiene, many people still have the bucket toilet system, and they would like to get flush toilets. They also need agricultural development, and sports facilities: there is one rugby field and a pool already. Through the Advieskantoor, the community has applied for R1 million from the Lotto.

The church plays a big part in community life.

There is petty crime, such as stock theft, but community leaders say the police don't investigate. They have complained to the Independent Complaints Directorate.

Issues/Story ideas in Saron

- Jobs
- Youth
 - Hiv/Aids
 - Entertainment
- Toilets (Sanitation issue seems important for many communities around Paarl area)
- Development - do outlying areas like Saron get forgotten in Drakenstein development plans?
- Agricultural programming
- Farm workers' rights and other issues related to this
- Church related issues

Mbekweni

Township which is home to most of Paarl's isiXhosa speaking residents.

Main issues:

Crime
Jobs
Houses (and conflict over certain housing issues - Dube houses.
Issues between those born in region and migrants from E Cape.

Main places:

Taxi Rank
Library
Marketplace
Community Hall
Desmond Tutu High School

Leaders:

Nellie Johnson (K block, tel: 862 4723)
Makina Philmon Maxam (U113 Mbekweni 073-264-3959; 868-3481) involved in: Khanya Christian Movement, ADP World Vision, Mbekweni ADF Choristers, Mighty Stars Gospel Group.
Xolani Mvula (strong connector, involved in health and other community work, 868-2866)
Julius Allah: Principal, Desmond Tutu High School

Mbekweni: Detailed Description:

(Based on feedback from Makina Philmon Maxam, a leader from Khanyisa Christian Movement)

There is some feeling that crime has really affected the Mbekweni community over the years, transforming it from a safe and peaceful environment to one where people have to worry a lot about safety and security. Parents are also very worried about their children being drawn into drugs and criminality. There is a feeling that the criminal justice system is not performing well enough, and in some cases, people are inclined to take the law into their own hands. This feeling, and feeling in support of the death penalty, is very strong when it comes to the rapes and killings of children and infants.

The community hall, library and churches are central places for organised activities in Mbekweni. There is a need for more facilities for the youth, to keep them occupied constructively in activities like sport and indoor games.

There are some projects to help people grow their own food crops. There is quite a bit of unhappiness about the performance of municipal councillors. Sanitation and toilets are a problem, and there is also conflict over housing. This issue, and the issue of jobs, also raises tensions between people originally from the area, and migrants from the Eastern Cape and elsewhere. There are also some strong feelings around African refugees. Many people see them as bringing crime into the area, and accuse them of organising marriages with young girls in order to get residence permits. However, others point out that refugees should be treated better, as many African countries hosted South Africans in exile during apartheid.

Issues/Story Ideas in Mbekweni

- Jobs
- Child rapes
- Community development projects such as training in planting and ploughing own crops under the organisation A.D.P. working with World Vision.
- Housing
- Sanitation
- Migrants - those from other parts of the country, and from other countries
- Land claims issues
- Vigilantes and community courts
- Need for radio programmes on career guidance, entrepreneurship, self-upliftment, etc.
- Gays and lesbians

Klapmuts

Semi-rural area 15 km from Paarl. Many people living there have migrated from other parts of the country. Klapmuts falls under Stellenbosch municipality.

Main issues:

Domestic violence
Police station across the railway and inaccessible
Mandela city informal settlement - toilets.
Health problems from toilets and pigs.
Jobs
Illiteracy

Main places:

Ablution block in Mandela City.
Police station.
General stores.
Church
Trauma centre

Main leaders:

Zolile Dayimani (community secretary in Mandela City)
Klapmuts policing forum
NGOs like Women on Farms and Women Against Violence in Stellenbosch.
Sarah Fabriek - stays in caravan near school. Works with pregnant women.
Sharon - prepared to help Radio KC with research (072-120-6032).

Klapmuts: Detailed Description:

Klapmuts is 15km away from Paarl and is mainly a rural area. The town Klapmuts falls under the Stellenbosch municipality. The population is largely coloured, and most of these residents seem to live in small RDP-type houses. The black population seems to be limited to the informal settlement Mandela city. Here about 800 people live in some 53 shacks. It has been there for about two years. Mandela City has a community committee under the leadership of Zolile Dayimani.

Mandela City experiences a number of problems, including lack of proper water and sanitation services, no access to electricity, unemployment, health problems, and illiteracy. The residents of this area all share an ablution block consisting of 3 or 4 toilets and a basin. There are no doors on the toilet cubicles, and the place is filthy. Adding to the health problems, there is a huge population of pigs just behind the settlement.

There is not a huge crime problem, but things get worse on weekends, as the result of drinking at taverns and shebeens. The police say domestic violence is one of the biggest problems, but that it's difficult to intervene, as people treat it as a private matter. Many of the men work on farms or other distant sites, so are away during the week. There seems to be some conflict over sexual relationships between the unemployed men and the wives of the men who are away at work - especially when these relationships cross colour lines.

Klapmuts has a police station, but for residents who don't have transport or phones, it is rather inaccessible as it is on the outskirts, across the railway line. But there is a local policing forum, as well as a trauma centre, which works with NGOs such as the Women on Farms project and other women's organisations.

