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Social capital, civil society, and good governance: civic traditions in Johannesburg's shack settlements and Greater Pietermaritzburg's villages under chiefly rule

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE SCENE

Introduction:

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the relationship between social capital-civil society and good governance-economic development in the rural, peri-urban and urban South African context. Various writers on "social capital" have suggested that in communities which feature high levels of interpersonal trust, which is where people of different backgrounds talk, socialise with their neighbours, and share norms that support openness and compromise, we are also more likely to observe better local government and higher levels of economic development (Widner and Mundt 1998). On top of that, we will experience more participation in public affairs and elections. However, though the evidence for such correlation is quite well established, uncertainty persists about the causal relationship between social capital and good government. Moreover, the nature of the social ties and values that promote good citizenship and responsive authority appear to vary according to context.

According to Wall et al. (1998: 315) much of the research on social capital to date has emphasised quantitative assessment. The study of Italian districts by Robert Putnam is a case in point and another extensive study, which was heavily influenced by Putnam was exploratory research done by Widner and Mundt (1998) on local government in Botswana and Uganda. The quality of relationships among the individuals involved in associational activities has been neglected. On the one hand, Putnam and his followers assumed that all trusting relationships result from horizontal or egalitarian kinds of association. While on the other hand, Putnam's critics such as Levi (1996) have suggested that certain kinds of vertical relationships may facilitate trust,

reciprocity, and certainly coordination. In this study I want to test this proposition. More generally this research is motivated by a methodological preference for qualitative as opposed to quantitative research methodology and an awareness of the need to address the urban bias found in many studies in this discourse (Civil Society, Social Capital, Development, and Democracy).

Limited evidence so far, suggests that these rural, peri-urban, and urban communities seem to present dynamics that point towards a particular kind of public sphere that is forever negotiated. The research method that is employed in this study is direct observation of these patterns as they unfold both in the urban and the rural sphere and interviews with government officials working in these environments. My case studies in the urban setting are the shack settlements of Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, i.e. Freedom Park and Kliptown, both in the south-west of Johannesburg. While in areas under chiefly rule, my case studies are Sweetwaters, north of Pietermaritzburg, which is a peri-urban village about 10-15 kilometres from the central business district (CBD), and two neighbouring rural villages of Manyavu and KwaXimba, about 35-40 kilometres south-east of Pietermaritzburg CBD. The peri-urban and rural villages have a longer history than the Johannesburg case studies and offer a perspective on areas under traditional leadership and an insight into whether social capital can be cultivated and produced in peasant societies. One of the main reasons for bringing peasant societies into this study is because it is often assumed that these societies are not capable of producing social capital as understood in the mainstream literature. However, previous studies on social capital have failed to account for variations that take place at local government level, especially in peri-urban and rural villages. The shack settlements, or rather informal settlements as defined in official government documents, have been under-researched in South Africa due to the conception that they are settlements in transition. We often hear government, especially the Department of Housing

which has since been renamed Department of Human Settlements setting up targets, for example, that shack settlements will be eradicated by 2014 (Tshikotshi 2009: 1). However, this seems to be a very ambitious target and the sense one gets is that they are here to stay, especially in the short to medium term. Therefore, a study into whether these settlements have an independent civil society that could produce social capital leading to good governance would seem a legitimate exercise, seeing that they are now part and parcel of life in South Africa and cannot be wished away.

Research Questions and Hypotheses:

From the current debates on social capital, the following questions arise which the next six chapters of this study will attempt to answer: How is social capital identifiable? Is its production exclusively confined to horizontally structured forms of associational life? Can peasant societies generate social capital? Do social capital networks accentuate divisions within communities between those who have access to authority and those without? Can political institutions play a role in producing social capital or does the enlargement of state authority take place at the expense of the associational networks which do produce social capital? And what kind of organisations in rural settings can best bridge sectional concerns and promote wider communities of trust? Can traditional existing political institutions be adapted to modern democratic requirements? Through these questions I will be in a position to test and explore the following hypotheses. Firstly, I will argue that there is a relationship between civil society and social capital that leads to good governance, economic and democratic development. Secondly, I will argue that positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income. I will now tackle these questions one by one.

First, how is social capital identifiable? According to Widner and Mundt (1998: 2) "Social capital is unobservable and multidimensional. It has many components." These components include "trust, frequency of social contact, the extent and form of perceived obligations to invest or co-operate, norms that accord prestige or status to people who generate and share information, etc. (Widner and Mundt 1998: 2)." This is in line with the definitions of the leading proponents of the concept of social capital such as Coleman, Lin, Putnam, and Woolcock, who all agree that social capital is a product of civil society, which means social capital is located within associations both voluntary and non-voluntary, micro and macro, local and national, as well as rural and urban. Social capital enables people to act collectively and minimises transaction costs. My interest in this thesis, will therefore be in the associational activities that residents of the selected case studies participate in and the benefits they derive from such associations. I will demonstrate that membership of voluntary associations is not always open to all members of a specific community, but that members are often carefully selected on the basis of a number of criteria such as referrals, kinship, status, class, gender, and so forth. Social capital is not tangible but is a product of the social interaction comprising civil society. It is not quantifiable and can only be assessed via an analysis of trust, frequency of contact, multiplicity of membership in local and national associations, and so forth. Concepts of bridging versus bonding social capital will be introduced as well.

Second, one of the enduring questions in the social capital literature has been whether social capital can be produced by vertically structured associations or if it is the exclusive preserve of horizontally structured associations. As stated earlier, Putnam and his followers believe that social capital is exclusively produced by horizontally structured associational activity. However, other scholars have challenged this assertion, claiming that vertically structured associations, such as churches, for instance, could also produce social capital. In his later writings, Putnam has tended to acknowledge this fact and

evidence coming out of this thesis will show that this is a complex question and that the production of social capital goes beyond whether associations are structured horizontal or vertical. Although it could possibly be a hybrid of the two, I will stress that horizontal structured associations are more likely to produce positive social capital than their vertical counterparts. It is hoped that evidence from this thesis will go a long way into providing answers to this question (i.e. the horizontal/vertical question).

Third, can peasant societies generate social capital? Some studies have often suggested that since there is no free public sphere in peasant communities, they are therefore incapable of producing social capital. However, evidence coming out of this thesis will demonstrate that this will depend on a number of factors, with one being access to independent sources of income. In the rural and peri-urban case studies chosen for the purposes of this study, it will be shown that these communities are capable of producing social capital and that there is a free public space that is forever negotiated.

Fourth, do social capital networks accentuate divisions within communities between those who have access to authority and those without? For example, Skidmore argues that,

> "Much of the existing literature examines absolute levels of social capital, whether the focus is on the society as a whole or a particular community. This ignores the fact that relative levels of associationalism can differ significantly among groups within a given society or community. Such disparities in organisational capacity among sometimes competing social groups can have enormous distributional consequences." (2001: 70)

This thesis will challenge the generally accepted convention in the social capital debate that membership of voluntary associations must be open to all for it to have positive distributional consequences. This is acknowledged by Skidmore but only late in his article. I will argue, using evidence coming out of the field, that while some of the voluntary associations identified are exclusive, some of their benefits often accrue even to those who are not members of these associations; for example, when infrastructure is built (such as roads and schools). Evidence that will be presented in this thesis will thus demonstrate that some of the benefits accrue not only to members, which means they "are generalised and non-excludable, tending to spill-over beyond the producers themselves (Skidmore 2001: 68)."

Fifth, can political institutions play a role in producing social capital or does the enlargement of state authority take place at the expense of the associational networks which produce social capital? In the literature review section, it will be shown that there are different schools of thought when it comes to this issue, which can be defined as statists and non-statists (or neo-liberal). A third approach is also introduced, which holds that neither the state nor the market is good for civil society. This thesis will demonstrate that state intervention has both positive and negative consequences in the creation of social capital. Drawing on evidence from the four case studies chosen; for example, Water Committees are a classic instance of how state created structures could both 'tap' into local social capital while at the same assisting in its creation. However, the state's role also depends on the particular context, for instance, it will be shown in subsequent chapters, that some developers appointed by the state were actually detrimental to local associations and contributed to their weakening. While other developers or community facilitators contracted by the state played a critical role in strengthening local associations and by extension the production of social capital.

Finally, I will look at what kind of organisations in rural settings can best bridge sectional concerns and promote wider communities of trust, i.e. can traditional existing political institutions be adapted to modern democratic requirements? One of the observations made by a senior government official in the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department for Traditional and Local Government Affairs (DTLGA) was that some traditional leaders had the ability of bringing large numbers of people to gatherings in a way that modern structures of political parties and local councillors cannot. They seem to have that legitimacy, which the DTLGA and other government institutions working in these areas have been able to exploit. Some of the approaches followed by traditional leaders are more in tune with the way that traditional societies operate, such as mediating in community disputes instead of dispensing retributive justice. This approach is more compatible with the needs of civil society and closes the gap between those with access to resources and those who do not have access to resources. In the South African case, one often finds in rural and peri-urban settings the same type of associations one finds in urban settings, such as burial societies, football clubs, *stokvels* and so forth. For example traditional dance groups, which this thesis did not study in detail but which can produce social capital and be adapted to modern needs. As will be demonstrated in the chapters to follow, associations that thrive in urban settings have the ability to thrive in rural and peri-urban settings too, exposing the dichotomy between the two as often very misleading.

Methodology and Data Collection Techniques:

In order to gather evidence for this thesis and provide possible answers to the questions I have posed above, I employed various data collection methods both primary and secondary, which included the following: individual and group interviews, attending public meetings, focus groups, direct

observations, research surveys (conducted by a third party), secondary literature, and local newspapers. Most of the interviews took place over a long period of time, in some instances they were supplemented by telephonic interviews to get clarity on some of the issues arising from the field.

Selection of Interviewees:

I selected those informants known to have an overview of the activities of the communities I wished to study. I then asked those informants to identify other informants who were representative of or active in, the 'community.' I used chain sampling to achieve these objectives. As stated earlier, most of the informants were interviewed a number of times, and I used information from the previous informants to elicit clarification and deeper responses. The selection of informants was not solely based on my personal judgement but more on identifications made by the first interviewees. In Freedom Park, for instance, the entry point was the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco), which then led to interviews with the Development Committee; the Member of the Mayoral Committee, the Developer contracted by the municipality, the Councillor, the local African National Congress (ANC) leaders, and local church leaders. In Kliptown, the entry point was the focus group discussions where the names of local leaders came up. In Sweetwaters, I had deeper knowledge about those who had participated in local associations. However, with regard to the new structures such as Water Committees, I relied on family members and neighbours who identified those who were active in these committees. In the Manyavu/KwaXimba case study, the starting point was the Umgeni Water Board where my initial interest was on Water Committees. It was during interviews with the staff (fieldworkers and community facilitators) of Umgeni that the village case study was discovered and where it transpired that, although these villages (Manyavu/KwaXimba) were separated only by a road and had access to almost equitable resources, they were governed differently. I then linked up with the KwaZulu-Natal Department for Local Government and Traditional

Affairs (DTLGA), where officials assisted me in accessing the area, especially Manyavu. DTLGA was responsible for building traditional courts in both areas, and therefore had interacted with various stakeholders in the aforementioned villages, including the traditional leaders of both. Manyavu was also accessed through teachers at one of the primary schools in the area who then identified key informants in the village, while also proving to be useful informants themselves.

Fieldwork Questions:

In the Kliptown case studies, my fieldwork was guided by the following questions: What is the election turnout? Who are the leaders of dominant political parties in the area? Do they have background in labour unions? Who are the leaders of Sanco? Their names and background? Do they have background in union activism? Are they retrenched workers? Who are the leaders of the Community Policing Forum (CPF)? Their names and background? Is the R 2500/2700 payment for those on the housing list regular? If so, who is supposed to pay it? Who constitutes the Greater Kliptown Development Forum (GKDF)? What is the relationship between different associations in Kliptown? What are the most challenging issues in Kliptown? Do people in Kliptown cooperate with leaders? If not, what do you think is the reason for non-cooperation? If they do, what do you think is the reason for cooperation? These questions were directed at key leaders in Kliptown and were formulated on the basis of the information that came out of the focus group discussions conducted in Kliptown. They were aimed at assessing this information, which came from ordinary residents of Kliptown, especially those residing in shack settlements.

Fieldwork in Kliptown was heavily influenced by the data that was already coming out of the Freedom Park case study. Therefore, the above questions were influenced both by the focus groups conducted in Kliptown as well as data that was already coming out of Freedom Park. Fieldwork in Kliptown

was more targeted whereas in Freedom Park, I allowed each conversation to develop differently. I was first introduced to the Freedom Park case study where I spent a significant amount of time with leaders of Sanco and the Development Committee. I attended meetings that were usually convened during the week or weekends, sometimes the evening. I also showed up in meetings unannounced, which gave me an insight to how the leaders of dominant associations behaved in the absence of outsiders. I also attended some of the meetings that leaders of Sanco had with the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, as well as the South African Council of Churches (SACC), which assisted Sanco in putting pressure on local government and in ensuring that they are listened to. I often validated information solicited from Sanco through follow-ups with the Development Committee, the local Catholic Church, the developers (Urban Dynamics) as well as officials within the Council, including the political leadership; viz. the Member of the Mayoral Committee responsible for housing. This research strategy was also employed to validate information solicited from the Development Committee: here interviews with their main adversary, i.e. Sanco and other structures mentioned above.

The informants that were chosen both in Freedom Park and Kliptown were often representative enough to give a good sense of local dynamics. In the few cases where I received information whose validity couldn't be verified, it is clearly identified as such. There were instances where the informants wanted to paddle some rumours but, as a researcher, I was able check the information accordingly. My familiarity with the cases under consideration helped me a great deal in that respect, informing my judgement when judgement was needed.

In the peri-urban and rural case studies of Sweetwaters and Manyavu/KwaXimba, I also had a set of questions that guided my research in those areas, although the approach was more flexible as I allowed the

conversations to develop spontaneously, while probing with follow-up questions. Where I sensed that there was some resistance, I usually rephrased my questions, or waited for another opportunity during follow-up engagements. These are some of the questions that I posed to the interviewees: Do leaders respond to community needs? Do your local leaders get things done? What is it that you think the local government does better? How long have you been in this area? How many new people are coming into your area? How many people have left your area? Do you trust your leaders? Do you believe that they are still relevant in this day and age? Do you feel obliged to cooperate with them when they call meetings? Do you belong to any community organisation? If so, how many? What do you think is lacking in this community for it to work efficiently? Have you attended any Water Committee meetings? Do you happen to know anyone who belongs to these? Do you think they are serving the needs of the community? Will you cooperate with Water Committees? Will you cooperate with the Development Committee, Sanco, CPF, and the local Councillor? How long have you been a leader in your community? Not all these questions were asked in my case studies as the focus tended to be on those already active in their communities, while others were rephrased when put to those in power, such as Councillors and local leaders who were expected to deliver on government services. Limitations of time and resources meant that future research will have to concern itself with ordinary residents.

Freedom Park and Sweetwaters Group Interviews:

Group interviews conducted in the two areas above were less formal compared to focus groups that were conducted in Kliptown. They were conducted by the author as part of the research for this thesis and between seven and eight residents of Freedom Park and Sweetwaters participated in the conversation. The purpose of these group interviews was to get clarity on some of the testimonies coming out of the research I had already conducted in those areas; i.e. to validate information.

Supplementary Bodies of Evidence: Kliptown Survey and Focus Groups:

Survey by Urban-Econ Consortium:

The socio-economic survey employed in the Kliptown case study, was conducted by the Urban-Econ Consortium (UEC) during October and November 2002 on behalf of the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), a state-owned development agency reporting to the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. According to the UEC, the purpose of the survey was to provide base information for the development of Greater Kliptown. In particular, JDA sought to determine the economic status of the residents of Kliptown and the impact associated with its involvement in the area. The study covered all 16 residential areas of Kliptown, which, as the UEC argues, were grouped into nine residential areas due to the size of the sample and for the purpose of socio-economic analysis. The residential areas were grouped as follows: Angola/Johnston Stop, Chris Hani, Fred Clark, Freedom Charter Square, Mandela View-Valentine Village, Kliptown Market-Ngubane-Kliptown old houses-Tamatievlei-Geeland Vaalkamers, Winnie Camp-Race Course, Klipspruit Ext 2, and Eldorado Park Ext 10.

UEC conducted 650 surveys in the aforementioned residential areas of Kliptown. The surveys sought information on the following subject areas: the composition of the household or family; the numbers related to age and gender; the type of dwelling unit; the number of dwellings and households per stand; ownership of dwelling – private or rental; basic services related to households such as water, sewerage and electricity; employment and unemployment figures; monthly income of each person in the household; income; expenditure and savings of households; reasons for moving to Kliptown and the time period living there; future housing alternatives in terms of preferable choice and affordability; retail information on shopping complexes and entertainment in the area; and general comments on the Greater Kliptown Development Project and the opportunities in the area.

In order to provide an indication of the results for the entire Kliptown study area, UEC applied the weighting method[1] to the nine residential areas based on the number of households.

This research survey provided a good base to validate views that came from Kliptown residents who participated in the focus group discussions, as well as interviews conducted by the author in Kliptown. I was unable to find any extensive and detailed documentary evidence in any of the other case studies which could complement my fieldwork. However, I have shown how validation was undertaken in other settings, including Kliptown itself. On the Kliptown case study I have had more documentary evidence than the other case studies due to the fact that Kliptown has been identified as one of the flagship shack settlements and residential areas in the Gauteng province. More resources have been dedicated to revitalising the area due in some part to the fact that Kliptown is where the Freedom Charter was signed, and there is thus a national and international focus on the area.

Kliptown Focus Groups:

There were four focus groups that were conducted in Kliptown. These were then divided into four categories as follows: Employed Women; Unemployed Women; Employed Men; and Unemployed Men. Each focus group had between 10 and 15 participants. Employed participants took part in the focus groups over the weekend as their availability was likely to be a challenge during the week, while the focus groups with unemployed residents were conducted during the week. The unemployed category also involved those who were informally employed, i.e. those in temporary employment as well as street traders. The main motivating factor behind separating men and women was to minimise the possibility of power dynamics playing

[1] For a more detailed explanation of the research method, especially on how the respondents were selected, a detailed report, a full report is available on the JDA Website (www.jda.org.za)

themselves out where men could possibly dominate women in the discussions. The research consultancy that conducted the focus groups was given an array of open-ended questions(which were drafted by this author)to ask the participants; however, the facilitators were told to allow conversations to flow without too much interference from the facilitators themselves, other than seeking points of clarity. The focus groups were conducted in languages such as isiZulu and Sesotho, which are the dominant languages in townships and shack dwellings of Johannesburg. The facilitators were conversant in these languages, including English. The focus group had been setup as part of the research that looked into the attitudes – of people who work and/or reside in informal settlements – to leadership and organisation and into whether they claim their rights as citizens, i.e. to vote and demand services from the state. The research was part of the Development Research Centre for the Future at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, United Kingdom, which was funded by the British Department for International Development (DFID). Most of the questions asked were relevant to this thesis, which looks at the role of social capital (which is a product of civic associations) in economic and democratic development. As stated earlier, one of the hypotheses I set out to test was that "positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income." Therefore, information coming of the above focus group is used to test this hypothesis as well as data coming out of Freedom Park, KwaXimba, Manyavu and Sweetwaters.

Chapter Outline:

Chapter one is an introductory chapter that sets the scene by introducing the subject matter. It introduces the research questions and hypotheses that guide this thesis. It unpacks methodology as well as data collection techniques adopted for the purposes of this study. It also explains the introduction of supplementary bodies of evidence and these are: Kliptown Surveys conducted

on behalf of the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) and the Focus Groups conducted on behalf of the Centre for Policy Studies. The chapter outline concludes the first chapter.

Chapter two locates the theory of social capital within civil society. It begins by exploring the social capital-civil society nexus. It then tackles at great length the concept of social capital. Different conceptions of social capital are interrogated and a distinction is made between positive and negative social capital. It is recognised that not all social capital is good, contrary to early proponents of this concept, such as Robert Putnam in his seminal study of social capital in modern Italy published in 1993. It then moves to the concept of civil society, where it draws from Keane's characterisation of civil society as an aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged primarily in a complex of non-state activities – economic and cultural production, voluntary associations and household life and who, in a way, preserve and transform their identities by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions. This characterisation by Keane captures the essence of the chapter to follow. The chapter engages with different meanings of civil society, while tracking its modern roots to Hegel and Marx. The concept did not originate from these philosophers, but they modified it. The role of the state to mediate in civil society is stressed and the role of the market in the emergence of independent civil society is also recognised. The dangers of uncivil society are interrogated. The relationship between social capital and good governance is assessed and some answers to these longstanding academic debates are advanced in the case studies. In this chapter the environment in which civil society/voluntary associations operate in the democratic South Africa is also sketched.

The five case studies (i.e. chapters three, four, five, and six) that are the subject of this investigation do not all follow the same structure. The rationale behind this was that these chapters should complement each other.

Chapter three and four are similar, while chapter five primarily looks at the history of local voluntary associations in a peri-urban case study of Sweetwaters. Chapter six's main focus is on the rural case study of Manyavu/KwaXimba where local associations mirror those found in Sweetwaters. As in chapter three and four, in chapter five and six comparisons are drawn but the primary objective was that these chapters should complement each other.

Chapter three begins by exploring the evolution of a community organisation called the Homeless People's Party formed in the backyard shacks of Soweto and extends to the initial land invasion in Freedom Park. The history of the leaders from the trade union movement is explored, as well as the birth of a protagonist resident's association which later joined a national body. The subsequent struggle between South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) and the Development Committee (Homeless People's Party) is central to the whole chapter. The interaction and the struggles between different civic bodies and their role in the overall governance of the informal settlement of Freedom Park are closely examined.

Chapter four, which is also an urban case study, looks at the individuals who lead local civic organisations and their background in Kliptown, Soweto. I come to the conclusion that leadership in both areas is drawn from retrenched union members and the relatively literate elite; i.e. mainly people with resources. Therefore the question of who organises in these environments is thoroughly investigated. The chapter begins by engaging with the attitudes of local residents to leadership in the area. What transpires is that people in this environment tend to trust national and provincial leaders more than their local leaders, whom they interact with on a daily basis. I examine the belief that local leaders take leadership positions in order to advance their personal interest and enrich themselves.

Chapter five relies on oral history from Sweetwaters' (which falls under the Mpumuza Traditional Authority) residents about the kind of associations that existed in the period before the 1994's democratic elections. It examines in turn different types of voluntary associations. It discusses at great length how these interacted, i.e. the fact that they were organised along clear gender, class, and age lines. I then adduce two phenomena that could be responsible for the dwindling stocks of social capital and the death of vibrant associational activity, viz. political violence and the advent of television. Firstly, the political violence that engulfed KwaZulu-Natal from the late 1980s to the early 1990s and secondly, the advent of television and the withdrawal of residents from public space.

The focus of chapter six is the rural case study of Manyavu/KwaXimba Traditional Authorities. The role of local associations in the development of local infrastructure is acknowledged. In this case study, and the one to follow, fear of outsiders is evident particularly in Manyavu. The scars of political violence were still evident during the fieldwork conducted for the purposes of this thesis. The associations chosen in order to better understand the role of associations in infrastructural development was the Water Committees and the School Governing Bodies (SGB). The section on KwaXimba also uses Water Committees to look at local political dynamics. It looks at the structure of the local Water Committee and how Umgeni Water rated these in terms of success. The role of other voluntary associations in the development of infrastructure and how these associations were responsible for bridging sectarian concerns between Manyavu and KwaXimba through joint sporting ventures to heal the divisions caused by political violence is also analysed.

Chapter seven is an attempt to explain the possible threats to voluntary associations. It looks at the nature of employment in the post-1994 era and its possible impact on associational life. The argument put forward is that the nature of work has changed, that unions have been losing members and that

they now rely heavily on government for membership (i.e. white-collar workers), rather than on factory workers (blue-collar workers) as it was in the past. It shows that the labour movement is now trying to recruit in the growing informal economy where the rules are different from those in the formal or mainstream economy. The employer-employee relationship, it is argued in this chapter, is not clear in the informal settings. It is suggested that in peri-urban and rural areas such as Sweetwaters, Manyavu, and KwaXimba many residents are no longer employed in traditional forms of employment and the question is raised whether this is responsible for weakening of voluntary associations. The Johannesburg case studies are utilised to explain these dynamics, also drawing on my work with informal traders in the Johannesburg inner-city. It is concluded that local leadership dominate these associations and they seem to rely on these associations for income, with the result that they (often) overstay their welcome in civic associations. The chapter concludes by showing the ways in which state activity can engender social capital, even in settings that have been neglected by the market economy.

Chapter eight, which is a concluding chapter summarises the main arguments by addressing the research questions and hypotheses posed in the introductory chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

CIVIL SOCIETY, SOCIAL CAPITAL, AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: A CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction:

This chapter attempts to locate the concept of social capital with the more generally used idea of civil society. It begins by explaining the nexus between social capital and civil society. It is then followed by an attempt to show that social capital has many forms, with some positive while others are negative. I then introduce the concept civil society and I trace the concept's historical roots. It is argued in this chapter that social capital is a product of civil society and that civil society itself produces distinct types of social capital. It then links civil society and its product, social capital, to good governance by dissociating it from the World Bank understandings of good governance, which does not locate the state at the centre. It concludes by looking at the South African legal framework for participation at local government level. This lays the groundwork for the subsequent chapters; arguing that the legal framework in South Africa recognises the role of civil society in economic development and democratic development.

Civil Society – Social Capital Nexus:

Development scholars and practitioners have lamented the lack of an adequate conceptual distinction between social capital and civil society, not just their respective relations to economic development and good governance. The failure in the literature has been conceptually, i.e. to distinguish social capital from its sources. The best place to start is to clearly state that social capital is a product of civil society. If one were to reason by analogy, I would say that, in the same way that human capital is a product of individual human beings, social capital is a product of civil society. Human capital is knowledge is located within one's mind, therefore there is no human capital without an individual human being. The same goes for social capital. Social

capital is a product of civil society. While human capital is located within an individual's subjectivity, social capital is located in relations between individuals in a particular form of association, which we term civil society.

Social capital is represented by such intangible concepts as norms, trust, and values. While one can clearly identify members of civil society and observe them at play, the same cannot be said with regards to social capital. Therefore, in any discussion of social capital, civil society cannot be excluded altogether, whereas the converse cannot be true in terms of civil society. Civil society could be studied and observed outside of social capital. This means that civil society is an independent variable while social capital is a dependent variable. Social capital can only be observed where civil society has been identified. Civic associations can be endowed with varying levels of social capital, even when they have an equal number of participants. The number of members in an association does not translate to the amount of social capital inhered in a particular civic association. In the same way, businesses with an equal number of directors and workers could not be expected to have equal amounts of financial capital; this will depend on the service that a particular business provides. The same goes for social capital, the amount of social capital will depend on what individuals bring with them into an existing social structure. Individuals can be members of other associations at a much more localised level.

It will be demonstrated in the following chapters how certain associations cultivate social capital by deliberately selecting those members who are likely to bring with them resources from other associations where they are members or where they used to be members. Therefore, before we can interrogate the concept of civil society, I begin by examining the concept of social capital. I will also demonstrate how certain types of social capital lead to good governance, economic development, social peace, as well as the creation of human capital.

Social Capital:

Social capital theory represents a developmental discourse, which takes off from the same premises which inform much of the thinking about civil society. For its exponents, social capital is the product of civil society and different civil society associations produces varying amounts of social capital, depending on their structure as well as their members. The concept has become especially influential as a consequence of Robert Putnam's study *Making Democracy Work*, which contrasts, and explains the efficacy of, different regional governments in northern and southern Italy with reference to the local presence and absence of "horizontal structures' of associational life (Putnam 1993). Social networks of this kind, Putnam believes, generate the values (i.e. social capital), which encourage popular engagement with government. These values are self-reinforcing overtime: i.e. social capital is a product of a lengthy historical evolution of civil society associations.

According to Woolcock and Nayaran, "social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively (2000: 226)." They argue that this definition recognizes both bonded social capital as well as the bridging form of social capital while it acknowledges it sources (Woolcock and Nayaran 2000: 226). This definition also acknowledges the sources of social capital.

A number of authors (Lin 2002; Putnam 2000; Coleman 1988, 1990) locate social capital within the broader capital family, which includes human capital and physical capital without being limited to these three. Lin defines capital "as investment of resources with an expected return in the marketplace (2002: 3)." He argues that "the market chosen for analysis may be economic, political, labour, or community (Lin 2002: 19)." Lin believes that individuals engage in interactions and networking in order to produce profits (2002: 19). In this approach, social capital is seen as a social asset by virtue of actors'

connections and access to resources in the network or group of which they are members (Lin 2002: 19). Despite criticisms, in some sociological circles, of Putman's application of the concept as a property of communities rather than that of individuals (see Portes 1998), there is a broad consensus that social capital can also be very usefully seen as a property of collectives; for example, Bourdieu sees social capital as a form of capital possessed by members of a social network or group (1990, 1988). For Lin, therefore, social capital is a collective asset endowing members with credits, and it is maintained and reinforced for its utility when members continue to invest in the relationships (2002: 23).

Coleman argues that "like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible (Coleman 1988: S98)." This idea was captured very well by Karl Marx in *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, *Volume One*, Chapter 13 on the role of cooperation within the capitalist system (Rühle, 1943). Marx argued that the capitalist method of production begins with cooperation where "a large number of workers are aggregated at one time and in one place (Rühle 1943)"; in order to achieve maximum productivity. Marx maintained that "the reason is that man is by very nature, if not (as Aristotle says) a political animal, at any rate a social one…. When a worker cooperates systematically with other workers, he transcends his individual limitations and develops the capabilities that belong to him as a member of a species (Rühle 1943: 335)." Even though Marx does not specifically mention the concept of social capital, the above quotation captures the essence of the latter as a property of collectives; in this instance, individuals, working as a collective, achieve more than if they were to do the same thing but as individuals; cooperation thus maximises the contribution of each individual.

Marx was talking about cooperation within a factory where the product of cooperation, that is, surplus value, accrues to the capitalist; my interest in this

thesis is however, cooperation within civil society where the benefits accrue to the members of the relevant civic association and where the community, as well as the state and market, could also benefit. Relations within civil society are not exploitative as they are egalitarian and voluntary in a way that capital-labour relation is not. Relations in civil society are loosely structured compared, for instance, to relations between the worker and the employer, where the obligations of each participant are clearly specified and defined. Moreover, the employer-employee relationship is not based on egalitarianism whereas relations within voluntary associations are usually based on (a rather 'thick') egalitarianism.

Like physical and human capital, social capital is not completely fungible. Coleman argues that its fungibility may be specific to certain activities (1988; 1990). For example, "a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others (Coleman 1988: S98)." For Lin, human capital, represents investment in training and other programs and activities to acquire skills and knowledge while social capital is an investment in social relationships through which the resources of other actors can be accessed and borrowed (2002: 24).

While Portes accepts the contention that the outcomes of possession of social capital are reducible to economic capital, he believes that the processes that bring about these forms are not (1988: 4). Portes argues that:

> "They each possess their own dynamics, and, relative to economic exchange, they are characterized by less transparency and more uncertainty. For example, transactions involving social capital tend to be characterized by unspecified obligations, uncertain time horizons, and possible violation of reciprocity expectations." (1998: 4)

Whether any structure is a capital depends on whether it serves a function for certain individuals engaged in particular activities (Lin 2002: 23). Lin argues

that “for this reason, social capital is not fungible across individuals and activities (2002: 23). The consensus in the literature is that social capital’s fungibility is limited.

Hyden argues that social capital “refers to the normative values and beliefs that citizens in their everyday dealings share; what Tocqueville referred to as ‘the habits of the heart and mind’ (Hyden 1997: 4).” These habits provide reasons and design criteria for all sorts of rules. Hyden argues that it would be hard to imagine that constitutional arrangements, laws, and regulations would work without being embedded in, and reflecting, particular values and norms (i.e. social capital) upheld by groups and communities making up a given society (Hyden 1997: 4). Civil society therefore is viewed as a forum in which ‘habits of the heart and the mind’ (i.e. social capital) are nurtured and developed.

Intuitively, then, the basic idea of social capital is that a person’s family, friends, and associates, that is, “members of civil society, constitute an important asset, one that can be called on in a crisis, enjoyed for its own sake, and leveraged for material gain (Woolcock and Nayaran 2000: 226).” Therefore, “what is true for individuals, moreover, also holds for groups (Woolcock and Nayaran 2000: 226). This thesis takes on board the approach that sees social capital as a property of collectives, while, at the same time, “acknowledging the essentiality of individuals interacting and networking in developing the payoffs of social capital (Lin 2002: 22).” This perspective, then, allows the exploration of “the elements and the processes in the production and maintenance of collective assets (Lin 2002: 22).”

Woolcock highlights an important issue when he argues that “matters are complicated when social capital is classified as a public good that is, by definition, ‘under-produced’ by society. Social capital in the form of trust, it is argued, is created as a by-product of other collective endeavours, such as

participation in civic associations, but these activities are themselves public goods, and are also identified as social capital, leaving us with problematic conceptual task of distinguishing between "sources of social capital [and] the benefits derived from them (Woolcock 1998: 156)." In simple terms, participation has a value in itself but it is not social capital and should not be confused with social capital.

Social capital is a product of activities such as participation, which produce values and norms that could be termed social capital. Participation in associations can be a once off event, whereas the values produced out of those interactions could outlive participation itself. In the following chapters based on research conducted for the purposes of this thesis, I set out to demonstrate that there is relationship between civil society and social capital which then leads to good governance, economic and democratic development. However, I will demonstrate in detail that positive social capital will be under-produced in societies where there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income.

Production of Social Capital:

There is a consensus in the literature that democratic social capital cannot emerge from activities administered in a nondemocratic fashion (Hemingway 1999: 162). Putnam believes that horizontal networks of social interaction and density of associational life foster norms of reciprocity and trust, decrease incentives for opportunistic behaviour, and serve as models for subsequent collective action (Putnam 1993). According to Hemingway (1999: 162) "Putnam deduces that horizontal structured organizations are more likely to be democratic in character than the vertically structured ones."

Michael Foley and Bob Edwards argue that "it is often assumed that the renewal of civil society and the generation of social capital within it are

accepted uncritically as offering a panacea to contemporary ills and an easy alternative to the partisan political battles that so many regard as incapable of resolving those problems (1997: 550)." Instead, evidence from this thesis suggests that while social capital is definitely not a panacea for all the social ills facing our societies, it can act as a catalyst for better-functioning institutions by producing individuals willing to cooperate for the betterment of their communities. Foley and Edwards are concerned that in the current usage of the concept of social capital "there is a lack of clarity about the meaning of the key term and a failure to appreciate the complexities of the theoretical tradition (1997: 551)." According to Skidmore "neo-liberals fear that high social capital can give rise to rent-seeking coalitions that benefit members at the expense of non-members (2001: 60)." However, he challenges this assertion by arguing that "considerable research suggests that forms of rent seeking involving public officials is less pervasive under democratic as compared with authoritarian regimes (Skidmore 2001: 60);" and this is because democracy allows interests that are harmed by the behaviour of rent-seeking coalitions to organize their counter-coalitions, which then can pressure against rent-seeking public policies (Skidmore 2001: 60-61). Skidmore believes that the introduction of democracy in many countries of the South is more likely to reduce overall levels of rent-seeking behaviour (2001: 61). This point will be interrogated further in the case studies, where I will show that in communities where there is less democratic space, civil society finds it difficult to achieve its goals and governing those areas proves difficult for local authorities.

Summary of the Main Schools of Thought in the Social Capital Debate:

Before continuing with our analysis of the concept of social capital itself, let us pause and quickly survey three important perspectives on civil society and its product, social capital. The first one is the one put forward by Maloney, Smith and Stoker which argues that the Putnam-school approach:

> "Neglects the role played by political structures and institutions in shaping the *context of associational activity* and hence the creation of social capital. Our top-down perspective recognizes that the governance of an area is affected by social capital, but is itself an influence on social capital. Indeed we argue that political institutions have a significant role, at least in helping to sustain civic vibrancy and probably also in stimulating growth (2000: 803)."

Harris and De Renzio argue that what Putnam's critics suggest is not that the 'features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation' are unimportant, but that they are actually very powerfully influenced by political institutions, including state institutions (1997: 928)."

This is called a statist approach, i.e. state-centred explanations, emphasising the synergistic relationship between the civil society and the state. Within this school there is a belief that the state can actually play a positive role in creating social capital thereby strengthening civil society. Its exponents argue that political institutions have a significant role, at least in helping to sustain civic vibrancy and probably also in stimulating growth (Maloney et al. 2000: 803)." In this approach political institutions matter a lot, without the right institutions in place civil society won't flourish. There is a belief within this approach that, "a well functioning democracy depends not only on social relations but also on political institutions and on a constitutional order that structures the relationships between them (Whittington 1998: 22)." In the case of South Africa, the right political institutions, such as the National Parliament, Provincial Legislatures, Council Chambers, and Ward Committees are already in place, supported by a liberal Constitution. The constitutional order that guides all these structures is in place. This opens a world of opportunities for civil society and this thesis seeks to test whether civic society associations are flourishing under this environment.

According to Tocqueville, voluntary associations were necessary for the successful resolution of common problems, because other possible providers of public service were missing or exceedingly weak in nineteenth century America (1969: 54). "Voluntary associations emerged from this context of weakness and compensated for the underdeveloped political and social institutions of a democratic society (Whittington 1998: 23)." Social capital, according to this understanding, "was compensatory for the deficiencies in a democratic society, arising from otherwise unmet social needs (Whittington 1998: 23)." This was especially so in areas classified as belonging to black people during the Apartheid era.

One of the major criticisms of Putnam's analysis is that he wants to discover a link between a strong civil society and a strong state, while, Tocqueville saw voluntary associations multiplying as a result of a democratic social condition and state weakness (Whittington 1998), a point clearly articulated in the Sweetwaters case study on Chapter four, where the non-responsiveness of the Apartheid state led to the sprawling of a number of self-help bodies, which have weakened since the advent of a democratic government in 1994. Civil society associations were very vibrant in the 1980s at the height of repression as demonstrated in the Sweetwater case study. A welfare state might thus pose serious threat to civil society in terms of its inner organisation and its ability to produce social capital.

Another perspective, i.e. the cultural perspective, sees too much involvement of the state as a threat to the creation of social capital. The state and civil society are seen as mutually exclusive. A bottom-up approach sees civil society organizations as central to economic development and by implication to democratic development (Putnam, 1993 and 1995; Fukuyama, 1995). For writers such as William Schambra, for example, dismantling the welfare state will not necessarily spawn new forms of voluntary support groups, which

welfare programs and 'national community" ideologies have allegedly eroded or 'crowded out' (Woolcock 1998: 157)."

Conservatives such as Fukuyama locate the source of social capital within 'culture,' arguing that while "the state can destroy sources of social capital (e.g. the church in Soviet Russia) it is inherently ill-suited to promoting them since, by his reckoning, the level of state intervention in the economy is inversely proportional to a society's endowment of social capital (Woolcock 1998: 157)." According to this view a society's stock of social capital – assuming that more is indeed better – is thus enhanced by minimizing state influence. This factor will be demonstrated strongly in the Sweetwaters case study. The absence of the state or neglect by the state and the traditional leadership meant that people in Sweetwaters had to organise themselves into groups that contributed to the infrastructural development of the area. It was an attempt to fill the gap left by the state.

Can social capital be created by deliberate government policies? Nonstatists insist that it cannot. Since for them governments impede the optimal functioning of both markets and social networks, it is inherently inimical to the growth of social capital. "Statists by contrast, believe that social capital needs formal institutions to flourish and that careful planning can create social capital capable of reshaping its local context (Petro 2001: 229)."

The third school, i.e. the neoliberal perspective, argues that the role of social capital is overestimated, especially its contribution to economic development. The emphasis is placed on the supremacy of the market (Kentworthy 1997). Kentworthy argues that "Putnam is right to emphasize the value of cooperative economic behaviour, but he overstates the contribution of civic activism and social capital to both cooperation and economic success (Kentworthy 1997: 645)." Within this school there is a view that not everything is positive about social capital, as its proponents suggest. As

Portes and Landolt point out, “social capital also has a ‘downside’ in that strong, long-standing civic groups may stifle macroeconomic growth by securing a disproportionate share of national resources or inhibiting individual economic advancement by placing heavy personal obligations on members that prevent them from participating in broader social networks (Woolcock 1998: 158).” That is, it works against social capital, as well as less investment in ‘weak’ ties. This criticism reminds us of negative social capital that can be used by certain members of civil society to further their narrow interests. This is where the issue of institutions comes into the picture, because with strong institutions in place this could be minimized. Ensuring that everyone has a voice in the public sphere will help minimize this problem.

The Relationship between Micro-Level and Macro-Level Associations:

Minkoff, like Tocqueville and Putnam, believes that “voluntary associations such as churches, social clubs, choral societies, and other forms of civic engagement are integrative mechanisms that bridge particularistic concerns and involve citizens in networks of social interactions around common activities and presumably shared goals (1997: 609).” According to Minkoff, “these forms of participation promote the formation of social capital (1997: 609).” For instance, local level associations that provide face-to-face interactions can act as a resource for national social movement organizations – drawing on existing social capital (Minkoff 1997: 612). She protests that there is a tendency to dismiss national-level social movements organizations (SMOs) as not capable of generating social capital, as most proponents of social capital believe that it is best created by those organizations that promote face-to-face interaction (Foley and Edwards 1997: 558).

In contrast to the tendency to dismiss such organizational activity, Minkoff argues that;

> "National SMOs play a critical role in civil society and in the production of social capital by providing an infrastructure for collective action, facilitating the development of mediated collective identities that link otherwise marginalized members of society, and shaping public discourse and debate (1997: 615).

Minkoff agrees that "national mobilization is difficult, if not impossible, to sustain without a corresponding investment in community infrastructures and institutions (1997: 616)." Since "face-to-face interactions, local institution, and embedded social relations are understood to promote integration, participation, and some degree of concern for one's neighbours (Minkoff 1997: 615)."

Traditional Institutions in the Production of Social Capital:

According to Hyden, "one issue that has attracted attention in the development literature is how far traditional institutions can form the basis for the growth of civil society (1997: 13)" and the production of social capital, by implication good governance and economic development. In their far-reaching review of the role of local organizations in development, "Esman and Uphoff (1984) found that they often play a positive role; for example, the Naam movement in Burkina Faso grew out of existing institutions among the Mossi people (Hyden 1997: 13)." In order "for the new institutions to be sustainable they need to be made compatible with existing institutions and norms as much as possible (Hyden 1997: 13)." The question should be how we are going to adapt local traditions to democratic norms, rather than eradicating the traditions, which is not sustainable. Historically institutions and traditions that were destroyed from above only to come back when conditions change, except those cases where radical social change was instigated from below, with the French revolution being the best example in this case. Traditional ways of organizing may also serve as a model for new associations and production of social capital; for example, the rural trade unions in Bolivia (see Hyden 1997).

It is apparent from the above literature on civil society that it puts most emphasis on its organized forms, such as social movements and labour unions. Other spheres of associational life, that are normally locally based, have not received enough attention. While conventional notions of social capital production may have limited applicability and sense in Africa, well-cohered institutions outside the state provide people with greater confidence in their ability to determine and affect those instruments of power and control that shape their lives, and enable people to know precisely what to do to exert some sense of influence, to make their voices heard (Simone, 1995: 81). Few of the studies cited above have focused on the internal workings of organizations in a localized and qualitative manner, which is what is aimed at in this thesis.

Negative consequences of social capital:

The current literature on social capital emphasises its positive consequences (Portes 1998: 15). Portes argues that this is because of "our sociological bias to see good things emerging out of sociability; bad things are more commonly associated with the behaviour of *homo economicus* (Portes 1998: 15)." For him, similar instruments, appropriable by individuals and groups as social capital, can have different, sometimes less desirable, consequences. Putnam adds that, "if there is one enduring lesson from the early social capital debates, it is that we cannot assume that social capital is everywhere and always a good thing (2002: 8)." He argues that even though, "the term 'social capital' has felicitous ring to it, we must take care to consider its underlying vices, or even just the chance that virtuous forms can have unintended consequences that are not socially desirable (Putnam 2002: 8-9)." However, the fact that social capital can have negative externalities does not distinguish it from other forms of capital (Putnam 200: 9). For example, "A nuclear power plant represents a massive investment in physical capital, even though

radioactive leakage might mean that its net value is negative (Putnam 2002: 9)."

According to Portes, "recent studies have identified at least four negative consequences of social capital: exclusion of outsiders, excessive claims on group members, restrictions on individual freedoms, and downward levelling of norms (1998: 15)." He argues that "the same strong ties that bring benefits to members of a group commonly enable it to bar others from access (see; Portes 1998: 15)." Not everybody can be a member of these groups; some benefits are not always accruable to non-members. The second harmful effect of social capital is the obverse of the first because group or community closure may, under certain circumstances, prevent the success of business initiatives by their members (Portes 1998: 15). For example, "cosy intergroup relations of the kind found in highly solidaristic communities can give rise to gigantic free-riding problem, as less diligent members enforce on the more successful all kinds of demands backed by a shared normative structure (Portes 1998: 16)."

Putnam suggests that what we need in fact is an understanding of the purposes and effects of social capital (2002: 9). For example, networks and norms, that is social capital, might benefit those who belong to the detriment of those who do not. Since some associations may "have the contradictory effect; they threaten social cohesion, erode social capital, frustrate social equality and equal opportunity, and violate individual rights (Tamir 1998: 215)." What emerges clearly from the literature on social capital is that "social capital might be prevalent among those groups of people who are already advantaged, thereby widening political and economic inequalities between groups and others who are poor in social capital (Putnam 2002: 9)." The Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) legislation in South Africa is a case in point, where some have argued that those who had already benefited from the policy should be barred from benefiting again. This led to the

addition of the qualifier “broad-based” in the BEE legislation, where benefits were extended to ordinary workers and other beneficiaries who had not benefited before.

Portes argues that “community or group participation might create demands for conformity (Portes 1998: 16).” For example, in a small village, all neighbours know each other and one can often get supplies on credit at the corner store. Such a case is quoted in chapter five, where the community of Sweetwaters is under study. It shows how this form of social capital was destroyed by the political violence which engulfed Sweetwaters between 1986 and 1995. Portes argues that in such environments the levels of social control are extremely strong and also restrictive of personal freedoms, which is the reason why the young and the more independent-minded tend to leave such places and relocate elsewhere so they can regain some of the lost personal freedoms (1998: 16).

Finally, under certain circumstances group solidarity is cemented by a common experience of hardship and opposition to mainstream society (Portes 1998: 17). “In such cases, individuals who succeed tend to undermine group cohesion because the latter is precisely grounded on the alleged impossibility of such occurrences and this results in downward levelling norms that operate to keep members of a persecuted group in place and force the more ambitious to escape from it as soon as they get an opportunity to improve their lives (Portes 1998: 17).” The point here is that not all associations necessarily promote internal democracy (Hyden 1997: 16); they may also be places in which authoritarian values are nurtured. In short, Hyden argues, “civil society can undercut democracy if its associations pursue values that go against tolerance and respect for others (Hyden 1997: 16).”

Positive social capital – striking a balance:

There is a broad consensus within the social capital debate that not all civil society associations can produce the kind of social capital that is needed for democratic governance, as demonstrated above. Our task is to identify the environment under which the social capital needed for economic development could be nurtured. It has been argued in the development literature that there must be a combination of social capital elements for it to be positive for development. Coleman (1990) and Bourdieu (1986) see dense or closed networks as the means by which collective capital can be maintained and reproduction of the group can be achieved (Lin 2002: 23). According to Portes, "closure means the existence of sufficient ties between a certain number of people to guarantee the observance of norms (1998: 6)."