It seems that many people in Klapmuts are very excited about Radio KC, although not everybody can pick it up.

Issues/Story ideas in Klapmuts

- Domestic violence.
- Mandela City - sanitation and health focus.
- Problems around access to the police station - interview people.
- Are there any community self-development projects?
- Speak to Women on Farms about the work they're doing there.
- HIV/Aids and migrant/farm labour.

Spookytown

Poor area about 10km to the North West of Paarl, with various phases of RDP housing, and some shack settlements. Sub-areas include Green Valley, Greenfields, Milkytown and Fairyland (which is the most undeveloped).

Main issues:

Jobs
Good news on housing
Services the next issue
Children, schools, and childcare

Main places:

Communal cooking area in Fairyland
Streets in Milkytown, with interesting names
Rainbow Creche in Milkytown
Spaza shops
Container meeting place in Greenfields

Main leaders:

Electrical contractor: Richrad Claasen
Hester and Marthinus Olivier in Greenfield (connectors)
Elizabeth Michaels, Oliviers, among first with houses.
Esther Hartzenberg in Milkytown.

Spookytown: Detailed Description:

Various phases of RDP houses, the most recent being Green Valley and Greenfields. People moved in at the beginning of October. When the team visited Greenfields on the 22nd October 02, electricity was not yet in, but the street lights were expected to be on by month end and pre-paid electricity boxes were to be installed in houses during November. Three contractors were each allocated 200 houses for installation of electricity. There is a positive atmosphere as many people have waited between 8-15 years for their own home, so they're happy to be finally realising their dreams. No baths or showers in the homes, but there is space to install them when the owners can afford it. The only water supply is to a single basin in the kitchen area. The houses are open-plan and most people use the bottom section of the L-shaped room as their bedroom. Pensioners don't pay rates; others pay R1000.00 a year. The houses are on reasonable sized plots, allowing for a small garden and future extensions. Many houses have wooden shacks on the property for extra accommodation. Generally, houses are well kept, and a sense of pride prevails. Roads are tarred, and Milkytown streets have imaginative names like Limelight, Sunmaid, Cocktail, Limelight, Granada, Nkuleleko and Rainbow's End. A container is used for meetings regarding unfinished or problem areas in the houses, but there is not yet an official community representative. There are a couple of spaza shops. Children mostly go to school in Mbekweni, and some young ones attend the "Rainbow Creche" at a cost of R60 per month. Unemployment is high.

Things are not so good in Fairyland. The people are still rather cut off from Paarl, and still living in shacks. They have no electricity, and there's only one tap for 200 families. The community prepares food on fires in huge pots outside their shacks. There are communal toilets.

People:

Elizabeth Michaels: (Greenfields) She married Louis, a municipal worker in the parks department in 1990. Three months after they married, they applied for a house at the Paarl municipality. Now, 12 years later, they finally have a home, and are independent for the first time. Over the years, they had always had to share accommodation with others.

Hester Olivier (Greenfields) She's been married to Marthinus for 15 years, and they too are in their own house for the very first time.
Esther Hartzenberg (Milkytown) moved in three years ago.

Issues/Story ideas in Spookytown

- Good news stories on housing. Interview people about finally getting a house.
- Follow up on electricity and water delivery - is it happening on schedule?
- Focus on Fairyland - what's being done to help them?
- Fairyland feature - colour programme on "dinnertime in fairyland".
- Community organisation and meetings - do people meet in the local 'container'? Follow up on election of a community representative.
- Children/youth - are there issues around having to travel to Mbekweni to go to school?
- Rainbow Creche - is there a small business story there?

Other Areas

Pniel:

Pniel is at the foot of Simonsberg, on route between Stellenbosch and Franschhoek via the Helshoogte Pass. Pniel Info Office: 885 1500 (on the Main Road running through Pniel, on the Franschhoek side of Helshoogte Pass (R310).

Douglas Petersen works at the Post Office in Pniel, and enjoys Radio KC. Some parts of Pniel pick up Radio KC, while others don't. Petersen said not many people have watches, so they'd like more time checks on Radio KC.

Simondium:

Lea (874-1674) is a wife and mother with disabilities in Simondium. She lives with her mother, Anna, a pensioner. Her son studied nursing at the army base in Pretoria. She has been living for 20 years in a house without electricity, water or a bathroom. The people there must still carry water in buckets, and make food on gas stoves. Toilets are outside. There is a squatters camp nearby.

Alcohol is a big problem with many of the families living in shacks. Many people in the area listen to Radio KC, and they have great respect for the Radio KC presenters.

Franschhoek:

Many of the poor people in Franschhoek live in wooden houses - "wendy houses". They do have water and electricity in these houses. All the people she talked to listen to Radio KC, except for one particular area. According to Levona, people in the part of Franschhoek that don't get KC, phone the others to find out what's been happening on the radio. The Bosbou area of Franschhoek does get reception.

One woman said that her husband loves Levona's show in the mornings, but that he's off at work - so she records the programme for him and he listens to it at night.