For example, Putnam's work on participation in voluntary organizations in democracies such as the United States reflects the use of this perspective (Lin 2002: 23). Coleman sees network closure as a distinct advantage of social capital, because it is closure that maintains and advances trust, norms, authority, and so on (Coleman 1990). He insists on "the importance of closure of social networks for the emergence of norms (i.e. social capital). Closure is also important if trust (i.e. social capital) is to reach a level that is warranted by the trustworthiness of the potential trustees (Coleman 1990: 318)." These solidifying forces may ensure that network resources (i.e. social capital) can be mobilized (Lin 2002: 27). Coleman argues that, "closure of the social structure is important not only for the existence of effective norms but also for another form of social capital: the trustworthiness of social structures that allows the proliferation of obligations and expectations (Coleman 1988: S107)." However, "in a structure without closure, it can be effectively sanctioned, if at all, only by the person to whom the obligation is owed (Coleman 1988: S107)." Coleman believes that closure creates trustworthiness in a social structure (Coleman 1988: S107)."

However, Lin argues that, “the requirement for network density or closure for the utility of social capital is not necessary or realistic (2002: 27).” Since to make a case that closure or density is a requirement for social capital is to deny the significance of bridges or weaker ties (Lin 2002: 27). It would be safe to say that closed networks are useful for the privileged classes, so that resources can be preserved or reproduced, or for a mother to move to a more cohesive society so that her children’s security and safety can be assured (Lin 2002). But closed networks could also be good for poor people at the initial stages of any form of voluntary association; in order to strengthen bonds between individuals within these groups. For example, “when one is looking for a job or a better job, accessing and extending bridges in the network should be more useful (Lin 2002: 27).” Research by Granovetter in social networks has stressed the importance of bridges in networks and in facilitating information flows. What emerges from the above analysis is that too much of any type of social capital can be negative for the continued production of positive social capital.

There are various approaches that could be employed to assess the existence of social capital. This thesis will draw upon Michael Woolcock, Mark Granovetter, as well as Robert D. Putnam.

At a micro level, Woolcock refers to embeddedness (i.e., intra-community ties) as Integrating, and autonomy (i.e., extra-community networks) as Linkage (Woolcock 1998: 168). In the cases that are the subject of this thesis, local associations in KwaXimba and Manyavu will be referred to as intra-community ties [Integration]; for example, *stokvels* and parent-teachers associations (PTAs). On the other hand, the involvement of Umgeni Water Board and the formation of Water Committees (WCs) will be referred to as extra-community networks [Linkage]. The latter relationships are at the macro level, while the former at the micro level. Micro level can be equated to bottom-up processes that emerge from within the communities, without

necessarily getting help from outside. Whereas macro-level linkages would be referred to as top-down relations, as these relationships involve extra-community actors. According to Woolcock, "The idea of linkages comes from Simmel, who early recognized that poor communities needed to generate social ties extending beyond their primordial groups if long-term development outcomes were to be achieved (1998: 168)."

On the other hand, "… integration constitute an important source of social capital, enabling participants to provide one another with a range of services and resources ranging from job referrals, gardening, equipment, and kitchen supplies to property surveillance, commuter transport, and child minding (Woolcock 1998: 171)." Woolcock argues that the more intensive the social ties and generalized trust within a given community, the higher its "endowment" with this form of social capital (1998: 171).

The second approach, favoured by Robert Putnam, (and introduced late in his work) is that which emphasizes bonding and bridging social capital. He argues that, "of all the dimensions along which forms of social capital vary, perhaps the most important is the distinction between *bridging* (or inclusive) and *bonding* (or exclusive) (Putnam 2000: 22)."[2] According to Putnam, "some forms of social capital are, by choice or necessity, inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous groups (2000: 22)." This roughly explains the bonding kind of social capital. Ethnic fraternal organizations, church-based women's reading groups, and exclusive country clubs are but some of the examples of bonding social capital. While examples of bridging social capital include civil rights movement, many youth service groups, and ecumenical religious organizations (Putnam 2000: 22). Most of these have their specific uses but it is suggested that a combination of the two

[2] Putnam credits Ross Gittell and Avis Vidal, C*ommunity Organizing: Building Social Capital as a Development Strategy* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1998), with this point.

is good for economic development, as well as democratic development by facilitating good governance.

The third dimension preceded the two and was coined by economic sociologist Mark Granovetter. He first articulated a closely related distinction between "strong ties" and "weak ties" (Granovetter 1973). Strong ties are defined in terms of the frequency of contacts and closedness (see; Putnam 2000). It is argued that weak ties may be better for knitting a society together and for building broad norms of generalized reciprocity. On the other hand, strong ties might be better for other purposes, such as social mobilization and social insurance. But as stated earlier, there are few studies that deal with the question of the negative consequences of social capital: an issue highlighted by Portes and Putnam. The main focus has been on positive social capital; that is starting to change however. Woolcock argues that, "there are both costs and benefits associated with a given 'source' of social capital; long-term benefits, if and when they occur, are the result of the combinations whose relative importance will in all likelihood shift over time as the tasks required of them to change (1998: 185)." For this to take place, "definitions of social capital should focus primarily on its sources rather than its consequences (Woolcock 1998: 185)." This is a task that this thesis hopes to achieve through empirical research in both rural and urban settings in South Africa. It will also attempt to go a step further and examine whether or not different sources of social capital can be linked with the governance of the areas studied.

Robert Putnam seems persuasive when he argues that:

> "As a practical matter, most groups blend bridging and bonding, but the blends differ: They may include people of different socio-economic classes but the same ethnicity or religion (many fraternal organizations fit here), or they may include people of different races but mostly or exclusively the same gender …" (2000: 12)

This argument is also true of linkages vis-à-vis integration, as well as weak ties vis-à-vis strong ties – thus, the question becomes the degree to which blending takes place. These three approaches to understanding social capital will help us in making a conceptual distinction between that social capital which encourages good governance and that which might be bad for economic development. This thesis argues that social capital can be found in any community and our task, therefore, is to identify positive social capital where and when we see it. However, one cannot discuss social capital without delving into its source, i.e. civil society. It is therefore opportune to introduce this concept.

Civil Society:

I think it is appropriate at this stage to bring in the concept of civil society, which as I have argued is responsible for producing social capital. In trying to achieve the goal of defining civil society, I will bring to the fore two scholars who I believe captures my understanding of the concept of civil society, John Keane and Yael Tamir. Their definitions of civil society capture the understanding of the concept which will guide this research. According to Keane civil society can be defined as "the aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged primarily in a complex of non-state activities – economic and cultural production, voluntary associations and household life and who in this way preserve and transform their identity by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions (2001: 14)." For Tamir, civil society[3] "covers any kind of formalized, non-governmental, human interaction, from cooperation among the tenants of one house to the international network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs); from loose organizations such as Oxfam, whose members do not interact with each other and have no more than occasional mail contact with the association's offices; to churches and neighbourhood associations, whose members are engaged in

[3] However, Tamir argues that he prefers the term "civic associations".

daily, face-to-face interactions (1998: 216).” But in the South African context there are other interests that are neither part of the state nor that of civil society. In this instance, the institutions of traditional leadership operate independently of the central state but outside civil society (Friedman 2003: 20). Amtaika in his fieldwork in the Vulindlela Tribal District in the greater Pietermaritzburg observed that the “Chiefs are part of a wider system of administration, but at the same time, they also claim to represent their communities (2002: 365). To put it succinctly, they are part of the state while members of civil society (which they claim to represent) at the same time (Amtaika 2002: 365). This point is argued very convincingly by Joel S. Migdal with regard to the modern state. He argues that, “States have been unable to transform societies sufficiently so as to solve the paradox of being simultaneously apart from society and a part of society (Migdal 1997: 231). This is more apparent in the case of traditional leadership in South Africa. A crises is exacerbated in the case of traditional leaders as they control a structure that was not fully developed and which now has to act within the democratic state.

As Hyden notes, “The rule of law, implicit in the notion of a rational-legal structure of authority, is particularly important for the emergence of civil society (1997: 5).” He argues that it is in such circumstances that civil society is most likely to serve as a constructive oppositional sphere, facilitating the inclusion of interests into the public realm. The concept of civil society was closely related to the ‘commonwealth’ or ‘political society’ in English political thought in the 16th and 17th centuries. It underwent some modification with Hegel’s distinction between the state and civil society (Sachikonye 1995: 2). Marx transformed Hegel’s distinction between the state and civil society by denying the universality of the state and charging that the state expressed the structure of civil society and its class relations (Wood 1990: 61). While James Madison saw the associations we call civil society as factions that are united and actuated by some common impulse

…adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community (1961: 57).

> "For Marx (1977), similarly, civil society – that is, modern, bourgeois society, freed of the restraints and imposed harmonies of the feudal era – is characterized by 'egoistic' competition, of which the endlessly multiplying religious sects of the North Americans were one outward manifestation, a cultural reflex of a much deeper and more pernicious social reality. Democracy has brought political emancipation, but left individuals free to compete in subordinating one another to their selfish interests. The rights of property, freedom of commerce, the growing dominance of capital, are at once the foundations of civil society and implicitly at loggerheads with the high moral purposes and legal universalism of the democratic state." (Foley and Edwards 1997: 556)

This, the universalism and neutrality of the modern democratic state, are consequently little more than imaginary (Foley and Edwards 1997: 556). Foley and Edwards (1997) argue, however, and correctly, against the strong Marxist thesis, that political systems differ widely in their ability to hear and respond to social claims—in their responsiveness and their accountability**.** Tamir believes that the role of the state should be to prevent the harmful effects of associational life and that it needs to be a liberal democratic welfare state (1998: 216). He argues that such a state, "must provide a safety net ensuring individuals that they will not be unprotected even if they exercise their right to exit the associations with which they are affiliated (Tamir 1998: 216)." He also argues for the non-intervention approach by the state in civil society and puts forward a number of reasons against state intervention. One being that, "if the state – or, more exactly, the government—is given the right to decide which associations are the 'right' sort, it is likely to endorse those associations that support its own interpretations, values, and policies (Tamir 1998: 224)." Since such approach embodies an "undeserving democratic presumption and an unfounded assumption that democratic governments can

withstand the temptation to abuse state power (Tamir 1998: 225).” An open constitutional state can guide against this tendency.

Neither Madison nor Marx imagined civil society resolving the conflicts at its heart on its own; on the contrary, it was a task of a worthy system of government, in Madison’s eyes, to “monitor” the competition of factions without suppressing them (Foley and Edwards 1997: 556). Habermas believed that “basic constitutional guarantees alone, of course, cannot preserve the public sphere and civil society from deformations (1996: 369).” He argued that the structures of the public sphere must instead be kept open by an active civil society (Habermas 1996: 369).

What has become clear in current debates on civil society is that there is a consensus that it (civil society) helps mobilize resources in ways that the state alone is unable to do. Hyden asserts that, “development benefits from the freedoms that civil society provides because people can take initiatives they would not otherwise do (1997: 12).” Another important role that is played by civil society is that of socializing individuals in a democratic route. An active civil society is a necessary, although not adequate, condition for democracy (Hyden 1997: 13).

Habermas in *Between Facts and Norms*, contends that the “sphere of civil society has been rediscovered …in wholly new historically constellations (2001: 366).” It can no longer be identified with the ‘bourgeois society’ of the liberal tradition, which Hegel identifies with market system involving labour and commodity exchange (Welton 2001: 5). Most theorists of civil society argue that the concept no longer includes the ‘economy’. Thus Skidmore in his article, *Civil Society, Social Capital and Economic Development*, maintains that this approach makes sense because it allows us to explore the relationship among the state, the market and civil society in economic development. It can also be justified on the grounds that “each of these three

realms of social life is based upon a different central ordering principle: the state is built upon coercion, the market upon competition and civil society upon voluntary and egalitarian co-operation (Skidmore 2001: 55)."

The point that markets are not necessarily superior to democracies is recognized by even one of the strongest proponents of the free market economy. As diZerega puts it, "Hayek argued for the importance of face-to-face organizations and groups not immersed in the market order for human well being (2004: 452)." Hayek recognized that over time markets tended to undermine traditional networks of community welfare. As diZerega puts it, "If democracies can discover values markets cannot, then it is not the case that democracies are inferior to markets (2004: 453)," but that they may be inferior to markets "for doing what it is that the markets do best. However, democracies may be superior to markets in other kinds of discoveries (diZerega 2004: 453)."

Habermas states that:

> "Civil society is composed of those more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organizations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in private life sphere, distil and transmit such reactions in amplified form to the public sphere. The core of civil society comprises a network of associations that institutionalizes problem-solving discourses on questions of general interest inside the framework of organized public spheres. The 'discursive designs' have an egalitarian, open form of organisation that mirrors essential features of the kind of communication around which they crystallize and to which they lend continuity and permanence." (1996: 367)

Habermas emphasizes the way the political system gets intertwined with the public sphere and civil society through general elections (1996: 368). In constitutional democracies, parties have the right to connect with civil society organizations and associations (Habermas 1996: 368). In South Africa, one

needs to look no further than the relationship between the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) and the ruling party, i.e. the African National Congress (ANC). The importance of civil society has often been recognized indirectly through the policies of both capitalist and socialist states attempting to crush them. As Welton points out:

> "The all-seeing state also destroys living conditions of solidarity. Social groups are crushed, as are associations, and networks. The indoctrination machine goes into overdrive; cultural identities (like, say, Russian Orthodox) are assaulted and may dissolve for a time; spontaneous communication is choked as even the coffee shops have their spies lurking in the corners. The more the bonding force of communicative action wanes in private life spheres …" (2001: 26)

It then becomes easier for those who seek to "monopolize the public sphere to align the mutually estranged and isolated actors into a mass that can be directed and mobilized in a 'plebiscitarian manner' (Welton 2001: 26)." The then South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, in response to Archbishop Desmond Tutu's claim that the government is not in touch with the needs of people at grassroots level, wrote,

> "Those interested to see how the government in all spheres interacts with those the Archbishop described as 'the so-called masses,' they should attend the Ward Committee meetings at local government level, and the *izimbizo* held regularly throughout our country by the provincial and national governments, the Deputy President and the President. In all these encounters the people interact freely with the government, with no restrictions whatsoever about issues they may raise. Media reports of these encounters would also reflect this reality and therefore the engagement of the masses of our people in the process of determining their destiny." (Mbeki 2004)

On the other hand, there is no clear evidence that individuals are able to influence government through such processes. As Pierre and Peters put it,

"Without some continued possibilities for interaction among the participants, a deliberative process may become reduced to a simple opportunity to vent feelings rather than a genuine opportunity to make decisions (2000: 151)." The public hearing model favoured by President Mbeki, "does not permit that type of continued interaction but tends to demand that a decision be made at the one meeting; to postpone a decision is generally seen as a failure, rather than a reasonable step in making a superior decision (Pierre and Peters 2000: 151)." Therefore, to argue that people at grassroots level are able to shape their destinies through such channels provided by the Government of South Africa might be difficult to validate empirically. Empirical work needs to be conducted in this area in order to ascertain the identities of those who attend the "*izimbizo*" and how free these meetings are to those people who hold opposing views. However, we cannot completely discount the effectiveness of these public forums.

One of the merits of civil society is that through its programme, it can exercise direct influence on the political system. Habermas argues that "actors within civil society are also concerned with 'revitalizing and enlarging civil society and the public sphere as well as with confirming their own identities and capacities to act' (1996: 368)." But "this affirmation of civil society as a critical learning domain does not mean that we should not face up to the realities of uncivil society (Welton 2002: 9)." It is possible for civil society to "place high particularistic demands on group members, thereby restricting individual expression and advancement; permit free riding on community resources; negate, in those groups with a long history of marginalization through coercive non-market mechanisms, the belief in the possibility of advancement through individual effort (Woolcock 1998: 165)." In the Freedom Park case study, it will be shown how members of Sanco were recruited by the developers and how the members who were left behind vilified those members who took jobs with the developers, only for some of the members who stayed behind to do the same, later.

The proposition that civil society in itself is a superior vehicle for citizen participation than the state ignores the important potential for 'un-civil' civil society – for these relationships can perpetuate inequality (Friedman 2003: 18). But since civil society is a realm of difference and competition, the state must enjoy the capacity to arbitrate between competing demands within it (Friedman 2003: 19). The state must therefore, represent the interests of those who do not belong to associations and are therefore not part of civil society. According to Friedman, "…where societies are significantly unequal, civil society will be a realm of inequality since some will command greater resources to organize than others and most citizens will probably find participation in civil society associations beyond their means (2003: 20)."

Friedman is right and it will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters how some informally employed individuals are unable to participate in associations and attend meetings due to time constraints caused by the nature of their work. Therefore, the assertion that some members of civil society might require protection from the state is valid. Putnam argues that citizens in the civic community are not required to be altruists, but that, "in the civic community, however, citizens pursue what Tocqueville termed 'self-interest properly understood,' that is, self-interest defined in the context of broader public needs, self-interest that is 'enlightened' rather than 'myopic,' self-interest that is alive to the interest of others (Putnam 1993: 88)." In fact, "liberal government does not require the internal life of every association to conform to public norms and practices by prohibiting discrimination, enforcing due process, encouraging liberal private life (outlawing polygamous marriage as 'patriarchical'), favouring democratic authority (congregational churches over hierarchical ones or worker control over other forms of management) (Rosenblum 1994: 539)." As Rosenblum argues, neither do associations have unlimited autonomy to govern their affairs; even churches are subject to an array of public laws (1994: 539).

There are a number of reasons why a state must refrain from intervening in the civic sphere. There are two that will be highlighted but this is not exhaustive. First, it is assumed that civic associations reinforce the ability of isolated individuals to acquire influence in the political sphere, thus balancing the power of government (Tamir 1998: 223). As Gutman argues "without access to an association that is willing and able to speak up for our views and values, we have very limited ability to be heard by many other people or influence the political process, unless we happen to be rich and famous (1998: 3)." Second, as Madison claimed, freedom of association is "a necessary guarantee against the tyranny of the majority," as the interplay of a multiplicity of groups defending their diverse interests prevents the consolidation of a permanent centre of power (Rosenblum 1994; Tamir 1998).

The above perspective acknowledges that not everything is good about civil society. For example, "religious groups may educate individuals to submit to religious authority at the same time as they cast doubt on the authority of the state; and other associations may foster feelings of trust and reciprocity among members but only at the expense of nurturing animosity and mistrust toward outsiders (Tamir 1998: 218)." Tocqueville, the strongest proponent of the view that voluntary associations are good for democracy, recognized that the values (i.e. social capital) fostered by some associations in civil society may be in sharp contrast to the liberal democratic ones.

Public Sphere:

For Habermas (1974), the public sphere is a critical part of civil society, including a broad array of institutions such as the media and public meeting places that promote open discussion. According to Minkoff the public sphere is the "space in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs, and hence an institutionalized arena of discursive action (1997: 110)." Within this arena, political and non-political associations are mediators that convey

public opinions and concerns to authorities and relay "back to civil society the unwritten rules of the political game (Minkoff 1997: 110);" they are also active voices in the public debate, at least to the extent that they are provided access to it. Competing discourses challenge prevailing understandings, so that 'assumptions previously exempt from contestation will have to be publicly argued out" (Fraser 1992: 124).

As Traber maintains there is no doubt about Sachikonye's assertion that civil society is weak in Southern Africa, and weakest in rural areas (Traber 1995); Sachikonye's claim is that an autonomous public sphere hardly exists, certainly not outside the urban areas. Traber believes that we should invest in village research and build on the peasants' experiences of cultivating a rural civil society with a genuinely rural public sphere (1995: 417). But taking as a peasant "a subsistence farmer, who farms a small amount of land, (say less than 50 acres), which he may or may not own."[4]South Africa might be different from the rest of Southern Africa since the Apartheid state destroyed the black peasant community to the extent that there is hardly any rural community in South Africa that has not been integrated into the market economy. According to Abercrombie et al. "Peasants are a class characterised by small-scale agricultural production, economic self-sufficiency, low division of labour and relative political isolation from urban working class (2000: 259)." The South African peasant was forced to "become migrant, urban worker (Abercrombie et al. 2000: 259), through the imposition of poll taxes from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. There is an opportunity here for research to assess the extent to which the public sphere is open in rural villages of South Africa.

Civil society organisations "contribute to the effectiveness and stability of democratic government, it is argued, both because of their 'internal' effects on individual members and because of their 'external' effects on the wider

[4] The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science and the Penguin Dictionary of Sociology

polity (Putnam 1993: 89).” Putnam argues that with civil society organisations habits of cooperation, solidarity, and public-spiritedness are instilled in members. This process produces what we term social capital. What differentiates social capital from civil society is that social capital is not tangible and cannot, therefore, be quantified; whereas, civil society organisation can be quantified. We have had various studies in South Africa and elsewhere that have attempted to quantify civil society associations and this thesis moves from the premise that this has been done and our responsibility, therefore, is to study the quality of these associations.

Mark Swilling and Bev Russell in their book entitled, “*The size and scope of the non-profit sector in South Africa*,” made a significant attempt at quantifying the size of this sector. Swilling and Russell (2002) describe the size of the sector in terms of its employment, volunteers, and finances, as well as its spread across different sectors of activity. Therefore, what distinguishes social capital from civil society is that the former cannot be quantified, while the latter can be. One can witness civil society in action but social capital is invisible and intangible, i.e. only evident in its effects. Civil society is therefore, the foundation of social capital. In simple terms, civil society is a tree and social capital a fruit, however, an invisible fruit of that tree. One of the hypotheses that this thesis seeks to test is whether or not there is a relationship between civil society and social capital that leads to good governance, and economic and democratic development. Does civil society, in other words and its product social capital, contribute to good governance, economic and democratic development? It is now therefore opportune to turn to the concept of good governance, which can be present in government and the private sector.

Enter “Good Governance”:

For the purposes of this research, good governance is broadly defined and refers to the processes whereby institutions govern themselves, be they nation

states or residents' associations (Mitlin 2001: 151). "In the case of the nation state, the process of governance refers primarily to relations between citizens (either individual or collectively) and their governments. In the case of membership organizations, it refers to relations between members and leaders (Mitlin 2001: 151)." This is a departure from the understanding that says for good governance to take place the relations within groups should be horizontal, and which dismisses hierarchical relationships as negative for economic development (Putnam 1993). In fact, it can be argued that, "hierarchies still play a very important role in the political and institutional organisation of the advanced western democracies (Pierre and Peters 2000: 18)."

The above approach seems to challenge the current understandings in the social capital literature that vertical networks are less helpful than horizontal networks in solving the dilemmas of collective action; according to Putnam (1993) this is what led to capitalism being more efficient than feudalism in the eighteenth century, and why democracy proved more effective than autocracy in the twentieth century. This view has however proved not to be supported by historical evidence, which has shown development resulting from a combination of both horizontal and vertical relationships.

Contemporary usage of the concept of good governance has neglected the broad approach referred to above. It has opted for the limited approach first espoused by the World Bank in the 1989 report on Africa, which argued that "underlying the litany of Africa's development problems is a crisis of governance (World Bank 1989: 60)", by which was meant "the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs (Leftwich 1994: 370)." The major shortcoming of this approach is that it fails to engage with the history, practice and theory of the state as an agent in the development process (Leftwich 1994: 373). In the same way, writers on the left have failed to acknowledge the emergence of civil society with the market economy as

espoused by Hegel in the early 19th century. Since micro-level dynamics, that is, local government, is the site of our investigation we are now going to introduce the policy framework that governs the affairs of South African local government (which overtly promotes the participation of communities in local government).

The South African Legal Framework for Participation at Local Government Level:

The Local Government Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998 states that only metropolitan and local municipality of a certain type may have ward committees. And, if a metro or local council decides to have ward committees, it must establish a ward committee for each ward in the municipality. Therefore, as soon as a municipality decides to have ward committees no ward should be excluded. According to the law, a ward committee should consist of a) the councillor representing that ward in the council – the councillor must also be the chairperson of the committee: and b) not more than 10 of other persons.

The law states that the ward committee must be as representative as possible – taking into consideration those groups with special needs. For example, it must take into account the need for women to be equitably represented in a ward committee, and for a diversity of interests to be represented. This sets the framework for local communities and associations to have a voice on how they are governed. However, the main interest of this thesis is to capture and identify civic associations before they reach structures such as ward committees. How are these civic associations constituted? For example, are people organising in their immediate communities? Returning to ward committees, a rule must also be made regulating the circumstances under which members must vacate office, as well as the frequency of meeting of ward committees. It is the role of the metro or the local council to make

administrative arrangements to enable ward committees to perform their functions and exercise their powers effectively.

What are the functions and powers of ward committees? A ward committee may make recommendations on any matter affecting its ward to the ward councillor or through the ward councillor, to the metro or local council, the executive committee, the executive mayor, or to the relevant metropolitan subcouncil. The act also states that the ward committee has such duties and powers as the metro or local council may delegate to it within certain limits set by the law [see, Section 32]. The members of a ward committee are elected for a term determined by the metro or local council. In addition, should there be a vacancy, it must be filled in accordance with a procedure determined by the metro or local council. There is also no remuneration payable to members of a ward committee. This, however, may favour those who have resources over those who do not. These resources include access to a civic association, such as a union, or being a former member of that particular association but this is not limited to that resource. A metro or local council may dissolve a ward committee if the committee fails to fulfil its objectives. However, this rarely happens in practice.

On the other hand, the Local Government Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 provides the Municipality Structures Act with some substance. It puts emphasis on representative government through community participation. It states that a municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. It must encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality [see, Municipal Systems Act for a detailed explanation]. This falls short of deliberative democracy as it enables only a few individuals to participate in these structures through the ward committees.

It must contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the community. It must also contribute to building the capacity of councillors and staff to foster community participation. The local council or metro must use its resources, and annually allocate funds in its budgets as may be appropriate to implement the above norms. The state in the case of South Africa is expected to play a leading role in developing the structures of civil society, and, by extension social capital. But the same law states that this must not be interpreted as permitting any interference with the right of the municipal council to govern and exercise the executive and legislative authority of the municipality.

Participation by the local community in the affairs of the municipality, the act states, "must take place through political structures for participation in terms of the Municipal Structures Act, as well as the councillors." The municipalities are expected to report-back to local communities. When these mechanisms, processes, and procedures are in place, the municipality must take into account the special needs of people who cannot read or write – as well as people with disabilities, women, and other disadvantaged groups. Report backs to communities are, in fact, law and those councillors who do not enforce this are violating the law. Whether this actually takes place in practice is discussed in the following chapters. Thus, people who might not have access to associations for various reasons are included in this responsibility.

Conclusion:

The literature has shown that there are different forms of social capital and that its development is a result of both the state and the market. It is, particularly linked to the development of the latter however Harris and de Renzio have raised a concern about studies that see horizontal organisation in civil society as being in the interest of society as a whole (1997: 926). They argue that "no differentiation is made between different types of

organizations (Harris and de Renzio 1997: 926).” For example, they question whether football clubs and choirs are the same in terms of their implications and effects as labour unions (Harris and de Renzio 1997: 926). I believe that their criticism is misplaced since the proponents of this school such as Robert Putnam, who argue that football clubs and choirs are important in the creation of social capital, do not downplay the role of labour unions as powerful agents for change. Instead they see choirs and football clubs as building blocks at local or micro level that can have positive effects on more powerful national level civil society organizations.

After tackling, social capital in detail, the second part of the chapter delved into the concept of civil society, which it is argued produces positive social capital under particular conditions. It drew from Keane’s and Tamir’s understandings of civil society. These scholars believe that it is an aggregate of associations engaged in non-state activities. I then opted for an extended definition which includes traditional leaders who act both outside and inside the state. They sometimes collect taxes from their people and at times, challenge state authority on “behalf” of their “subjects” has been shown. It is argued in this chapter that independent civil society is linked to the development of capitalism and how social capital and civil society are themselves linked as well as what their relationship to good governance is without shying away from any negative consequences.

Finally, in this chapter I have set out to show, through reviewing the relevant literature, that in communities which display high levels of interpersonal trust, (which is where people of different backgrounds talk, socialise with their neighbours, and share norms that support openness and compromise,) we are also more likely to observe better local government and higher levels of economic development. This thesis will therefore look at how local level associations contribute to the creation of social capital and, by implication, their impact on good governance at that level, especially in an environment

where there are high levels of poverty and unemployment – as is the situation in the case studies presented in this thesis.

SECTION II: SOCIAL CAPITAL IN SHACK SETTLEMENTS

CHAPTER THREE
ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT IN FREEDOM PARK SHACK SETTLEMENT, JOHANNESBURG

Introduction:

As with most shack settlements in South Africa, associational life in Freedom Park (see, Map one and three) is linked directly or indirectly to the development of the area; therefore, most associational activities in Freedom Park tend to assume a political dimension. What are often called 'bread and butter issues' within the social movement network, here possess a political meaning. One of the main groups with a longstanding history in Freedom Park, which predates that of the settlement, is the Development Committee. As we shall see, it came into existence long before the initial land invasion in 1994. The other main association is the local chapter of the South African National Civics Organization (Sanco), which was formed in 1999. This followed the dismantling of its predecessor, the Ruth First Resident's Association. It seems that one of the main reasons for dissolving the Resident's Association and joining Sanco was to gain access to the resources that came with joining a national body (NB). As Heller and Ntlokonkulu put it:

> "Mzwanele Mayekiso's assertion that the movement has become overtly bureaucratized is accurate, but only with respect to the strategic intent of higher leadership. In practice, all the branches we investigated operate quite independently of higher structures and in many cases have been able to nurture significant levels of community participation. In many cases, Sanco is simply a title taken by existing and very rooted civics (mostly in townships), and in other instances has served as a useful framing logic and a structure for constituting a new local civic (especially true in informal settlements)." (2001: 12)

The above accurately captures the evolution of Sanco in Freedom Park/Ruth First shack settlement. Ruth First is one of the sections of Freedom Park shack settlement with a very active branch of Sanco. Gaining access to a wide selection of leaders might have acted as the main motive behind local activists' desire to link up with a national body (NB), Sanco. But I will show later how that attempt to take advantage of the national resource possessed by Sanco had both negative and positive consequences. This national resource could be termed social capital. And, specifically, bridging social capital, i.e., access to networks outside one's immediate environment.

At one public meeting organized by Sanco in Ruth First, Freedom Park as many as 100 persons from the floor raised questions, including many who had been critical of the local Sanco leadership. The attendance register at one of these meetings revealed the presence of representatives from the United Democratic Movement (UDM), Homeless People's Party[5], the Socialist Party of Azania (Sopa), The Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Most of these political parties are inactive locally with members of the SACP normally attending meetings in the neighbouring Eldorado Park. But the point is that the local Sanco branch was made up of people from diverse political parties and background at the leadership level and some of their ordinary members were not affiliated to any political party. Some came from church groups, while, for others, Sanco was the only organisation they belonged to: Sanco was in other words the only organisation in town.

History of Freedom Park Shack Settlement:

In the late 1980s, a number of retrenched workers who were staying in the backyard shacks of Soweto, a township approximately 15 kilometres from

[5] This is a local political party that does not contest the elections. It had no demonstrable membership except the leaders.

Johannesburg CBD, organized themselves into a Homeless People's Party (HPP), with the main aim of trying to eliminate homelessness (Willie Dlamini; Interview; 19-07-2001). Most of the leadership of the Homeless People's Party were part of the Development Committee. Since most of these people had been retrenched, they felt that they could no longer afford to pay rent every month and also wanted something they could call home. The main organizers knew each other from when they were union members. They used to travel together to attend union meetings and some of the bonds that are evident in Freedom Park today can be traced back to this period.

For example, Willie Dlamini and Mr. Phiri met in 1984 before formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). They claim that they were part of the negotiations that led to the formation of Cosatu in 1985 and the dissolution of its predecessor the Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu). As Dlamini puts it, "I have been involved in the Golden Triangle area (Freedom Park and Ruth First) for the past eight years. We came together 1994 towards the end of January. Our aim was to get rid of homelessness. Most of us came from the backyards of Soweto (interview; 22-03-2001)." These leaders have a long history of organization; "In 1984 I joined Fosatu. I was part and parcel of the formation of Cosatu. I was in the education desk. I met Mr. Phiri in Fosatu (Dlamini; interview; 22-03-2001). Their meeting was to lead to the discussions about the possibility of finding a permanent home for themselves as well as all those people who were homeless. They began to discuss community problems. Their involvement in the labour movement led to them thinking about the best possible ways to resolve their community problems. The thinking that governed Cosatu at the time was that shop floor and community issues were intrinsically linked and could not be separated. Therefore, it is not surprising that Cosatu activists were also active in their communities. This was in contrast to the workerist tradition, which is based on a philosophy according to which this dichotomy is necessary. Dlamini explains how he got involved:

> "We started looking at problems that were facing our communities. Housing was identified as a major problem and we then decided to form a network of homeless people (Dlamini; interview; 22-03-2001)."

There had been a number of such initiatives before in different parts of the country. For example, Dlamini states that, "We emulated the people who occupied Cato Manor outside Durban. We had a number of trips to Durban to meet the organizers of their successful land invasion (Interview; 22-01-2001)." They participated in these activities as members of the trade union.

Development Committee members then set up a delegation to negotiate with the Johannesburg municipal council. The negotiations ensued and Dlamini states that, "We wanted to find out which land was available for habitation. This involved a lot of negotiation and trips to and from the Council offices. Sometimes with the help of academics from Wits (University of Witwatersrand), such as Mark Heywood[6] – I think you know him (Dlamini; interview; 22-03-2001)." They used to undertake trips to various locations in order to ascertain the best available sites that would be nearer to amenities such as hospitals, water, transport and so forth.

This process spilled over to the new democratic government. After the election they had to deal with the first MEC for Housing in Gauteng, Paul Mashatile. Phiri states that, "We wanted land that could be occupied immediately but it appeared that the MEC Mashatile wanted the process to drag on for some time (Phiri; interview; 22-03-2001)." Dlamini adds, "We then identified land that was ready for occupation. We wanted initially to find out from the government which land was available for development and we

[6] He is now a member of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) a very active social movement that advocates the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS to free treatment. He is still based at the University of the Witwatersrand with the Aids Law Project and is a well known activist.

also consulted widely with experts from NGOs in the city (Dlamini; interview; 22-03-2001)."

According to Thandi Ziqubu (Chairperson, ANC Women's League in Freedom Park), the ANC in Ruth First was established in 1995 and Sanco only in 1999. She believes that the people who formed Sanco in 1999 were disgruntled individuals who had failed to get elected into positions within the ANC (Ziqubu; interview; 15-03-2001). According to Ziqubu, these were people who opposed the choice of the ANC councillor because they wanted their own person for the position. She believes that the relationship between Sanco and the ANC is good in Freedom Park but not in Ruth First. However, the Ruth First section had the strongest and most active branch of Sanco, while in Freedom Park it was almost dormant and rarely organized meetings. Some of the Sanco members had also been members of the civic movement since their days in Soweto. This means that that they had a long history of organisation, just as the members of the Development Committee.

Freedom Park had about 800 shacks in 1994, this was after the land invasion led by Mr. Dlamini and other members of the Development Committee. There were further episodes of land invasion in 1995 and 1996. Freedom Park became bigger and its population increased – the government could no longer ignore the settlement. Subsequent land invasions were also precipitated by internal fighting within the Development Committee. Those members who had not benefited decided to invade the adjacent land, which they later called "Ruth First". This land was partly owned by the local Catholic Church and the other part by the government. This group was led by Michael Cekiso and there were differences over who was expected to benefit in Freedom Park. The land in Freedom Park was privately owned.

The Roman Catholic Church took those who had invaded its land to court. During the protracted dispute Father Risi (a local priest who has since

relocated to the Northern Cape), told the local leaders that he would withdraw the case if the leaders could settle the legal costs, which amounted to about R10 000. In addition, they also had to agree that they would prevent further land invasions on the remaining church land. The group from Ruth First was under the leadership of Michael Cekiso who was praised for his leadership in the settlement. As stated earlier, he was credited for spearheading the initial land invasion of the Ruth First settlement. In one interview, Ruth First leaders from Sanco argued that the land they occupied is theirs because they had been living there since 1994. They argued, "It is because we have had a long struggle, fighting for this land (Sanco Ruth First, 22-03-2001)."

According to Mr. Zwane[7] they held meetings in Motsoaledi informal settlement near Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. Zwane and Dlamini met during that period (Zwane; interview; 28-03-2001). "We wanted a place where we could build our houses," Zwane argued, "We had a common aim. Motsoaledi informal settlement was already full of squatters. The leader of that settlement was known as Prince (Zwane; interview; 28-03-2001)." Prince then informed them to look elsewhere for land they could invade.

That team was led by Willie Dlamini, Ruphus, Phiri, and Zwane, as well as other activists. According to Zwane, they hired a truck to Kliptown just outside Soweto, only to find out that the land they had identified was not fit for habitation. "We knew that there were other vacant places that we could invade – we then moved and camped next to the BP garage in a place we now call Freedom Park. We brought our own corrugated iron (Zwane; interview; 28-03-2001)."

[7] He is one of those who had a fallout with Dlamini when he was denied land there, although he was part of the initial land invasion; he is still employed fulltime, unlike most members of the Development Committee.

A brief biographical history of some of the Development Committee members tells us that they had a long history of union engagement and had a decent level of education. For example, Willie Dlamini received his schooling in Orlando High School in Soweto and completed his matric in KwaZulu-Natal, which was then known as Natal. He witnessed the formation of Cosatu as he was a union member by then. He is an eloquent speaker as are most leaders who have a union background and whom I have encountered in informal settlements. Biza Phiri hails from North West Province and arrived in Johannesburg in the 1970s. Like Dlamini he had a decent level of education and was very eloquent as well. What these leaders shared was their long history in union organisation; this connected them, in addition to homelessness.

Somebody who worked closely with the Development Committee is Moffat Shoyimba, who had a long history in the trade union movement. He was a member of Cosatu until he got retrenched in 1997. This is how he recounted his experience when he was a member of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa): “I started as an ordinary worker. I then moved up the ranks to the role of a supervisor. I was a leader in the factory. I was also involved in negotiations and disciplinary hearings on behalf of fellow workers. It was very challenging defending workers who had done wrong. I was often in negotiations with the representatives of the company. I always fought for my comrades to be reinstated. I was very successful (Interview).” His leadership skills were not only effective at the shop floor level, but also became a resource in his community. As he puts, “We started organising ourselves in Freedom Park, we had meetings with the Council (Johannesburg Municipality). I’ve been a leader in this area since 1995. The people always elect me to be their leader. In 1996, I was elected as a recruiter for the ANC. In 1998, I was elected secretary of the ANC. We are 15 in the executive of the ANC.” He was not sure about the number of women in the executive. These biographical details point to the fungibility of social capital, since the

skills one acquired on the shop floor were also useful in the community, e.g. skills such as book-keeping, organising and negotiating.

One of the pioneers of the land invasion, Mr. Zwane, recounted how, since he had a full-time job as a factory worker, he had to work night shifts which meant that he was not able to camp at night with other activists. The other leaders of the land invasion camped there every night. Most of the activists had no regular jobs since they had been retrenched. When he came back a week later and requested a stand from the leaders, he was informed that the place was already full. He had to try and find other options. As he puts it, "I then met Thomas Thaga and Mkhatshwa but they were not leaders at that point. They said they can find me a place and they got one in Ruth First." When the existing networks were closed, Zwane had to forge new networks. These extensive networks help in difficult circumstances, as was the case with Zwane.

Freedom Park is made up of approximately 7000 shacks, while the adjacent Ruth First is made up of approximately 3000 shacks (Information from Urban Dynamics – Consultants contracted by the Johannesburg Metro). According to Sizakele Nkosi (Councillor in the Mayoral Committee – Johannesburg), "Freedom Park was invaded first, and Ruth First much later, and we were therefore able to stop its expansion. That is the reason we have available land for resettlement there. The land will be used to resettle both communities (Interview; 20-03-2003)." She argued that therefore Freedom Park needs to be prioritized when it comes to development. Three thousand stands were made available for the first phase. One thousand five hundred stands were to be allocated to each settlement during that phase. One of the main issues, therefore, was - who should benefit first? There was a lot of pressure from Sanco Ruth First who believed that they were entitled to benefit first since the land "belonged" to them.

The other contentious issue in relation to land was the size of the stands that were to be allocated to residents. Sanco demanded 250 square metre stands, while the Council believed that in order for everyone to benefit 150 square metres would be adequate (Nkosi; interview; 20-03-2003). During the consultation process, the Council agreed to settle for a compromise of 200 square meters. The main issue was initially the size of the stands, while the second important issue between the Council and the local civic body was who should benefit first. There was a lot of horse trading and Sanco was able to demonstrate its power through organizing community meetings; but things did not always go their way.

***The Main Associations in Freedom Park – Devland Land and Tenure Project*:**

The life of the Development Committee predates that of Freedom Park, as stated earlier. It was initially organized as a Homeless People's Party, in Soweto Township. It only adopted the name of the Development Committee after the successful land invasion of the area we now know as Freedom Park. At that point, it seems it came to power democratically and few people challenged its legitimacy. It was partly a reward for the role the leaders of the land invasion played in the whole process.

The Leader of the Development Committee, Willie Dlamini, proclaimed that the committee was a non-partisan organisation. Its only concern was the welfare of the poor and the homeless people. Its leadership was one hundred percent male and most of the leaders had a union background, mainly from the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa). The Development Committee had about ten leaders and it was not a membership based organisation. The leadership was also knowledgeable about the main challenges affecting their community believing it represented all the residents of the Freedom Park informal settlement. They maintained that they were going to dismantle the Development Committee as soon as homelessness had

been eradicated. This, they argued, was the mandate they were given when they left Soweto.

As stated earlier, the hegemony of the Development Committee went unchallenged in Freedom Park at the inception of the settlement. It had a good working relationship with the local ANC branch, in spite of the breakaway group led by Michael Cekiso, which formed the Ruth First section of the settlement. As stated earlier, Ruth First is part of Freedom Park and the government treats them as a single settlement. Most of the Development Committee's main adversaries came from the Ruth First section, which had a vibrant and active branch of Sanco. But there were no major tensions between the different associations found in Freedom Park. Its biggest challenge came when the resident's association was dissolved in 1999 and Sanco was formed. The main point of contention became the development of the area. The civic had a diverse leadership from the beginning, including women, metered taxi owners, unemployed and employed young men, as well as women from local churches; unlike the Development Committee which had a homogenous leadership, and was a mirror image of a boy's club, the new civic drew its membership from diverse groups. As stated earlier, one of the reasons the Resident's Committee was dissolved was to tap into the existing resources coming with joining a national body. Its networks, therefore, extended beyond Freedom Park. This is a clear demonstration of what Mark Granovetter calls 'the strength of weak ties,' or what Robert Putnam calls 'bridging' social capital; access to networks beyond ones immediate environment.

Unlike the Development Committee, Sanco had a demonstrable membership. In the community meetings it organized, Sanco always embarked on a recruitment drive for new members, especially when the Annual General Meeting (AGM) approached. In 2001at one of the mass meeting organized by Sanco, about 400 people attended. Almost 50 percent of those who attended

claimed to be Sanco members, while the rest had ANC membership.[8] The membership of the ANC and Sanco often overlaps, since they have an alliance and Sanco is not a political party. Only in a few instances did disgruntled Sanco members stand against the ANC in local government elections when they were dissatisfied with the choices made by the ANC on who would stand for the election. These differences have led to violent protests elsewhere. For example, in 2005, preceding the local government elections, there were episodes of violent clashes in some townships in the Free State Province [Frankfort – Namahali township] where residents torched the local district council offices and a truck belonging to a national trucking company (The Star, 16-08-2005) over the selection of candidates for the elections, which they believed had been manipulated.

During the aforementioned meeting, which was attended by about 400 residents, Mr. Sugar Monnakgotla, the Gauteng provincial secretary of Sanco said, "Sanco does not discriminate on the basis of party affiliation; our membership is open to everyone, because development is for everyone (Sanco meeting; 25-01-2001). He further stated,

> "A Sanco leader gets a one year mandate from the people. That is why there should be an ongoing process of consultation. This mandate does not give Sanco leaders the right not to report back to the community on an ongoing basis. There are good relations between Sanco and the ANC at national level and it was agreed that each should deploy a member at each other's structures at local level. At Sanco we need to elect people who are trusted by the community. It becomes a problem when people say Sanco should participate in this development and it then does not report back to the people. Transparency should not be one sided. Democracy should be applied to all groups." (Sugar; Sanco mass meeting; 25-01-2001)

[8] Source: Ruth First Sanco meeting register.

The fact that Sanco Freedom Park was linked to a national body sometimes gave it a reprieve in its struggle with powerful interests within the Development Committee and the developers, who worked closely with the ward councillor. The main point of contention was over the substance of development, and the role of different groups, the local Sanco branch believed that it was being sidelined. It then alerted the provincial leadership of Sanco which delegated Richard Maluleke, who was responsible for housing, to strengthen its position and show local people that it had extensive networks. Another point of contention revolved around community meetings. For example, Richard Maluleke, enraged by the interference in their meeting by the Development Committee and some local leaders of the ANC, stated, "It needs to be clear that we are Sanco and we are an autonomous organization. Sanco is a community watchdog. If they disrupt this meeting, we will go back to the community. We can always call Consultants (Urban Dynamics) on our own and go on with the process; we could by-pass the Councillor (25-01-2001)."

Given their different histories, residents of Ruth First did not want to be mixed with residents of Freedom Park (i.e. in the organisation of the new settlement) since they believed that they would bring crime and other social ills with them. In one interview with Sanco leaders, they said that they regard Ruth First as being safe. They said they always felt safe there, unlike in Freedom Park, where the level of crime was high. People in Ruth First believed that they were very different from the people of Freedom Park. They believed that Freedom Park lacked strong family values, since it was made mainly of young and unmarried couples. They attributed the high crime-rate to these factors. The family structure was very important. One informant said, "Freedom Park lacks the strong family values found in Ruth First, mainly because young people stay on their own." The organizations in Ruth First attracted members from diverse backgrounds and people interacted freely with their leaders, while Freedom Park appeared to be characterised by strong

patronage networks. This might be explained by the fact that during the initial land invasion the organizers wanted to boost the numbers of people so as to justify the invasion and make it difficult for the authorities to remove or relocate them. They were not rigorous in screening those who wanted to stay there.

Those who moved to Ruth First were people who were not happy with how things were run in Freedom Park. They insisted that there should be no people renting backyard shacks, while this was not strictly observed in Freedom Park. The leadership of the Development Committee acknowledged that there were high levels of crime in the area under their jurisdiction but were also at pains to explain that Freedom Park and Ruth First were the same area. It is clear that Ruth First is endowed with better social capital, which has led to low levels of crime. Leaders in this area know their people better than the leaders of Freedom Park. However, it is worth mentioning that the population size of Freedom Park was three times that of Ruth First.

When we interviewed the leader of the Development Committee, he seemed reluctant to acknowledge some of the claims made by the Sanco leadership. He argued, “The issue of safety is beside the point – our main task here is to bring development to the people and not to divide the community.” People in Ruth First seemed to be very knowledgeable about the area compared to the people in Freedom Park. Ruth First residents were more likely to attend meetings, while there was a high level of apathy in Freedom Park; even their local branch of Sanco was very weak compared to the Ruth First Branch. Patron-client relationships appeared to be very pervasive in Freedom Park. For example, when the leader of the Development Committee introduced the leadership, he referred to them as ‘my people’ and they made little contribution during the discussions. This was in contrast to observations made during interactions with the Sanco leadership, where everybody was

given a chance to speak and they were very knowledgeable about developmental challenges within the settlement.

The attitude of the leadership of the Development Committee is sympathetic to the government of the day. During the dramatic fall of the South African currency, the Rand, towards the end of 2001, they believed that there were forces that wanted to see the government fail (Phiri; group discussions; 8-12-2001). However, they did acknowledge that there were serious challenges with regard to poverty and the lack of development in the settlement. They argued that it was up to them to ensure that residents had the requisite skills. There was an attempt by one member of the Development Committee to establish cooperatives in Freedom Park in order to create employment, based on an experience gained while a union leader in the 1980s. Since retrenchment and the move to Freedom Park most of the Development Committee leaders have money generating schemes, while some work for the consultants and others are recipients of tenders emanating from government sponsored projects in the settlement.

Unlike the Development Committee, most of the Sanco leadership had never held a formal job. For example, the chairperson of Sanco Ruth First operated a metered taxi, while the chairperson for Freedom Park Sanco worked in a hotel in Sandton. The Freedom Park chairperson was initially a branch leader within the ANC and vacated his leadership position when there were disagreements over the building of a local school. As stated earlier, the majority of Sanco leaders had little union experience and their skills and experience did not compare favourably with those of the Development Committee. But the female members had a long history of participation in churches [the Roman Catholic Church] of which they were proud and believed that people from Freedom Park envied them. Some African independent churches held their sermons at the local hall and many of these networks had been established during the days when the Freedom Park

residents rented shacks in the backyards of Soweto. Although some of the residents presented negative attitudes towards government, they still had some faith in the ability of government to deliver, for example, they successfully engaged the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to build a school, which has since been finished, and was opened by the Gauteng Premier Mbhazima Shilowa in July 2003. The Sanco chairperson in Freedom Park was also very active in this initiative of building a local school. The Sanco secretary had a number of trips and meetings with the government regarding the building of the first school in Freedom Park.

Some Sanco leaders also held positions within the local ANC branch, so there is evidence of membership overlap. Thandi Ziqubu argues, "If you look at the elections:-in 1999 more people voted in the national election, but few people voted in the local government elections. People forget that this is one government. At local government we talk about practical stuff, such as the delivery of services. People feel that local and national governments are two separate things. That is why they blame the ANC in local government but endorse the ANC at national level. They compare structures (Interview; 15-03-2001)." That is why some people in Freedom Park believe that the accusations levelled at the ward councillor Mofolo are political rather than expressing a genuine concern for ordinary people. They do not trust the intentions of the civics, especially since the chairman of Sanco lost to Councillor Mofolo during the nomination process within the ANC. Sanco leaders attributed this loss to corruption but they also acknowledged that the faction that supported the current councillor had the requisite resources which Sanco lacked. These resources ranged from financial to manpower, and came from the leadership of the ANC in the province.

There is always a struggle within the community with groups promising development in order to drum up support. For example, some leaders outside Sanco argue that they were the ones who brought the makeshift schools to the

area, while Sanco proclaims that they have done the same. There seems to be an agreement that Sanco enjoyed popular support in Ruth First. But Thandi Ziqubu attributed this to the fact that Sanco promised drastic development. Promises she believed were farfetched and the Sanco leadership could not fulfil. These debates mainly took place in meetings that were organized by Sanco. Some of these meetings were very confrontational. On average these meetings were attended by 300 people. One woman I interviewed in a meeting said she came to represent her husband who was working on that particular day and therefore she did not attend meetings regularly. It was always important to know what was happening in the settlement since this decided whether or not one received a house. This market information was very crucial as to 'who gets what'.

When you asked members of Sanco whether they liked the people of Freedom Park, the answer you often received was, "We like the people of Freedom Park, but the problem is over the scarcity of land. This development currently taking place here, it seems it will not lead to the improvement of lives, but we think it will destroy our community. It appears our leaders do not care about the long-term consequences. Whereas we can see that in future this will create problems (Thami; interview; 22-03-2001)." When asked about what made Ruth First different from Freedom Park, these Sanco members argued, "Some of us left Freedom Park a long time ago, we are now united. We do not know what the people in Freedom Park are up to – we don't understand them. We became different from the beginning. They are controlled by powerful leaders. We have different names for our areas. We have Freedom Park and Ruth First. Those are two different things (Sanco female members; focus group; 22-03-2001)." They believed that the situation was not sustainable and efforts should have been made to unite both communities. They argued that a mass meeting would go a long way to closing that gap. "It will give us a feeling about what is going on in Freedom Park."

The Golden Triangle Land and Tenure Project:

While Sanco was very successful in putting pressure on government to speed service delivery in Freedom Park/Ruth First, its stance on the land and tenure project was different. There was a feeling that not enough information was given on how the project was to be implemented. Sanco had a relatively successful campaign in encouraging people not to fill in the housing subsidy forms, especially in Ruth First since in Freedom Park, the Development Committee was very influential and the Sanco branch there was ineffective. Their main concern was that there was not enough information on who was going to benefit. A number of community meetings were organized in which the role of the development consultants (Urban Dynamics) contracted by the City Council was discussed.

These interactions were both intra-community – that is, involving community members and organizations such as Sanco and the Development Committee. These were both associations formed by local residents. But there were also extra-community interests involved, such as the Council and Urban Dynamics, as well as the provincial leadership of Sanco which was usually called upon by the local leadership of Sanco when they felt overwhelmed by powerful interests; there were groups within the 'community' that believed that development should go ahead as planned and consultations were seen as a hindrance to the whole process. The Development Committee and the local branch of the ANC saw Sanco as a problem and were envious since they were not the ones who would take credit for the infrastructural development taking place in the settlement.

Urban Dynamics Gauteng operates within the Gauteng Province and it is part of a group of companies operating in southern Africa (Urban Dynamics website, www.urbandynamics.co.za). It has more than 150 staff members. It has been operating since 1986. It consults on Town and Regional Planning, as

well as Project Management and prides itself on being a fully-fledged multidisciplinary firm. It has contracts in a number of informal settlements across the province and offices in Parktown, Johannesburg, one of the upmarket business centres in Johannesburg housing important companies such as Goldfields; a local government official conceded that it is difficult to work in Freedom Park without the cooperation of the Development Committee because they know the area and its people very well. This might be the reason the developers worked with them. Urban Dynamics employed a number of local residents on short-term contracts

The Sanco leadership in Ruth First believed that the fact that some members of the Development Committee worked for the development consultants – they were compromised and were unlikely to act in the interest of the community. In one case, an active member of the Sanco branch executive committee (BEC) was constantly solicited by Urban Dynamics to work for it, which eventually happened. So they were always suspicions about the intentions of the development consultants. There was a feeling that these consultants were preying on the weak. Most of the Sanco members had no steady income. This made Sanco vulnerable to outside influence that was not always in the interests of the people these interests purported to represent. The high levels of unemployment made the challenge of forming an effective voluntary association to push for the needs of those who are likely to be excluded in the development process, a daunting task.

The involvement of Urban Dynamics was seen as having an adverse effect on local associations. Here, a member of Sanco Ruth First BEC explains the tensions:

> "There are already discussions between Sanco BEC in Freedom Park and Ruth First. The developers are responsible for these divisions. For example, some Sanco leaders in Freedom Park are on the Urban Dynamics payroll, and that is

one of the reasons we have these problems. Our integrity has been compromised."

In a community that lacks resources and has a very high unemployment rate, such problems and divisions are to be expected. This is supported by Mitlin when she argues that these relations within organisations in informal settlements are not predetermined but are a reflection of several factors, such as pressures on local the leadership and the difficulties of self-organisations where there are scarce resources (2001: 156).

Most of the people who attended these mass meetings from both Freedom Park and Ruth First were mainly people over the age of 30. The likely explanation for this is probably because people who are interested in meetings are homeowners, or prospective homeowners, who were responsible for their households. Therefore, the youth will tend to be less interested in some of these issues unless these impact on them directly, such as the issues of schooling. Some of them move into these settlements so as to gain independence and not really as a necessity. Women tend to be in the majority irrespective whether these meetings are held during the week or on weekends, evening meetings are difficult for women and this might be expected in an environment where the majority of households are headed by single parents and women in particular.

A member of the Development Committee explains how the land and tenure project works: "People have to fill in subsidy forms – so as to get title deeds; then the infrastructure including storm water pipes, electricity to your house, and then the bottom structure is put in place." When the Development Committee talks in such meetings one often heard voices in the background saying that they were not consulted and do not know much about the land and tenure project. This illustrates the perils of the lack of reliable sources of information to poor communities. Sanco, as their main source of information,

was often excluded from meetings between the consultants and the municipal council. Or it might be that since Sanco is opposed to the project in principle they have been able to convince people, especially Ruth First residents, that the project was not going to benefit everyone and might exclude the most deserving residents.

Some of these meetings organized by Sanco would take place in difficult conditions. For example, there was a meeting in 2001 which was also well attended even though it was raining heavily. What was interesting was that even though these mass meetings were organized by Sanco people were not afraid to challenge the organisers. It was obvious from these interactions that these meetings were not only attended by Sanco members and sympathisers. I can confidently state that these meetings were not stage managed. As stated earlier, Sanco sometimes invited its provincial leaders to put pressure on the Councillor and Urban Dynamics. In one such meeting, one resident said, "I believe we should pose questions to the provincial leader, because the local Steering Committee members have been with us and I do not think there is anything new they can tell us. And we never elected this Steering Committee." Sanco was also represented by their chairman in the Steering Committee but argued that there were rarely any meetings and it was a toothless structure.

There were claims during the mass meetings that the process was far from being transparent. For example, a woman in her late forties protested:

> "How can we be expected to join the process at this stage? Urban Dynamics appointed the Steering Committee in the first place. Why is Sanco victimized? Sanco is the organisation that represents us. Although, they have their fair share of problems in this area, there is a power struggle, they fight amongst themselves."

There were various issues that the local residents wanted clarity on in these public meetings. It appears that the consultants, as well as the ward councillor, were unable to provide the necessary information that the residents needed. They had given powers to a structure (Urban Dynamics) that was not democratically elected to manage consultations. The consultants failed this test dismally. The sense one got was that the consultants' main preoccupation was to get the project completed as soon as it was possible so as to make as much profit and move to the next project. Urban Dynamics was in the business of making money and not properly suited to do a job meant for the government. It was therefore difficult for the consultants to fulfil basic democratic requirements. This was a job for elected officials. The Municipal Systems Act states that councillors should report back to local communities. This means that councillors who do not report back to their communities are violating the law.

During the course of my fieldwork in Freedom Park, I never witnessed or attended a meeting convened by the local ward councillor. He did not recognise (i.e. did not see them as genuine representatives of local residents) some of the local associations that were active in Freedom Park, particularly his nemesis, Sanco. This might have emanated from the fact that Sanco members were hostile to him. There was a fear, especially in Ruth First that not everybody would benefit from this development. The issue here is that a person cannot benefit more than once in the government housing subsidy scheme. For example, a person who might have already benefited from another province, and then decides to leave that particular province, would not be eligible to get an RDP house in Freedom Park or anywhere else. People who earn more than R3 500 per month are also not eligible, so are illegal and legal immigrants. However the government had actually planned for such individuals in other developments. The solution was not to neglect this group of people but to provide rental housing for them, except for illegal immigrants who are not catered for by law as they are undocumented. These

are the things that need to be taken into consideration when development is brought into an informal settlement for the processes to run smoothly. But the reality is often more complicated.

This might have been interpreted as self-serving on the part of Ruth First residents and Sanco, which represented them. But a closer look at the situation tells us a different story. The proposal put forward by the government to mix people from Ruth First and Freedom Park was seen as interfering with the order of things. A community was going to be dismantled to form a new one – it appears that the government was not able to read the internal dynamics; the issue was no longer about just putting infrastructure in place and building houses, it was also about networks and norms of social organisation called social capital, which the community of Freedom Park had cultivated in its short history of about seven years.

In an attempt to diffuse the threat posed by collective action, the local Ward Councillor suggested that whoever had a problem should come to him individually. As he put it:

> "I have a problem with Sanco, because not everyone is a Sanco member. I believe that people know my house and anyone who has a problem should come to my house. It is my responsibility as an elected official to look at your problems and not Sanco. The ANC will come with its leaders to address the people and not Sanco."

The reality was different. My observations on the ground were that most people went to the local Sanco leaders whenever there were service delivery challenges in the settlements. Sanco was the first point of call for a number of residents. When there was no water they often went to Sanco leaders for information. I witnessed a lot of those interactions. There was a feeling that Sanco leaders were more accessible. When there was no water or a breakdown of other services in the Ruth First section most residents went to

the shacks of Sanco leaders. During one afternoon when there was no water in the area, this researcher saw four neighbours coming to the shack of the Sanco secretary to report their difficulties in getting water and hoping that she would do something about it. The difficulty was that since she worked only two days a week as a domestic worker she did not have enough money to go to the municipal offices to report these cases. The will might have been there on the part of Sanco leaders to assist their community; however, their ability to do this was impeded by a lack of resources. A return trip by taxi would cost about ten rand.

As stated earlier, there were fewer associations in Freedom Park which were not politically oriented. But there were church groups. Most voluntary associations such as Sanco, Development Committee and the ANC Women's League were linked to the ANC. One would find some leaders represented in almost all these organisations. Therefore multiple-membership is not always a sign of vibrant associational life, as the social capital literature suggests, but it can be used as a form of domination and control. But the positive thing is that these are voluntary associations that people can enter and exit as they see fit.

Most children in Freedom Park informal settlement attended school in the neighbouring township of Eldorado Park (which was classified as a coloured township during apartheid). One Sanco BEC member put it this way: "The schools there are very good. It takes 30 minutes for children to get to those schools. But there is some form of discrimination there since some of our children are normal taken a grade back." However, a reprieve was provided by donors. The World Space donated R3 million towards a new school after some local associations had highlighted the plight of children in the settlement. Former state President Nelson Mandela was said to have raised R2 million from business as well. The former president is well known for mobilizing resources in this way. The school was completed in June 2003 and

started operating in January 2004. The role of the community in the process will be documented later.

The leadership of Sanco laments that their preferred candidate was denied a chance to become a local government councillor. They believe that it had nothing to do with the popularity of the Ward Councillor but rather with resources and corruption. They wanted their chairman to stand as a candidate during the 5th of December 2000 elections. As one Sanco leader puts it:

> "I believe that the ANC rigged the elections. Just before the elections the current Councillor said that the only people who were going to receive refuse bags were those people who produce the ANC membership card. When our candidate lost we demanded a recount. The ANC won the recount since their people were counting."

A more thoughtful explanation is the one put forward by another Sanco BEC member who attributed the ANC's preferred candidates' nomination for councillorship to their strong resource base. They were able to mobilize people before the election, when they embarked on a door-to-door campaign. This was something that was very difficult for Sanco to emulate, since they lacked resources. They were not interested in standing as independent candidates but they wanted to do it on an ANC ticket.

The chairperson of Sanco in Freedom Park (Albert Mosiye) gave a more convincing explanation of this. He said that the ANC decided to reduce the number of delegates from Sanco to 20 from the initial 40 (Albert Mosiye, interview, 14-10-2000). This was after he had won the first round of votes. He argued that he could have still won but they had decided not to stand against the ANC again. He said that he had been asked to go for a proportional representation list. However, this would have also meant that he would be left behind since he would have been at the bottom of the list.

In 2000 Sanco had 500 members in Freedom Park (Albert Mosiye, interview, 14-10-2000). The branch had five zones that were all organized and Ruth First section was one of those zones. There were meetings every week. I observed a number of these meetings, which were usually held in the evening during the week, with weekends reserved for community meetings. Sanco branch members are delegated to go to zonal meetings. When there is no water, that is, when the tanker did not arrive in the settlement, residents usually go to Sanco members to lodge complaints. Sanco deals mainly with family disputes, challenging authorities, and mobilising residents to engage the Councillors and other officials. At a branch level, Sanco has an executive committee, which consists of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Treasury, Organising Secretary, and nine heads of departments. The 500 members mentioned above participate in the election of these office bearers. The main responsibilities rest with the chairperson and the secretary. While branches do not always follow this structure, there is always a branch secretary and a chairperson in all the branches, and the branch executive committee members with specific responsibilities and portfolios (Donovan Williams, Sanco National Executive Member, interview).

A majority of Sanco BEC members are unemployed and rely on odd jobs. One of the reasons people join associations is to get access to market information, i.e. social capital. They are usually the first people to know about forthcoming opportunities. As a Sanco BEC member argues: “The census 1996 helped me financially. I was able to pay for my daughters’ travelling course. I also get employed by the IEC when there are elections.” This leader was later enticed by Urban Dynamics to work for them. That tends to give the consultants some legitimacy since most people know members of Sanco as hardworking and they know the community very well. In particular, note that these are the people who were previously resisting attempts by the development consultants to subvert democracy.

One of the main areas of contention in Freedom Park/Ruth First was about who should benefit first. The information Sanco had was that there were approximately 1666 stands in Ruth First. Sanco was involved in the counting of the stands as well. The process was under the auspices of Urban Dynamics, which involved some members of Sanco who are on the Steering Committee. But there was a concern that the process was superficial since it failed to count families staying on one stand – it counted stands and not families. There was a feeling that some families had 'relatives' who were staying in their backyards. So the failure to detect this would create problems and cause tensions within the community. Sanco was also against a situation where residents would be moved in phases, as proposed by the Council. "Our concern is for the people who are going to be left behind." This clearly demonstrates the strength of kinship ties and glue that kept a relatively new community together.

As stated earlier, Ruth First residents felt that their section was much safer than Freedom Park. In Ruth First, they argued that one can answer a mobile phone without a risk of being robbed. Incidents of robbery were well documented in Freedom Park. The Community Policing Forum (CPF) in Freedom Park deals with a large number of serious crimes (Shoyimba, interview).

There was always a concern from the civics that decisions about the settlement were made by people who were from outside. These people, they argued, had little information about the area. Sanco believed that there was a mutual trust between themselves and the members of the community. This, they believed, was demonstrated by the number of people who came to their meetings. Most people also came to them when they had problems. I observed different approaches to dealing with residents by both Sanco and the Development Committee who needed help from these organisations. On the

one hand, one had Sanco which was very friendly. On the other hand, there was the Development Committee, which did not treat some of the residents who came for help with dignity. The Development Committee gave the impression that it had a hold on these people.

Some leaders had foreseen the problems that might be caused by having backyard shacks. This was partly based of their shared experience in the backyard shacks of Soweto. In Ruth First they were able to gain control, while in Freedom Park backyard shacks went out of control. As one Sanco BEC member puts it:

> "Sanco is officially against people soliciting rent from people staying in backyard shacks. As we believe that since we are not paying for services, we cannot justify it. But some people often claim that they were housing relatives and not tenants. But backyard shacks are a common occurrence in Freedom Park. Leaders lost control of the situation. In Freedom Park there are more backyard shacks than here (Ruth First), sometimes people have more than one backyard shack. So Freedom Park presents a unique challenge and they are trying to shift it to us."

One of the main areas of contention is the policy of "first come first served." Sanco argued that that some people were relocated to make way for the new school and they should be prioritized. There was an agreement that they would benefit first. In the mass meetings residents tended to listen to Sanco and it was able to convince people to move when the Council proposed it. There seemed to be a lot of trust between the Sanco BEC and residents in Ruth First.

One of the observations I made during local meetings was that some people were concerned that there might be moved away from the Golden Triangle area. This had happened in the informal settlements of Alexandra township north-east of Johannesburg. Therefore, this concern was not far-fetched.

Those people had been moved to Dobsonville, Soweto; which was far away from where they derived their livelihood.

Various issues were raised in these meetings. These issues were not confined to housing. HIV/Aids and crime were often part of the agenda. As a Sanco BEC member puts it:

> "Comrades, we also need to talk about HIV/Aids. We need to get involved in campaigns against Aids. This disease is a threat to development. Statistics say the rate of Aids is very high. We must join hands in the fight against Aids. Crime is also a big problem. Anyone who sees a person with an unlicensed firearm should report that person to Sanco. People who feel that their cases are not being properly followed by the police should report to Sanco. We will do our best to get them resolved." (Thami; Sanco Mass Meeting; 04-02-2001)

There was an emphasis on a collective approach to resolving problems. The CPF in Ruth First was not active; therefore Sanco played the role of a policing forum. Whereas in Freedom Park there was a CPF branch and this worked closely with the Mondeor Police Station. The chairman of the Freedom Park CPF was once a factory worker and also a shop steward. He worked closely with the Development Committee, as well as the social consultants Urban Dynamics.

But residents in meetings also raised concerns about the lack of change in leadership. These seemed to be directed mostly at the Development Committee. As one person in a meeting I attended stated:

> "We've been with certain leaders for a long period of time and they claim that they have developed the area. The fact is that they haven't done anything since 1994. Sanco is new here. If you have something against an individual in Sanco you should not drag the whole community into it."

The local ANC leader had raised an issue saying that Sanco does not deliver anything to the community. There were people who did not have faith at all in the leadership of the area. They believed that these leaders were not trustworthy. In most cases, Ruth First residents appeared to have some faith in Sanco. Whereas, what gave the Development Committee some form of leverage was the fact that they were part of the process to register people for a housing subsidy – so they had some patronage to disburse.

Some of the tensions between Sanco and the ANC at national level tended to manifest themselves at local level. Freedom Park/Ruth First is a case in point – some leaders within the ANC believed that it was unacceptable for Sanco to challenge a process that was led by the ANC; on the one hand, Sanco leaders were usually drawn from people who did not have work experience who had gained most of their skills within the civic movement. On the other hand, most of those within the ANC were workers, or people who owned small construction companies, shops, and former union members. But it should be mentioned that some Sanco leaders also held leadership positions within the ANC. In terms of skills those who headed the ANC and the Development Committee seemed to have a higher skills level. Nonetheless the engagement in Sanco had also empowered the leaders of Sanco, some of whom were domestic workers. They had gained good note taking and record keeping skills and had developed a fairly good understanding of how the government works and who to contact for help; they had established links with the South African Council of Churches (SACC), amongst other organisations.

One ANC BEC member said that Sanco was told by the ANC leaders to decide whether they wanted to be a political party or not, since they seemed to have opted for an adversarial approach, rather than working constructively with the ANC. A Sanco provincial leader who came to Freedom Park to address a mass meeting said, “We still believe that the ANC is the best vehicle to drive this development and not individuals or other political

parties." But there was also a belief within some sections of Sanco that they were being used by the ANC as voting fodder. The provincial leader argued, "Sanco is not accountable to any political party. Sanco is a vanguard of the society. The constitution of Sanco states clearly that Sanco is an autonomous organization," another local ANC leader argued that Sanco was an alliance member – its problem was that it had some bad elements within it.

Some members of the Development Committee ran empowerment projects. The Development Committee was from the beginning made up of retrenched workers who had been members of Cosatu. As a Development Committee member saw it, "The other thing we do in Freedom Park is to empower people with skills. We do not talk about houses only. We train our people to have skills such as bricklaying, painting, sewing, and so on. We also founded Freedom Park. We used to do things ourselves and train people."

In one interview, I asked the Development Committee about the funds it was alleged were never accounted for. The chairman of the Development Committee said that to have meaningful development the community had to be united. As he puts it, "We said that there was a space for people with money and almost 99 percent of those people who contributed were from Freedom Park. This issue has nothing to do with Ruth First." He said that he paid the money to the Deeds Office and the only thing that was left was to finalise the handover. The process, he stated, was facilitated by ASDO, a company of builders from Soweto. Local residents contributed R23 each. He argued that this was a Freedom Park community initiative. At that point the Development Committee chairman got irritated with our questions and lost his patience. He said that he had nothing to hide and if necessary he would give permission to talk to the residents of Freedom Park to ascertain the truth.

The Development Committee argued that as an organisation they were very transparent. The chairman maintained, "We can't divorce ourselves from the

community. I strongly believe that we are accountable to our people. We disseminate information. We always call meetings to report back to the residents." But during my field visits to Freedom Park, there were no mass meetings organized by the Development Committee. Its structure was very hierarchical and appeared to be authoritarian. It had no membership base. It was centred on one individual and to a lesser extent his committee. It should be remembered however that at its inception phase the Development Committee was relatively democratic and had legitimacy in the eyes of the residents.

According to the chairman of the Development Committee, members were willing to engage the community but believed that if they were too democratic nothing could be achieved; the belief was that too much consultation could actually delay the timely implementation of much needed development projects. Their main concern was to eradicate homelessness. He argued that democracy was given a chance and it was then necessary to move on with the process. They claimed that people themselves do not have problems, that these exist in the imagination of the local civics (Sanco). The Development Committee maintained that the major problem in the Golden Triangle development was the people who politicize development. He reiterated the point made at the Sanco Congress in 2001 by the then ANC President, Mr. Mbeki, that Sanco should clarify its role.

The Freedom Primary School and the Role of Voluntary Associations:

From the beginning the nature of this process was such that the community was going to take the centre stage. The strategy followed by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) was to work with people who approached them first, but not necessarily the local Councillor, as was the case with the Golden Triangle Land and Tenure Project, which is a responsibility of the municipality, the municipality works through the councillor, as it is one of its structures.

This is an example of a successful initiative that was able to take advantage of the existing social networks (i.e. the social capital found within these local networks) through open community engagement. The GDE, as stated earlier, had a very different approach from to the one taken by the City of Johannesburg. The GDE approach encompassed working through the community networks. Its strategy is to work through the people who approached it first. Some community members, who later became members of Sanco, had in the late 1990s approached the GDE about the plight of children who had to walk long distances to go to school.

As stated earlier, local children relied mainly on schools in the neighbouring Eldorado Park. Some attended school in the neighbouring Soweto, which is about six kilometres from Freedom Park. This put a lot of strain on most families since they had to provide for transport.

The GDE appointed development consultants to facilitate the whole process, something common in post-Apartheid South Africa. However this case proves that not all development consultants are obstacles to development. According to the consultants, they then embarked on a consultation process with the community. As Matla Matetoa puts it, "Our greatest challenge was to decide who to deal with in the community (interview; 31-08-2003)." High levels of unemployment in the informal settlement made the process even more complicated. Matetoa has a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of the Witwatersrand and runs a very successful architectural practice with offices in Melrose north of Johannesburg, a very upmarket area. He has a long history of working with poor communities; and one could see this from the way he conducted himself in meetings with community leaders and activists.

Urban Dynamics, the consultants responsible for the development of Freedom Park/Ruth First, unlike the consultants for the school, had to work through the Ward Councillor. This was not the case here. As Matetoa argues, “We do not have to work through the Ward Councillor. He comes from a particular political party even though he represents the whole area, people who belong to the ANC and those who do not.” He adds, “In many ways even though his role is official – there is no tangible link by way of him having to sign anything.” However he acknowledged that his presence could provide some legitimacy.

In the meetings organized by the development consultants there were various groups that wanted to take credit for the process. The most active participants were people from Ruth First, where there was much initiative from below. There were various political parties that got involved such as PAC, DA, UDM, and the ANC. The civic in the form of Sanco was also represented. There was Sanco from Freedom Park and Sanco from Ruth First. It is worth mentioning that Sanco Freedom Park, as stated earlier, had become dormant. They hardly organized any meetings and lost some of their credible leaders, who claimed that the environment they operated in was very hostile. The Development Committee was very dominant in Freedom Park.

The Consultants (Matla Matetoa) had a number of meetings with local community leaders. He argued that before the school was built, he met a group of people at the gate (school). They said to him that they were the legitimate leaders since they had approached the GDE. After this, other groups approached him as well. There was a sense that this was an opportunity to make money. The structures had to be set up. The Community Liaison Officer (CLO) was appointed. Sanco was part of the process. According to Matetoa, “Sanco had identified itself as the main actor in the process. Initially, they worked with Sanco. This was challenged by other organizations. These organizations asked for the process to be reconstituted.”

According to Matetoa, even after the reconstitution of the process – there were still hiccups. The meetings were always well attended by as many as 50 people. Most of them were representatives of various organizations. It was clear that their intentions were not purely altruistic. There were expectations that people were going to get jobs. The consultants created a labour desk in consultation with the community. These desks were spread throughout the settlement. Matetoa believes that most of the problems are directly linked to poverty.

Throughout this process the members were a reliable source of information – their structure was "horizontally" organized and women were well represented within its ranks, but it was not immune from the problems that affected the whole community. In these meetings, residents promised the consultants that they were going to make sure that the project would succeed and that there would be no vandalism. The school was built on the border of Freedom Park and Ruth First and it was on the side of the latter. The levels of crime in Ruth First were very low.

It appears that getting the community involvement from the onset led to the successful implementation of the project. This did not mean that residents took over the project. But that it was kept abreast of the developments taking place – information was made available. The whole process was relatively transparent and democratic.

Sanco had been the main player in the process. Other interest groups joined later. Matetoa argues that, "Even though the process was nearly derailed – the residents who were challenging the process were not very organized. On the other hand, Sanco was very organized." Sanco was able to mobilize the community. Getting the other groups on board never meant that the whole

process had to be reconstituted. When there were deadlocks, these were resolved through voting. Sanco tended to dominate the voting process.

There were other problems that came up after the school was about to be completed. At one stage the Ward Councillor declared that the school was going to be opened in January 2003. He distributed pamphlets to that effect. But this was challenged by Sanco who felt that the school was not complete. It was eventually opened in July 2003. There was a battle between the Ward Councillor and Sanco for legitimacy. The Councillor feared that Sanco would take all the credit and this could dent his image. But it clear that Sanco was more in touch with what was going on.

Matetoa believes that the whole process improved local democracy. It got people talking. It became a catalyst for better relations. For example, issues that had nothing to do with the school were discussed and resolved. The approach chosen by the GDE was to tap into existing social networks, instead of seeing these as a hindrance it brought them on board.

There were claims from other groups that the process was not inclusive enough. During one of the meetings Matla Matetoa argued that the process could still be rescued since those claims appeared to be legitimate and would not necessarily derail the whole process. As stated earlier, he said that the Site Meeting is a technical process that did not necessarily need input from the community. He acknowledged that not all stakeholders were represented but did not see that as a serious problem; the reason being that this was a Site Meeting – it was technical in nature. He said that in the absence of a community meeting they decided to call this meeting.

During the Site Meeting, the Councillor said that, “If there is a meeting the first in the area under my jurisdiction – the first person that needs to be informed is a Ward Councillor. If the builders talk to a particular section of

the community and leaving other stakeholders out, there might be problems along the way (Mofolo; Site Meeting; 22-01-2002).” Some people, especially the consultants, saw the involvement of the Councillor as a positive development. For example, somebody from the audience said that the presence of the Councillor helped to move things forward as it relates to people. The Councillor suggested that there should be another meeting and he was not going to be part of any agreement reached that day. He argued, “I can’t be part of it. I can only abide by the decisions of the next meeting which will be more inclusive.” There were also people in the meeting who were whispering that the school did not belong to the Councillor.

The ward councillor (Patrick Mofolo) became a councillor against intense resistance from the members of Sanco. When he was nominated there was already dissatisfaction with Jose JJ Coetzee from the neighbouring Eldorado Park, who, it was alleged, was more concerned with business development than community development (Sanco BEC Member, interview, 14-10-2000). The other issue was that he had failed to proclaim the land, something that Mofolo was accused of when he became a Councillor as well. One of the reasons Mofolo had been unpopular was that he had supported moving in the past, that is, for the residents to be moved to another area; he was not nominated to stand for the March 1, 2006 local government elections and was not even put on the proportional representation list.

Out of those deliberations they then set a date for a new meeting. The meeting, they agreed, was going to be held on Thursday the same week, at 10:00 in the morning. Therefore, it was clear that people who were working were unlikely to attend; as well as those people who had already made other commitments, since it was to be held at short notice. But in Freedom Park, inclusiveness meant the Development Committee and Sanco. It was agreed that all stakeholders should participate. The Ward Councillor mentioned the Development Committee. In addition, there was going to be a Site Meeting in

two weeks time, which was open to everyone, but did not necessarily have to be representative of all the interest groups.

The consultants informed the residents that the MEC for Education had emphasized the need for an inclusive process. The MEC wanted to meet residents through their representative – three residents from each organization. There was a consensus on dates that had been set and that needed to be adhered to since the builders were working on a strict deadline. One resident said that personal differences should be set aside for the sake of the children; he argued that their children might not forgive them if they find out after twenty years that they, their parents, were the ones who derailed the whole process by failing to agree on basic things – given that there were enough resources.

On the challenge put forward by the Ward Councillor regarding the representativeness of Sanco; a Sanco BEC member said, “I don’t know what Mofolo [the Ward Councillor] is talking about because as Sanco we represent all registered community organizations. Sanco is an umbrella body.” In these meetings one would sometimes witness heated exchanges between various interest groups. A Sanco branch secretary said, “The Councillor has nothing to do with this. We did not elect him. I was the one who approached the GDE. Where was the Councillor then? He is now talking about the whole community.” The GDE acknowledged that Sanco approached it but insisted that this was not reason enough to exclude other groups. Another Sanco BEC member said, “The issue is not that we hate Mofolo (the Councillor). But that we all need to be treated equally and with respect.”

This is nothing new where different interest groups are involved. As Whittington puts it,

> "Antebellum Americans suffered not from the lack of civic association but from a conflict of goals among social and political groups. Sometimes those conflicts arouse from the direct self-interest of various factions within society. At other times, however, political conflict arose not from competing interests but from competing visions of public good derived and reinforced by unrelated voluntary associations." (1998: 26)

Such conflicts, Whittington concludes, "could not be resolved without effective political institutions (1998: 30)." Therefore, "a well-functioning democracy depends not only on social relations but also on political institutions and on a constitutional order that structures the relationships between them." As will be shown later, the role played by the GDE in this process was very decisive, and without these meetings the project might have failed. Public goods are here understood as goods for the whole community.

The consultant was able to convince the "community" that it was in their interest to cooperate. He stressed that, "This is a project that involves Mandela. We need to make sure that we stick to timeframes. So let's make sure that we avoid tensions. We are the ones who are going to suffer eventually. It will also put the name of this settlement in a bad light." In some instances leaders had to use important symbols to get 'buy in' from residents.

A Sanco BEC member argued that the Council said they must form the Ward Committee to assist the community. It was supposed to be a representative structure, one representing all interests in the community. But the Ward Committee did not know what was happening in the community. As Nozala (Sanco BEC member) argues, "Most of the people in the Ward Committee are not as representative as the government policy requires." They said that during the Sanco national conference in 2001, President Mbeki said that the ANC should not try to control everything because Sanco is there.

A Sanco BEC member said that the problem in Freedom Park was that everybody wanted to take credit. “If people realize that they are not going to benefit, they tend to sabotage projects. But since the funds were donated to the community nobody is likely to sabotage the school building process; even if we are not completely satisfied.” One informant believed that Sanco was determined to control everything in the community. They did not want other stakeholders to get involved. But the ANC and the Development Committee contest the issue (Sanco former secretary; Interview; 24-04-2002).

Freedom Park and Public Officials:

The City of Johannesburg has not always found it easy to work in informal settlements. Freedom Park is no exception. Councillor Nkosi was in the Mayoral Committee under Mayor Masondo’s leadership. She was an ANC Councillor and had been active in informal settlements. During the reshuffling of the Mayoral Committee she was moved from the housing portfolio into the public safety portfolio, a position she lost after the 01 March 2006 local government elections. She argued that, “When we started development in Freedom Park, there was a lot of resistance from Sanco. I had a number of meetings with its leadership in the area. I allowed them a space to air their views. But, when these attempts failed, in some instances we resorted to coercion, because without force there could be no delivery. I then called a public meeting and it was very successful. They then allowed the process to continue.” She argued that during the meeting the residents contradicted the leadership and this embarrassed Sanco.

The metropolitan government sometimes tried to portray the civics as not being representatives of the views of the community. As Councillor Nkosi argues, “What I learned from my experience is that leaders do not share the same views with the people they purport to represent.” She said that resistance was often from specific individuals. But she conceded that the other reason people resist was that development in an area sometimes

threatened the order of things. Development could interfere with local networks and interests. Local politicians also had to recognise the role and value of local associations in development and show an appreciation of social capital.

The metropolitan government and the consultants claim that some of the problems in Freedom Park were tribal in nature. According to one official, "Some settlements are divided along tribal lines." But my own observations in Freedom Park showed associations consisted of various ethnic groups within the community. In the Development Committee there were people from different ethnic groups, and in the Sanco leadership. The only signs of tribalism came from people who were not members of associations. For example, there were rumours that the chairman of Sanco was a Zimbabwean but these came from outside the leadership ranks. The chairman also challenged the assertion and nobody ever took the issue seriously. During the xenophobic attacks which engulfed Johannesburg's informal settlements in May 2008, Freedom Park was not affected.

The City of Johannesburg officials said that they consulted the Development Committee on a number of issues in the settlement when there were no structures in place. But since the establishment of Ward Committees the reliance on the Development Committee has diminished. However they still consulted them on some issues, because of their knowledge of the area. When asked if that did not create unequal power relations and clientelism, that possibility was acknowledged. The creation of new wards during the demarcation process weakened both the Development Committee and Sanco in Freedom Park as wards now combined different settlements, previously not connected. However residents still consult these old structures when they have problems.

Once the Ward Committee was put in place, the leadership of the Development Committee was ignored. Interference from the provincial structures and the determination to align the branches of Sanco with those of ward committees, has affected the powers of Sanco negatively; this is more pronounced in Freedom Park, the Ruth First branch used to be very vibrant and it was close to the people but the integration of Freedom Park and Ruth First branches has distanced the leaders from the residents. The levels of organisation have declined ever since, but this may not be the only cause. The other likely contributing factor to the diminishing levels of activism is that infrastructural development in the area has been accelerated. There is now electricity in the informal settlement and other amenities. Residents argue that since street lights were put in place there has been reduction in the levels of crime.

Summary:

It is evident in the accounts above, that Freedom Park informal settlement, especially Ruth First, is very rich in social capital. This social capital resides in organisations such as the Development Committee, Sanco, CPF, and the branches of the African National Congress (ANC). These are the main protagonists and role-players in the case of Freedom Park. For instance, the members of the Development Committee were mostly former members of the unions, so were some members found within the ANC structures. Their involvement in union activities equipped them with skills which were very useful in the formation of the Homeless People's Party, which spearheaded land invasion in Freedom Park. Membership of Sanco was initially part of the Resident's Association which was dissolved in 1999 to make way for a new structure. They believed that Sanco would give them access to networks beyond Freedom Park, as Sanco is a national body. This has proved useful in their dealings with the local council, as well as the powerful Development Committee.

Ruth First appears to be the section in Freedom Park that is endowed with benign social capital, although members of the Development Committee have proved to have the deepest reservoir of social capital, nurtured in the backyards of Soweto and the trade union movement as far back as 1980. However, these types of social networks have proved to be resistant to change. It has had the same leadership since early the 90s. It has never held elections in order to get a new mandate from the people it claims to represent. Sanco holds regular elections and we have seen the top leadership changing from time to time, although there is some continuity in Sanco as well. Leaders of the Development Committee argue that they will only dissolve once their main goal has been achieved. This goal being the elimination of homelessness; a mandate they have carried to Freedom Park from the backyard shacks of Soweto.

Sanco has over time proved to be a catalyst for good leadership. It worked very closely with residents. During my fieldwork I witnessed this a number of times. The leadership of Sanco is very diverse. There are women, youth, retrenched workers, as well as leaders from other backgrounds. The structure of the Development Committee was useful during the initial land invasion, which took place during apartheid government. During that period a militant and male dominated leadership might have been necessary due to the risks that came with being a community leader. In the post-apartheid era they have proven to be resistant to the changing environment of democratic participation. On the one hand, you have Sanco that conducts elections. On the other hand, there is the Development Committee which behaves in a top-down manner.

The evidence from this chapter seems to support Robert Putnam's contention about the significance of 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital. His argument that groups tend to combine both bonding and bridging social capital is very relevant in this case. The local Sanco was once a local

association that did not have strong links with other associations outside their environment. After joining Sanco, they were then able to access resources outside Freedom Park. The Development Committee is stronger internally and appears to be inward looking. Its engagement with the developers was characterised by something that bordered on clientelism. They benefited a lot from this relationship in terms of contracts and most of them were in the payroll of the consultants. However, although the Sanco leadership was not immune from this relationship, the leaders who opted for this option were sometimes marginalised. There were sanctions for this kind of behaviour. One element of being member of local associations was access to temporary jobs provided by either the developers or the government during the elections or other big events.

Both these organisations engaged with the local government. The Development Committee had a close relationship with the Ward Councillor. Sanco was able to engage the department of education to facilitate the building of a local school, which was a success. In an environment characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty one would have expected high levels of vandalism, but that has not happened. Sanco acted as a conduit between the state and residents of Freedom Park. They attended meetings with local government officials. The evidence from this case study suggests that the Development Committee was also rich in social capital, but that this was not always good for development. Sanco lacked certain skills partly due to the fact that some of its members had never held a formal job. However, through engagement in civic structures they have since gained some useful skills, such as record keeping, thereby compensating for lack of education. In a way both organisations have been positive for the development of Freedom Park and both have been able to create a space for government to deliver the much needed infrastructure. They provided the necessary checks and balances on each other, ensuring that there was no permanent centre of power.

Conclusion:

Evidence coming out of this chapter suggests that Freedom Park has 'social capital-producing' civic associations such as Sanco (initially a residents association) and the Development Committee. It arrived at that conclusion by studying closely the internal dynamics within the main formations in the shack settlement and these were, the Development Committee and Sanco. These associations, especially Sanco, are vibrant, drawing members from youth formations, retrenched union members, church groups, women's groups, political parties, and so forth. These two dominant formations were effective in bringing in benefits such as housing subsidies and the building of a school. The findings in this chapter also suggest that in areas where Sanco was dominant, such as Ruth First section, there is evidence of wider networks of trust, norms of reciprocity, and low crime rates with minimal incidents of vandalism. However, where the Development Committee is dominant, the qualities found in Ruth First section are markedly absent. Nonetheless, these two associations were able to play complementary roles in the settlement, where they were able through intense debates, eventually to agree on what was good for the community. The conflict between the two protagonists ensured that at the end of the day there were better houses, roads, and schools, something that might not have happened without this competition for public space. Lack of access to jobs and resources, however, acted as a hindrance to these associations playing a more developmental role in the community.

This case study demonstrated that local associations established linkages and thereby built bridges with macro-level associations, i.e. regional and national associations such as national bodies of civic associations, churches, academics in a local university, national social movements and other associations located beyond their immediate environment. This suggests that local associations were fully conscious of the value of bridging social capital

alluded to by Robert Putnam as well as the strength of weak ties alluded to by Mark Granovetter. However, having made this prognosis, one major constraint facing such associations is their members' lack of access to independent sources of income. It might be one of the reasons why some leaders are reluctant to vacate their positions, which has led to the inability of these associations to fulfil their potential. Although there has been modest successes, which were outlined in this chapter. The next chapter, which complements this case study will focus on the attitudes of residents of the Kliptown shack settlement to leadership and associational life.

CHAPTER FOUR
ATTITUDES OF RESIDENTS TO LEADERSHIP AND ASSOCIATION IN KLIPTOWN, JOHANNESBURG

Introduction:

Kliptown (see, Map two and three) is a shack settlement neighbouring Soweto[9]; a South African township famous for its resistance to apartheid and especially for the student uprising of 16 June 1976. Soweto is also the largest township in South Africa. This event is described by many observers as the turning point in the fight against apartheid. In fact, some claim that Kliptown is part of Soweto; some sections of Kliptown also share a ward with Dlamini, one of the townships that constitute Soweto. Kliptown is also the place where the Freedom Charter was written in 1955 – and, for the first time in the history of South Africa, parliament was temporarily relocated to Kliptown from Cape Town for two days on Sunday 26 and Monday 27 June 2005. This temporary move was to celebrate the adoption of the Freedom Charter 1955. The anti-apartheid groups that met in Kliptown in 1955 were members of the Congress Alliance – a coalition that was constituted by the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Organisation, and the Congress of Democrats, representing mainly white activists. As the former President of South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela in his autobiography puts it:

> "The Congress of the People took place at Kliptown, a multiracial village on a scrap of a veld a few miles southwest of Johannesburg, on two clear, sunny days, 25-26 June 1955. More than three thousand delegates braved police intimidation to assemble and approve the final document. They came by bus, truck and foot. Although, the overwhelming number of delegates was black, there were more than three hundred Indians, two hundred Coloureds and one hundred whites." (1994: 201-202)

[9] Soweto is an acronym for South Western Townships.

People had held consultative meetings within their respective communities and prepared ideas that were tabled and debated at a mass rally in Kliptown, where the Freedom Charter was later adopted (Mandela 1994: 202).

Background:

Kliptown was one of the few areas in South Africa that defied segregation laws and survived as a multiracial area, where you could find Africans, Chinese, Coloureds, Indians, and White people living side by side; it has since grown and in large part now consists of informal houses – it was not always like that. Kliptown was established in 1903 and it is the oldest urban settlement in the Johannesburg area to accommodate people of all races (City of Johannesburg website), it is a sprawling collection of settlements with a thriving informal business sector. In fact, the majority of people in Kliptown ply their trade in the informal economy. Many people from other Soweto townships shop in Kliptown where there are often cheap vegetables and other household items.

Kliptown like any other shack settlement has both formal and informal associations. In this thesis I am using it as a case study to complement the Freedom Park case. I relied on three sources for data collection 1) focus group material, 2) a research conducted on behalf of the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) by the UE Development Economist Consortium in 2002, and 3) interviews with local leaders of Sanco, ANC, the ward committee, the community policing forum (CPF), the ward councillor and the uMkonto weSizwe Military Veterans Association (MKMVA). While at the Centre for Policy Studies as a principal researcher on a project that looked at citizenship and informal association among people who work and live in informal settings, we conducted four focus groups in June 2004 as part of this project, these focus groups comprised employed males, informally employed males, employed females, and informally employed females. This was done in order to minimize the impact of power relations within the community that

could lead some groups dominating others. The intention was to make the environment a little intimidating as possible.

My own fieldwork in Freedom Park was done over a long period of time during which civic leaders, consultants, government officials were interviewed. Ordinary residents who were members of associations and attended meetings were also interviewed. But the Kliptown case presented an opportunity to ascertain the experience of ordinary residents in a different setting, where my research findings were not likely to be influenced by my prior knowledge of the area. As in Freedom Park, the majority people in Kliptown had no rights to what they owned. However, the majority of those who responded to the Johannesburg Development Agency[10] research recorded private ownership of their property. The majority of these residents indicated that they paid R200-R500 for this ownership, which mostly relates to the shack material for the building of the shelter (UE Development Economist Consortium 2002: 23).

The focus groups sought to ascertain the attitudes of shack settlement residents to organisation and leadership. Trust is one of the key elements of social capital. Another aim was to look at the constraints, if there are any, to organisation and the kind of social capital that is likely to be produced in such environments. As in Freedom Park, the ANC and its affiliates dominate associational life in Kliptown. This is despite peoples' pronounced dissatisfaction about service delivery (since the ANC is a ruling party one might have expected attitudes to be influenced by lack of service delivery). For example, the main source of water for the majority of residents is communal taps. But they continue to vote for the ruling political party (i.e. ANC) overwhelmingly, for example, in Kliptown Community Centre voting station the ANC got 1 252 votes which translated into 81 percent, in the April

[10] JDA is a development agency that has a sole shareholder, the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (CoJ); it is also responsible for the development of the area.

14, 2004 national elections; the number of registered voters was 2 440. In the temporary Freedom Charter Square voting station, where the majority of the interviews and focus groups were conducted, the ANC received 790 votes which translated into 89.47 percent of the total votes cast by the electorate.

Service delivery and the role of local associations:

There was a shared belief amongst the residents that the living conditions have become worse in the past few years. They complain about their living conditions and that shacks are overcrowded. There are approximately 23 400 residents in the greater Kliptown area, and a majority of them reside in the section called Freedom Charter Square (JDA 2003), where most of the interviews and the focus groups for this case study were conducted; the Freedom Charter Square has about 2 686 shacks and a population of 9 401 (JDA 2003). People also complain about the conditions of sewerage and sanitation. They argue that the new toilets that were supplied by the government are worse than the bucket system they had in the past. According to Kliptown residents who were interviewed, the bucket system was emptied daily and in the early hours of the morning. But when the new system is blocked, the municipality only fix it in the evening, the likely time for an evening meal for most families; in research commissioned by the Johannesburg Development Agency, the majority of respondents in the surveyed areas saw housing as the greatest need (29%), electricity (24%), water (15.9 %), and sewerage (11.6%).

The focus group participants believed that service delivery in other shack areas has improved since 1999. Freedom Park and Orange Farm informal settlements were cited as being model settlement – they believed that these were better off. However, Freedom Park residents were also not satisfied with the delivery of basic services and leadership in their area. But it appears that the problems in the two settlements were also dissimilar – community struggles in Freedom Park had put pressure on government to do something.

But civic groups in Freedom Park were not happy about the conduct of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan municipality as well as the consultants hired by the municipality to oversee development in the area. That might be one of the reasons the Kliptown residents are blaming their plight on the leadership. It is because of the belief that other similar areas are managed better than their own.

There is a perception that leaders are corrupt and that is the reason things are not improving. As in Freedom Park, Sanco is very dominant in Kliptown. People believe that it is responsible for jobs and improvement of services in the area. It is not seen only as a pressure group. There is a shared belief that leaders tend to focus on certain areas over others within Kliptown. This might be as a consequence of the unequal distribution of social capital in the settlement. Some settlements in Kliptown are more resourced than others, in terms of both physical and technical infrastructure; Kliptown is a combination of formal housing (e.g. Ngubane section) and informal housing (e.g. Freedom Charter Square). Those living in shack dwellings are often the newer residents. As the latest arrivals in the settlement they are yet to nurture and cultivate the benefits that come from being a member of a particular association and have not yet developed trust amongst one another. It seems that the majority of new arrivals are not members of local associations. It is not always easy to build trust in a new environment.

Kliptown residents seemed to have chosen the area for the same reasons people in Freedom Park chose their settlement. This is access to transport, hospitals, schools, and other necessities. However, Kliptown has another dimension – it has a vibrant market for fresh produce where they can buy vegetables at fairly cheap prices, so for an area with high levels of unemployment, this comes as a relief. Thus despite acute living conditions, there are compelling reasons for people to continue staying there. During the focus group discussions the residents argued that, “Government wants to

build houses away from Kliptown, which won't be right. This is the right place to buy and sell vegetables and other necessities (Focus Group, Unemployed Women)."

The inequalities are not just within Kliptown but also within the ward which they share with Dlamini, Soweto. Dlamini has a well-developed infrastructure and has formal dwellings. They also share another ward with Eldorado Park, a former Coloured township; this also has a fairly developed infrastructure with a substantial lower middle class. Therefore, Kliptown is in a ward that is highly unequal but this is the rule rather than the exception. It is not the only area that shares municipal wards with better-resourced areas. But under these circumstances the councillor is likely to spend his/her time with the better-resourced sections of the ward since they are likely to be better organized and have fewer problems, making it easier to manage.

In the past, the leaders are said to have asked residents to contribute, for example, R20. They were informed that this was needed to meet certain needs of the community. As one employed male informant puts it, "We do not see what this money gets used for, as we do not see any delivery, I think they use it for personal gain. We are supposed to trust them. But when you speak against it, they threaten to beat you up (Focus Group, Employed Men)." In another similar case quoted by the residents who participated in the focus group discussions, residents claim that they were asked to pay R1 per household to get water from the tanks. The person who had initiated it was the one who ended up benefiting from the whole thing. One male resident argued, "It is not fair that every shack must contribute since water is supposed to be free." They argue that they will not pay for other things since it is the job of the ward councillor to get things done. It is clear that Kliptown residents who participated in the focus groups are aware that the government has made provision for 6 kilolitres of water to be free.

Trust in leaders:

When asked about their leaders Kliptown residents often claim that they have no leaders. They say the leaders are not visible. As one resident puts it, "They are not visible, we do not see them, and we don't see them doing their job." Similar concerns were also raised in Freedom Park. There was a claim that these leaders elect each other. Miltlin's claim that organizations provide vehicles for the informal poor to participate, and to develop a belief in their ability to change their circumstances through collective action, is put into question here (Hlela 2003). It has been "expressed that the community leaders dominate the organizations they belong to reinforcing the belief among residents that they have little control or influence over their lives and their local organisation (Mitlin 2001: 156)." This might be reflected in low turnout in meetings organized by community leaders. Kliptown is no exception to the rule. Local residents mainly complain about the attitude of the leaders and their failure to consult residents when decisions that affect the community are made.

There is a belief that politicians and local leaders are more interested in votes than anything else; residents are seen as voting fodders. One local male resident said, "These people work on the basis of how much he or she is going to get in return. When these leaders have found what they are looking for, they then desert you. They then shift focus to their families." There seems to be a lack of generalised reciprocity and more of balanced reciprocity (For detailed discussion on this see, Putnam 1993); here it is the survival of the fittest – those with access to more resources (i.e. social capital).

One employed male resident said that their ward councillor invited them to a meeting. The meeting was about housing. When they arrived at the venue they were informed that they had to pay R 2500 if they wanted to get government subsidised houses. The informant claimed that the councillor

came to this meeting drunk and showed them little respect. But the community did not do anything about it. The local leaders also did not challenge it. There is a belief that the leaders are not visible and accessible. The residents believe that the councillor should be more involved. There is still a sense that the right kind of leadership could change things. The reason local residents claim that they do not have leaders is because of the way these leaders conduct themselves.

There is often a perception that leaders focus on some sections of the community at the expense of others – an observation already made above. As one unemployed female resident argued, "Our leaders are one sided and are also not honest. For example, when there are jobs (public works jobs), people who get those jobs are people from *Sideka*. People from *Station*[11], our area, are neglected. Leaders work for their areas at the expense of others." They claim that people who are on the waiting list for jobs are ignored. This, they argue, is especially true if you are from a less favoured section of the settlement. They claim that they are told they are still on the waiting list and are told not to lose hope, but even though on the one hand these residents seem to have lost hope in the ability of leaders to change their lives – they still on the other hand expect them to deliver on infrastructure such as roads and houses; the government still has some legitimacy in the eyes of the residents. One reason might be that some leaders are known to have the right connections in higher places, such as government departments and sometimes this is through the leader's command of the English language (Friedman et al. 2005: 63).

Aletta Webster, a chairperson of the Labour Forum which is a sub-committee of the Greater Kliptown Development Forum (GKDF), claims that there are clear guidelines on who should get employment in this development. Webster

[11] Sideka and Station are sections within the Freedom Charter Square that are not official names but are names used by the residents to classify each other. Station is called station because it is near the train station.

was a Sanco treasury in the early and mid-1990s. Subsequent to that she was a shop steward in the Metal and Steel industry, but not a member of the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (Numsa), the biggest union organising in metal sector affiliated to the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (Cosatu); the largest trade union federation in South Africa. She could not recall the name of the union.

She said that there is a document that states clearly the responsibilities of sub-contractors who have been awarded contracts in the Kliptown development. One of the conditions is that the sub-contractor can only bring up to five core workers from outside Kliptown. The rest of the labourers should then be from the local area. She agrees that the system is not perfect. The concern from the residents that developers bring people from outside Kliptown is valid and has been acknowledged by the local leadership. There were negotiations that took place between the developers and the local leadership. Developers argued that they have to bring their own skilled labour since they could not be expected to work with unskilled local residents. A deal was then struck that they could only bring their core staff (with specialist skills) and this is the policy of government on the public works programme. It is not a policy designed for Kliptown Residents. Those residents who seek employment have to register with the Labour Forum, which the local leaders manage through the GKDF.

The chairperson of the Labour Forum complained that not everybody registers with them. She said that some people go directly to the sub-contractors. The sub-contractors do employ people from outside the township, as well as illegal immigrants. But when there is a dispute between the sub-contractors and workers who did not register with the Labour Forum, these workers cannot ask the Labour Forum to intervene. As Councillor Nkomo puts it:

> "There are people who work here who are from outside Kliptown but that is in the contracts they sign with us. There is a situation when people are from outside but if these people did not register with the Labour Forum, these people cannot come to us when they have problems with the employers. There are also workers from outside the country. This creates problems especially in housing. We fight with contractors over these issues. The illegal immigrants can't challenge the contractors if they are dissatisfied." (Interview, 23-04-2004)

The Labour Forum did set minimum working conditions, but the community leaders argue that the contractors don't always abide by these. As the chairperson of the Labour Forum puts it, "there was this contractor who was looking for professional layers. He was paying R140 per day for the job but he expected the workers to lay 150 slabs a day, a target that was impossible to meet in one day. There is a lot of exploitation."

All focus group participants cited nepotism and corruption as being widespread in Kliptown. This is especially so in relation to jobs in the community. The leaders of local organizations such as Sanco and the ANC are the ones who handle contracts. The informants alleged that these leaders employ their family members and relatives, many of these not from Kliptown. Nepotism has been identified as a problem in a number of public works programmes (PWPs) beyond Kliptown. However, some PWPs are better managed than others.

When asked about the sources of information they have about the settlement, the residents stated that that they got it from meetings and sometimes neighbours, since they did not attend all the meetings. However, they said that they are not sure about the reliability of that information. They believed that the ward councillor should be responsible for running Kliptown, since they elected him. But there was some dissatisfaction with those who led the local associations of Sanco and the Community Policing Forum (CPF). These

residents thought that even if they were not satisfied about the conduct of the ward councillor there was not much they could do about it. However, there was recognition that participation in the affairs of the community by everyone concerned could ameliorate their lives.

There was a belief that the infighting between the leaders of local chapters of political parties and civic associations, mainly the ANC and Sanco, has not been good for the area. Most focus group participants said they do not trust information from the local leaders. They argued that these leaders control development contracts and then employ their associates. What can be deduced from the experiences of the local residents was that that the lack of trust in local leaders in the informal settlement emanated from the failure to deliver much needed services, as well as an equitable allocation of public works jobs.

Some residents admitted that these leaders were elected by them into the positions of power; however, these leaders then disregard democratic principles by staying in power long after their mandates had expired. The feeling was that some of these leaders wanted to stay in power indefinitely. The residents claimed that these leaders recruited their cronies to consolidate their hold on power. It then becomes difficult to challenge them. “Since we voted for these leaders – the leadership has not changed for sometime now.” Some of these leaders are said to have been in the same positions for a number of years beyond their terms of office. This is something that this writer observed clearly in Freedom Park in the three years that I spent there conducting field work. These leaders often justified their long stay in power on the grounds that their mandate has not been fulfilled. In the case of Freedom Park the mandate was to eradicate homelessness, which they had bestowed on themselves as leaders and founders of the settlement.

Most residents who participated in the focus groups were from the section called *Station*, which falls within the Freedom Charter Square, one of the most impoverished areas in Kliptown. These residents believed that people who tended to benefit and who dominate associations and employment contracts are people from the Sideke section, where most of the leaders stay. Most of the people in Sideke have a long history in Kliptown, compared to people from the Station section. They believe that there is a 'big man' looking after the people of Sideke. There is a sense that clientelism is widespread in that section. Clientelism understood here as a "relationship between a bestower of patronage and a series of supplicants with benefits for both. For the patron the reward will be access to political power. For the 'clients' jobs, government contracts, licences for bars or construction purposes etc., will be the profits [The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science, retrieved 16-06-2003)," as things stand, the residents of Station believe that most jobs and contracts go to the residents of Sideke, they are said to be the first to get information about government contracts and jobs. The civil society and social capital literature has identified access to information as one of the benefits derived from being a member of an association. For example, Lin argues that, "social capital is seen as a social asset by virtue of actors' connections and access to resources in the network or group of which they are members (2002: 19). There are benefits that accrue from being a member of an association, which might disadvantage non-participants as is clearly demonstrated by both the Freedom Park and Kliptown case studies.

The perception that residents in other settlements are better off is sometimes supported by evidence. In Freedom Park for instance, most of the people who benefited from development contracts and who worked for the consultants Urban Dynamics, were from Freedom Park, even though residents from Ruth First claimed that they were excluded. Major beneficiaries were closely linked to the Development Committee. People in Ruth First felt excluded and did not want to engage with Urban Dynamics. However, despite these

testimonies of favouritism within Freedom Park the perception that it was better managed settlement than Kliptown was valid.

The view that some areas other than Kliptown are well off is supported by the data collected. The residents seem to know exactly those informal settlements that have improved. For example, they usually cite Freedom Park and Orange Farm as model settlements; these settlements have witnessed massive infrastructural development in the recent past. They hardly referred to an area such as the Motsoaledi shack settlement opposite Chris Hani Baragwaneth Hospital, which faces similar problems to those found in poorer parts of Kliptown. But some residents blame some of these misfortunes on the failure to monitor each other in the area. For example, Kliptown had streetlights that have been constantly vandalized. The failure of local structures and networks, therefore, is also highlighted as a problem; this has led to a decline in the stock of social capital, and an uneven distribution of it.

Chairman of the Greater Kliptown Development Forum and ward councillor Eric Nkomo acknowledged that "some people have held protests claiming that they will not benefit from the development. Most of the opposition relate to the housing project. I believe that people who do not qualify for state-provided low-cost housing instigated others to oppose the initiative (*Sowetan*, 23-06-2005)." As he puts it, "During our investigation we discovered that some of the protesters had already qualified for housing elsewhere (*Sowetan*, 23-06-2005)." In Freedom Park the issue of immigrants was taken into consideration during the planning phase, something that appears to have been overlooked in Kliptown.

On the issue of people who had already qualified for housing subsidies elsewhere, it appears that this problem is very widespread in these circumstances. However during my fieldwork I rarely encountered such cases – although this is not surprising as it is in the nature of illegal immigrants to

avoid detection as well as other vulnerable group that has been declared illegal. The information that there are people who come and buy other people's houses is well documented. There are also local leaders who have an interest in more than one settlement. In Freedom Park these leaders were found both within Sanco, which had often challenged, the leadership and the Development Committee which worked closely with the ward councillor, this is a point that was acknowledged by a councillor in the mayoral committee. This councillor was responsible for housing. She claimed to have met the same leaders in different informal settlement (Interview; 20-03-2003).

The focus group participants seemed to be very knowledgeable about the leadership in their area and who was responsible for what? As one respondent puts it, "When there is an assault in the settlement we go to the CPF. When we want jobs we know who to contact." Even though, these residents do not have faith in the ability of these leaders to deliver, they nevertheless know exactly where to go for help. What is good about the CPF, the participants said is that, "the CPF is led by people we trust." One of the reasons, the CPF seemed to be attracting the right calibre of leaders could have been because it does not have control over resources, especially financial resources. Therefore, there is no patronage to disburse.

The residents believed that if their leaders were to be honest and dedicated, their settlements, as well as their wellbeing, would improve. They expressed concerns with what they call 'empty promises;' which, they believed, their leaders made without due regard for their plight. As one resident puts it, "to be honest, we do not like these leaders because they take our names and put them on the waiting list but then we never hear from them." They argued that some of these leaders ask for financial favours before a person could be put on the waiting list for a job. Respondents in the study done on behalf of the JDA saw employment and education as the least exploited opportunities in the area. "The provision of training and the creation of jobs, amongst others,

are suggested as methods to exploit the unexploited opportunities in Kliptown (UE Development Economist Consortium 2003: 26)."

The residents expected their ward councillor to inform the community of any new developments in their area. Report backs are part and parcel of the ward councillors' job descriptions. What came out of the focus group discussions was that the Councillor was not doing his job. As one respondent puts it, "He is the one who made the oath that he will work for the people. So we have the right to complain if he does not deliver. People have a right to complain if he doesn't deliver." Residents believed that the fact that the Councillor is not from Kliptown might actually be working against their interests. The ward councillor is from the township of Dlamini in Soweto and he stays there. Unlike the councillors who normally leave their constituencies after they have been voted into their positions, Ward Councillor Eric Nkomo stayed in his ward during his term of office. But the problem is that his ward, as with most other wards, combines different settlements. These are sometimes characterised by huge income disparities, and types of dwellings, or combine people who have different backgrounds who have never seen themselves as belonging to the same communities.

One respondent argued, "If we approach the councillor individually – he normally says that there is lot on his hands." It appears that they are not happy with the responsiveness of the councillor to their needs. However, they believe that bypassing their ward councillor could be a futile exercise. Since they will eventually be asked to go to their ward councillor who will then take the issue to the Council. The policy states clearly that a councillor and the ward committee cannot be bypassed (see the Municipal Systems Act). It is always difficult for a resource poor community to deal with this bureaucracy. There is a belief that the ward councillors are in it for the money and not to serve the community.

As with most shack settlements in Gauteng, the dominant association in Kliptown is Sanco. Some residents believe that Sanco is not an effective organisation but its *modus operandi* is to take advantage of limited opportunities available in Kliptown. This is a situation that could be expected in an environment where unemployment stood at 71 percent. Like Sanco, the Community Policing Forum (CPF) is very dominant in Gauteng's poor settlements. The residents are very knowledgeable about what this does in the community. They know that it deals with minor crimes; if there are serious offences these are referred to the police.

The Kliptown police station is not small; however, for it to be effective it still needs the support of the community to assist in identifying problem areas within the settlement. The police station is headed by Director Ellen Ndaba, who leads a team of 187 police officers operating throughout greater Kliptown. The jurisdiction of this police station extends beyond Kliptown to include Pimville in Soweto, Klipspruit and the former Coloured township of Klipspruit West (*Sowetan*, 23-06-2005). Ndaba concedes that while there has been much positive sentiment surrounding the development in Kliptown, they had also had to deal with protests from people claiming that the development will exclude them. She also admits that the renovations of the CBD (Kliptown central business district) and surrounding areas have contributed to an increase in crime; including robbery, murder, housebreaking, and assault. People have also stolen building materials in the development that is being undertaken by the Greater Kliptown Development Forum which has a budget of about 4, 5 million rand (Sowetan, 23-06-2005).

The GKDF consists of 33 members. Nkomo said that there would be a change of leadership after the March 2006 local government elections. According to Nkomo there are five wards represented on the GKDF, which means that there are five ward councillors who are represented in this structure. Nkomo said that what they did was go to all the eleven settlements in Kliptown and

speak to the leadership of different structures, i.e. all organised formations. As he puts it, “We said, for example, Chris Hani informal settlement you need to have a representative who is going to represent your settlement. Freedom Charter Square was an exception because it is very big, so it had more than one representative. But the very small ones, like Ngubane, were combined with other smaller ones. We then said we will allow other new structures such as women’s groups, environmentalists and so forth. We invited all of them saying let’s have structures in place. An executive committee was formed with representatives from all the committees. CPF and the police are also represented. Hawkers, informal traders, as well as formal businesses are represented. We formalised them and they appointed their representatives.” He said that everyone in the executive represents a sector or a structure. That is how they ended up with 33 members. These 33 members then elected a chairperson. Nkomo says this is how he became the chairperson of the GKDF.

One reason mentioned that contributes to apathy is the dominance of leaders in these organizations, especially Sanco, as one participant puts it, “The leaders of Sanco and CPF do not inform us about meetings in the community well in advance. That’s why in one such meeting – I did not see anyone from my area going to the meeting called by the CPF.” Kaizer, the chairman of Sanco Freedom Park, is said to disregard the views of ordinary residents. He has a family in the formal township of Pimville and is said to be very active in the development of Kliptown shack settlement. He was responsible for registering people who are going to work on the public works programme (PWP), where he was said to give contracts to close friends. The other cause of apathy is said to be the fact that the positions are not truly contested in a democratic way. Leaders are said to be nominated well in advance and the process stage managed.

The other issue that came out with respect to organisation was that most of the associations in Kliptown were affiliated to the ANC, one such association that was beginning to take root in Kliptown is the MKMVA. As focus group participant puts it "The veterans meet every Monday and they do their things as old men and women. This is an ANC territory and yes the ANC rules here. But they do not deliver." Organizations that are not affiliated to the ANC included churches and football clubs. However, the dominance of the ruling party in all the organisations and structures in Kliptown is to be expected in an environment where it commands more than 70 percent of the votes. In fact, the ANC got more than 85 percent of the votes in the Freedom Charter Square voting station.

But not all these problems are attributed to the government. For example, one respondent argued that their children are the ones who tamper with the street lights. The residents also acknowledged that other parts of Kliptown had witnessed some improvements. These were sections that were more cohesive and with stronger networks of social organisation; meaning that there was a better distribution of social capital. In those areas where there is less community activity and associational life, there appear to be more problems. There is an acknowledgment of the role that leaders can play in the advancement of the community. Most of the leaders came from the well-resourced areas, and in areas where there were newer entrants there seemed to be fewer activities; as it came out during the focus group discussions, they lacked access to jobs. This could be interpreted as lacking in social network and by implication social capital.

When asked about their impression of the leadership and life in general in Kliptown – one participant said, "I'm personally not satisfied. There are certain individuals within the community who just do things without consulting us. They are the members of Sanco and we did not elect them. Whenever opportunities arise, they are the first to grab those opportunities.

We hardly get the information about what is going on in the community in terms of development – leaders tend to share amongst themselves." There is a sense that people who have access to power do not consult. There appears to be no connection between the intentions of the leaders and aspirations of ordinary residents. There is a feeling that leaders are not representative enough, the view that leaders are not representative was shared amongst all groups.

There is a belief, though, amongst the residents that leaders should be the ones responsible for the improvement of services in the area; which means that people still believe that leaders have an important role to play in the community, there is also a view amongst residents that for things to change people must get involved in running their own lives and not leave everything at the mercy of their leaders.

Resident's Attitudes to Participation and Organisation:

Some residents argue that leaders hardly ever give them feedback on meetings. As one resident puts it, "these leaders in organizations don't come back to us and tell us, for example, if a leader has resigned from their organization. The other thing is that the CPF does not come back to us and give us feedback about the meetings. They just keep information to themselves. We do not have enough representatives. We believe that those people that we elect must be able to give us feedback on meetings they have held." They argue that not all residents can go to each and every meeting and argue that this is the reason leaders are elected. For them, community leaders have the responsibility to give feedback. This is a central tenet of the Municipal Systems Act. Therefore, this is supported by legislation. Failure by elected officials to give feedback is clearly a violation of the law. However, this clearly demonstrates the limits to legal frameworks in instilling certain cultures, such as participation in community affairs. Participation in civic life is linked to access to resources, which could be in the form of networks.

The problem stated above is not unique to the CPF, the residents interviewed also complained about the attitude of Sanco leaders. As one employed male puts it, “Sanco leaders do not report back. They are just doing things the way they see fit. We believe that a true leader is a leader that listens to the community.” Even the ward councillor is said to present a similar attitude. For example, one respondent said, “If I were to go to Councillor Nkomo and tell him I want to talk to him, he will simply tell me to get lost, if you take your grievances to the councillor he will throw them into a rubbish bin.” There appears to be a sense that the ward councillor does not take the views of the community seriously and people feel that they do not have a direct line to the government. This disjuncture between the aspirations of the community and what leaders believe communities need was also observed in Freedom Park.

When some residents were asked what they do when they have problems, they said, “It is not easy to just invite people to a meeting. If you try to do that they’ll say you think you are better. Once you do that you’ll be inviting your own death. Because, these leaders will think you want to stop them from their gravy train. They’ll come and burn your shack” There is a feeling that not everybody can call a community meeting. It seems that there are constraints on ordinary residents that prevent them from organizing - other than the lack of interest in community affairs.

We know that joining a local association is a form of collective action. But what happens when these associations disappoint their members? What one would expect under normal circumstances is that these members would go to the next meeting and challenge the leadership or form a rival association. However, what happens in this environment is that residents instead opt out and they stop going to meetings. As some residents stated in the above paragraph; forming another association or calling a meeting is not always an

option, as one risks being ridiculed or, worse, being killed. So violence against those who attempt breakaway from the norm within these settlements is a reality. What transpires is that some residents are just not interested in any form of collective action.

They become free riders in the process. Free riding is a common occurrence in these environments, especially if there is a risk that one might have to confront visible or invisible power holders. According to Ostrom (2000: 138) "... the temptation to free-ride on the provision of collective benefits is a universal problem." Therefore, it is not unique to Kliptown and other case studies chosen for this study. As Skidmore argues,

> "The public good character of much social capital means that individual incentives to engage in behaviours that create or sustain social capital are relatively weak. The temptation to free ride on the social contributions of others is strong." (Skidmore 2001: 68)

However, free riding has its downsides and upsides; its upside being that one does not have expose him/herself to ridicule and does not waste time, letting others do the job; its downside being that one might lose out on crucial market information, for example concerning jobs available in the settlement, where any kind of employment is at a premium as there is about 71 percent unemployment in Kliptown.

But some residents still present a positive attitude toward attending meetings. This is, in spite, of the perceived constraints. As one employed male resident puts it, "Yes, it is important to attend meetings because we want to be informed. In other areas people work together. But we need a report back when leaders have meetings either with government or other stakeholders." It appears that some residents still see local organizations as a very important bridge between them and the government. However, these residents have

different perceptions on the role played by local leaders. Some residents preferred certain leaders to others, while other residents believed that the whole system was rotten. They argue that a true leader must be someone who is honest and has an understanding of community needs. They also believe that the leaders must be of middle age, thereby combining youth and old age.

Residents appear fairly knowledgeable about issues that affect other shack settlements. They are aware of the fact that the government is facing a huge challenge in dealing with homelessness. As one resident puts it, “There are too many shacks here. I do not know how the government is going to manage it. Probably, the shacks in this area are more than 20 000. And you can just imagine how many people live inside one shack. If you look at Alexandra, they took people to Bram Fischer informal settlement, a place far away from their places of work.” Some argue that since there has been talk of people putting up an upfront payment, those who are likely to benefit are those who are employed. As one female residents said, “When you have money you stand a better chance of getting a house quicker, because they say there will be subsidized houses and rental ones.” This is the information that comes out of meetings that the residents of Kliptown have attended and I have also been in such meetings in Freedom Park. This gives a sense that the information does filter through to residents even those who do not attend meetings and are not members of any associations; the informants seem to be conscious of the role played by organizations, the government, as well as their own role. That is why the issue of report back keeps on propping up.

Some residents do resist the notion that they are supposed to be passive recipients of services. They want a proactive role in determining their own lives. It appears that the residents of Kliptown informal settlement, like those of Freedom Park want to be active recipients of services. They want to be kept informed, so as to be able to make informed decisions. But what transpires from the field is that the public space is not always open for

everyone in that kind of poorly resourced environment. According to Habermas, “The public sphere can best be described as a network for communicating the information and points of view (1996: 360).” The public sphere in Kliptown is riddled with problems and inequalities between parts of the township and the leaders in relation to residents. The public sphere here does not meet the criteria described by Jürgen Habermas. Some of the residents interviewed were not happy that they did not get feedback from their leaders. As one resident proclaimed, “I see the leaders going up and down. They attend meetings about development, but I’m not certain of what they are supposed to be doing. Perhaps, if you (the researcher) talk to them, they will be in the best position to tell you what is going on.”

Kliptown residents seem to be highly conscious and knowledgeable about the organizations that operate in their area. They believe that the local organizations such as Sanco and the CPF are very active in Kliptown. These are also diverse and there is a good gender balance in some of them. Residents do get invited to some of the meetings. However, some residents believe that they are being told of processes that do not actually work. But, because of high levels of unemployment, it appears that some residents are mostly interested in meetings when there is a possibility of finding new public works jobs. Housing is also on top of the agenda of these residents, a point that was acknowledged by the ward councillor.

In some instances the possibility of access to jobs is seen as a prerequisite for participation in community activities. It appears that they are adopting an instrumentalist approach, as a condition of attending meetings. So, without any hope of getting something out of these meetings, going to a meeting is seen as a waste of time. Some unemployed residents believe that attending these meetings will limit their chance of making a living. They often argue that a meeting is unlikely to put food on their table and that the information that they sometimes get from community meetings is not useful. This means

that not everybody has faith in local organizations. Unemployed residents sometimes present a completely different attitude to organizations compared with their employed counterparts. Time is cited as one of the main reasons why the unemployed do not attend meetings. They do not think that attending meetings will ameliorate their lives.

Local civic leaders are seen as the people who are in the best position to convey the messages of residents to the ward councillor. As one resident puts it, "It must be the Sanco leader and the ANC that should resolve our problems. They are able to reach the councillor and in return the councillor is able to reach the Council." But at the same time, they believe that these leaders have not been able to fulfil their mandates. Some residents argue that the main problem is that all these leaders have links with each other, that is, they have the same circle of friends or comrades. So there are no proper checks and balances in place. There is a strong belief that outside intervention will be the best thing under the circumstances. The role of the national government and institutions is crucial in resolving some of these challenges.

The fact that residents of Kliptown can see change taking place in other similar environments has made them lose faith in the ability of their leaders to improve their lives. They believe that a good crop of leadership could make a difference. In some of the interviews, the name of Freedom Park[12] (Devland Ext. 27) was mentioned a number of times as a model of how things could change if the leaders work with their people. As we have seen, although Freedom Park residents often complained about their leaders, there was a lot of interaction between the different interest groups in the settlement. The strength of the civics in Freedom Park and its ability to liaise with both the local leaders and the Council went a long way in improving the circumstances

[12] It is officially known as Devland Ext. 27. Since it is located in the industrial heartland of Devland, in fact the land where Freedom Park is situated was owned by the private sector, whereas the section called Ruth First was partly owned by the government as well as the church (Roman Catholic).

of local people, there was dynamic equilibrium between different interest groups and that made it possible to achieve a relatively successful local infrastructure development; this shows that the balance of power does not always favour one group.

There is also a sense that the civic organisations are crowding out the community in Kliptown. As one employed female resident argued, “All the groups in the settlement must now take a back seat, we now want to hear from the minister herself. We need Sisulu (Minister of Housing at the time) to come here so that we can hand to her our grievances. If we expect these leaders to do it – they are unlikely to deliver. The timeframes need to be set and we believe that the minister is in a better position to do that,” and it appears that the role of the state is well understood – there is still a lot of faith in the national government to deliver and a lack of trust in local institutions to produce any tangible results. This is a view some residents in Freedom Park hold as well – but which is seen as unfair by the local leadership in these areas since they believe that you cannot divorce what is happening at local level from what is happening at national level.

Some residents commended the role volunteers play in their community. One resident said, “They are just volunteering. They do not receive any salaries. We also complain about them because we like to talk. They do everything for free. They are hard working. But greediness only comes in when there is money involved.” They believe that leaders get corrupted when there are finances involved. This situation is only to be expected in an environment where unemployment is very high. Getting a position in such a community could mean an improvement on ones life chances. But some residents believe that leaders are not given enough support by the community.

There is also a sense that the ward councillor is not responsive to the needs of the community. People argue that he made a number of promises that he has

failed to fulfil. Another issue that is often mentioned is that he is not working hard enough for some areas within his ward. For them his intervention could have made a huge difference. The main problem cited by residents was that the councillor was the only one with access to the municipality. It would be difficult, they believe, to know whether the ward councillor was conveying the right information to the Mayor of the City of Johannesburg. So there is a sense that accountability to his constituency is lacking. This might be a structural problem as much as it is a political problem; especially if one looks at the two policies that govern participation at local level. This is the Municipal System Act, as well as the Municipal Structures Act which are discussed in the first chapter. The former states that the metro must encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality. The role of the councillor is clearly stated in the Municipal Systems Act. However, this rarely happens in practice as there are other pressures on the councillors to deliver concrete results and this leads to councillors accounting upwards rather than downwards.

The Municipal Systems Act states that the metro council must contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the community. It must also contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the community. It also states that local council or metro must use its resources, and annually allocate funds in its budgets as may be appropriate to implement the above norms. But the same law states that this must not be interpreted as permitting interference with the municipal council's right to govern and exercise the executive and legislative authority of the municipality.

Residents Attitudes to Government and Voting:

There is a sense that within Kliptown the relationship between the 'community' members is not cordial. Some residents believe that the ward councillor and organizations are only interested in addressing community

problems during the election time. On political campaigns, one resident said, "When we did these campaigns, I knew that there some benefits but here in Kliptown there aren't any benefits. Do you think one will be able to wake up early in the morning and do a door-to-door campaign and then get nothing out of it? They only gave us money for transport to go and do these door-to-door campaigns, that's all." What comes out of these testimonies by Kliptown residents is that there is a belief that things in other, similar, areas are improving. But that might not always be the case. Some residents believe that it will be difficult to effect changes in their immediate environment. They believe that participation in the civic and political life will not ameliorate their lives. Holders of public office, especially at local level, are seen as unresponsive to the needs of ordinary residents. The fact that residents expect concrete benefits from participation shows the difficulties of instilling civic duties in communities where there are high levels of unemployment and poverty. The sixth chapter deals with this point extensively.

As stated earlier, age was seen as one of the important variables in determining who becomes a leader, especially a good leader. Kliptown residents who participated in the focus groups believe their leaders are not responsive to their demands and concerns because they are too old to adapt to new ways of doing things. The residents argued that in the civic organisation there are too many old people. There is hardly anybody between the ages of eighteen and thirty. In fact "the Greater Kliptown Development area has a predominantly youthful population, with 63.8% being below the age of 30 (UE Development Economist Consortium 2003: 26)." It means a significant portion of the population is not represented in community structures. The voice of 63.8% of the population might not be heard and therefore, not factored into decision making. Most of the senior leaders in Kliptown had a union background, the ward councillor has a union background as well; however, he is not from Kliptown but from Dlamini in Soweto. During my

fieldwork in Freedom Park I also discovered that a significant number of its leadership had a union background.

However, Sanco is constituted mainly by the unemployed; these are mainly people who have never held a formal job, the youth, they argue, is not incorporated into these structures; which means that the majority of residents do not have a voice. Thus a person who has stronger networks forged long ago stands a better chance of becoming a leader. The lack of experience in associations amongst the youth might be a stumbling block to their ascendance within the leadership structures. It is argued elsewhere in this thesis that the dominance of the older residents is likely to be as a result of their experience gained in the union movements in the 1970s and the 1980s – something that is also a reality in Freedom Park as stated above; this is also demonstrated extensively in chapter six. In Freedom Park, the Development Committee is very strong and male dominated. All its members gained their experience and came to know each other during the struggles on the shop floor. They have a longer history of community mobilization.

There is a sense, though, that for a person to be a true leader, s/he needs to have something in common with the people s/he leads. But, if one looks at Kliptown, for example, the ward councillor lives in Dlamini, Soweto and the local leaders are seen as very old. Therefore, the commonality of interest might be very important in determining the right leader. Councillor Nkomo did agree that some people in Kliptown questioned his credibility, often saying that he cannot empathise with them because where he stays there are tarred roads and street lights. They believe that there is no commonality of interest between the leaders and those they lead. However, there is a counterargument to this claim since middle classes often lead the struggles of the poor; this does not necessarily invalidate the concerns raised by the residents however.

Sections one and two of Dlamini Township share a ward with Kliptown. After the 2005 local government elections Councillor Nkomo was retained by the ANC as a proportional representation (PR) councillor. However, he retained his position as the chairperson of the Greater Kliptown Development Forum, an elected position. Nkomo has a long history in the union movement. In 1992 he became national negotiator for the Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu) which he had joined in 1987. He started as a shop steward and moved up the ranks over the years. He is a very eloquent leader, something I frequently observed amongst the Development Committee members as well as the ward councillor in Freedom Park, in 1995 he joined the Gauteng Provincial Government where he stayed for six months and after the 1995 local government elections he became a ward councillor for the Kliptown/Dlamini Ward.

While some residents believe that there are no good leaders, others believe that Kliptown does have a good crop of leaders. As one unemployed resident puts it,

> "According to me there are good leaders in our area who are doing their best to improve the lives of local people. Even though, there are stumbling blocks along the way that are sometimes beyond their control. The main problem is that people will always oppose you. They will try their best to make sure that these leaders do not succeed. For example, Mandla is a good leader but most of the people do not like him. Perhaps, he is too much of a good leader for them and ahead of his time."

Despite all this, Kliptown residents still present positive attitudes to voting. On average, the turnout in the national and provincial elections in 2004 was about 65 percent. For example, the Kliptown Community Centre had a 64 percent turnout in the national elections and 61 percent in the provincial ballot. In another voting station, Kliptown High School, the turnout was 76.35

percent. In this voting station however the ANC majority was reduced to 31.89 percent, this can partly be explained by the fact that the voting population in that station was very diverse compared to the station found within Kliptown, which is predominantly black African and poor. This is the main ANC constituency in the Gauteng province. Most of them vote in all elections, even the local government elections, where the turnout is usually very low.

On the other hand, there were those who said that there had been no significant changes in their lives, if any changes at all. Therefore, they are unlikely to vote if there are no improvements. As one residents stated, “If the next elections find me still living in a shack, I will not vote.” But others say they will vote because they want a black government – therefore, voting in this instance will be like expressing one’s identity. There is a fear that if they do not vote, apartheid will come back – a view often expressed during the election years. While others stated that they would continue to vote since most of the country’s poor people had witnessed improvements in their lives. It was Kliptown that had leaders who did not work for their residents. So this problem was seen as a local issue and not a national problem, and, therefore, they did not see the need to disengage from politics completely.

Some argue that voting gives them the power to choose the government they want. As one employed male resident puts it, “It is very important to vote because that is when we have the power to put an organisation that we trust. I’m not talking about individuals; I’m particularly talking about Mbeki. I trust the organisation that he leads” This was witnessed during the local government elections on December 5, 2000, when the ANC, instead of putting up posters of local candidates during its election campaign, decided to make President Mbeki the face of its election campaign.

The explanation often put forward to justify voting for particular political parties is that not everybody can be a leader. They elect people they trust to the leadership positions. The ANC, they argue, stands a better chance since it is trusted by the majority of citizens. One reason put forward for voting, even if there are no significant changes in the lives of ordinary people, is that this is done in order to vote out those leaders who are not performing well. Voters in South Africa (this is especially true at national and provincial level) have little power to choose leaders who will represent them unless they happen to be registered members of the political parties and attend branch meetings. This is an argument that is often put forward in favour of the constituency system against the current system of proportional representation. At local government level, South Africa already has a combination of the two systems. This does not seem to have resolved this dilemma. However, we have seen non-performing leaders replaced, which means that the political leaders do sometimes respond to the needs of people on the ground. There is a strong belief across different groups that things will only be fixed through voting. Unemployed individuals present different attitudes to government from the employed residents. The unemployed residents still show loyalty and attachment to government. This might be a result of a sense of powerlessness. The other reason they mention is that other areas have experienced qualitative changes. Therefore, they see their plight as mainly a result of local dynamics.

Some residents believed that if they do not vote for the ANC and vote for the opposition (DA), it might lead to more corruption, as well a lack of service delivery. The reason put forward is that the DA will have to start from the beginning building local structures. This seemed to be informed by the understanding that all political parties are likely to make mistakes.

The level of greed is seen as one of the problems that hinder development in the area, and this is said to be especially true in the past five years. As one unemployed female resident explains:

> "For the structures such as Sanco, CPF, etc. it is like they have been contaminated. For example, if there is a project that is to be implemented; there is now a belief that one must enrich him/herself first. But it is not supposed to be this way; leaders are supposed to lead the community. I would like to put more emphasis on the CPF because they are facing a lot of problems. They are also responsible for combating crime. When you are a leader within CPF people abuse you verbally. The community has no sense that you are working for them. If you were to die, there will be no compensation from the government but they are doing the work of the police – trying to make their task easier. This might be one of the reasons leaders are corrupt, because their contribution is not always acknowledged by both the community and the government."

Unemployment might be one of the reasons why people are no longer prepared to volunteer and selflessly work for the good of the community. This was a culture that was very vibrant prior to the advent of democratic governance in South Africa – people who were members of the local voluntary associations such as the *stokvels*, and the educated elite, used to participate in the development of their communities; with no expectations that they would be financially rewarded for it, as the peri-urban case of Sweetwaters under chiefly rule will highlight. High levels of unemployment might be detrimental to the cultivation of a culture that instils positive social capital, as the case studies chosen for this thesis show.

The stocks of trust seem to have dwindled in Kliptown. This assertion comes mainly from residents who have been in Kliptown for longer, since the time it was still a smaller settlement with fewer shacks. The recent arrivals are more concerned with acquiring new government subsidised houses. Most people do not attend meetings. Therefore, most residents tend to rely on secondary sources for information. For example, some people say that houses will be built in Pimville, Soweto, while others will tell you that these houses will be

built in Dlamini, also in Soweto, where the Ward Councillor Nkomo comes from. The leadership is blamed for this gap in information. Some people claim that they are wary of attending meetings since they are usually told that they have to pay R2 500 to secure the government's RDP houses, even though people know that these houses are free.

There is clearly a breakdown in communication and this impacts negatively on the ability of people make informed choices about what is in their interest. Information might also be spread by those individuals who earn above a certain amount and who therefore do not qualify for these houses. A point mentioned by the ward councillor; however, considering the high levels of unemployment these are likely to be very few. The other source of misinformation might be those residents who have already benefited elsewhere and who are, therefore, ineligible to benefit in Kliptown. An individual cannot benefit more than once with regard to government subsidised houses, although they are given an opportunity to rent.

Some residents think that the authorities are failing to prioritise development of their area. As one unemployed resident argued, "Before the authorities start revamping our shopping centre, they should build us houses. Then they can build taxi ranks and shopping malls." It appears that there is a serious discrepancy between the aspirations of the poorer members of the community and the perspective of those in power. Some residents believed that the government got its priorities wrong.

Some residents believe that the relevant information does not get down to them because the leaders usually speak in English, as one unemployed resident puts it, "The youth that understands the "King George's" language is excluded." There seems to be a feeling that those residents who understand the language spoken by those in power are excluded from leadership structures. One of the concerns often raised by older residents is also that

meetings are usually conducted in English thereby excluding a majority of the residents that do not understand the language. There is a concern that things are not put in writing to avoid accountability. The Municipal Systems Act states that the "… the municipality must take into account the special needs of people who cannot read or write – so as people with disabilities, women, and other disadvantaged groups." Therefore, the failure of the ward councillors to communicate with residents through mediums of their choice is a clear violation of their rights.

It becomes difficult for local residents to demand accountability from leaders when messages from the metro council are not clearly articulated. In local meetings, residents often demanded that every structure within the community should keep records that will reflect similar information. It is clear that unemployment is sometimes at the heart of these problems. But these can be minimized if residents could get proper title deeds in order to give them ownership of the land. This is likely to give them more leverage. It would also create more certainty. However, this is likely to be challenged by those residents who have benefited elsewhere as well as illegal immigrants, because if you have already received an RDP house before, the system picks this up and you are automatically excluded. Therefore, not everybody in these settlements is looking for a title deed. Development often means threading carefully around all these interest groups mentioned. It is not just an issue of erecting structures and giving title deeds.

One of the positive things about Kliptown, as well as Freedom Park, is that the local associations are characterised by diversity with leaders coming from different backgrounds, and, in some structures, with women well represented. Tribalism is unheard of and ethnicity is not seen as a hindrance to organization. As one unemployed resident explains, "The leadership is elected by the community. The political party you belong to is not important. In this settlement we have not had problems like that." But that does not mean

that everybody attends and participates in these meetings. My observation is that the leadership is not strictly tribal or based on political affiliation in the civic groups. However the ANC dominates every sphere of life in the settlement. One of the reasons often mentioned as contributing to apathy is the R2 500 (R2 700) demanded by the council as down payment for houses, I should note that all the groups that participated in the focus groups made this point. The residents said that it always tops the agenda in meetings and is one of the reasons some of them no longer attend meetings. However when it comes to meetings there are no barriers based on age and gender. In meetings I attended residents seem free to ask controversial questions. But this is not always the case with most of the areas under chiefly rule, which are also a subject of this thesis.

It appears that some residents lack the confidence to ask questions during meetings. This might be due to certain invisible structural constraints or perhaps lack of meaningful organisation in the area; it is an open question. As one resident puts it, “The issue of R2 500 gets to my nerves. Instead of people asking what the R2 500 is for and who must pay it, they just ask irrelevant questions and talk amongst themselves after the meetings. They do not engage the leadership.” According to one female informant, the R2 500, which later increased to R2 700, was initially going to be paid only by those residents who completed the forms in 1997, but those who came afterwards were also expected to pay this amount. Therefore those who are expected to pay this amount might be deliberately confusing other residents, telling them that they are all expected to pay. Similar approaches have been observed elsewhere, where residents who live in formal houses, realising that those who were renting backyard shacks were also likely to be provided houses, mobilized backyard dwellers to challenge the process (see, Sihlongonyane 2001); in the process, the poor backyard dwellers ended up destroying a programme that was meant to benefit them.

Residents who were expected to pay were those had white registration forms and those who were not expected to pay were those with pink registration forms. Some residents believe that those who are not attending meetings compromise themselves more than anyone else. There were those who said that they would not deliberately miss a meeting. While other residents argued that they would only attend these meetings if there were new issues on the agenda. The residents said that the issue of R2 500 was always on the agenda in each and every meeting. As one resident explains, "When we are called to a meeting about the development of Kliptown; there must be something to show for it. But if there is nothing to show we become less interested in subsequent meetings."

In an interview with the former Ward Councillor for Kliptown, Eric Nkomo, who became a Proportional (Representation) Councillor after the March 1, 2006 local government elections, the issue of the R2 500/R2 700 payment was clarified. Nkomo said the money required was actually R 2 479, which they usually refer to as R 2500. He said that this was a decision taken at Cabinet level. There was a concern that people were abusing the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) housing programme. A number of suggestions were put forward to deal with the abuse. One of the proposals was that beneficiaries should contribute their own labour in the process. This suggestion was seen as problematic. In Gauteng there was a decision that people who were on the waiting list from 1995 to 1997 should be exempted. Nkomo said, "There was a concern that people who came after this period actually received houses at the expense of those who came earlier. As a way of compensating, those who came between 1995 and 1997 were going to be exempted from paying the fee. Those who came after 1997 were expected to pay." (Eric Nkomo, interview, 23 April 2006). He said that as far as he knew the 1995/97 policy applied in Gauteng only.

The attitude of local residents to local organizations depends on the issue at hand. Some residents believe that these organizations are very good when it comes to community disputes. Both Sanco and the CPF are commended for their role in resolving community disputes. CPF is seen as the most effective, although the leadership of these organizations sometimes overlap. They are given credit for working under trying circumstances, including working at night doing patrols. The relationship between Sanco and the CPF in Kliptown is very cordial. When Sanco feels that there is an issue that they cannot resolve, it is referred to the CPF. Even though these organizations were said to be effective in dealing with crime – crime was still seen as one of the main problems facing Kliptown, especially in informal parts of the area. One should remember that unemployment stands around 70 percent and therefore the majority of residents are not employed. If you drive through the area during the week – one might mistake it for a weekend or a holiday. Employment, housing, and crime remain Kliptown's biggest concerns. The research commissioned by the JDA concurs with the findings of the focus groups and discussions with community leaders.

Kaizer is from Sanco and is responsible for the contracts relating to development in the area. He is the chairperson of Sanco. Mandla, on the other hand, is the Chairperson of the ANC. There are positive views about the ANC leader compared to the leader of Sanco. This is a feature that distinguishes Kliptown from Freedom Park. It is possibly because Sanco in Freedom Park, especially the Ruth First branch, does not have control over resources. The leader of Sanco is said to come from the formal township of Soweto; thus people from middle class backgrounds seem to possess better networks and are endowed with social capital. These kinds of leaders are able to get around problems because of the resources they possess. This is also true of Freedom Park. Most of those people who hold positions of influence tend to have a long history of community engagement; some have held formal jobs, while others have been able to get good public works program contracts. There

seems also to be an entrenched perception that those who benefit are members of the ruling party. As one male informant puts it, “Once they discover that you are not a member of the ANC, you’ll never benefit from what the government offers, never, and you’ll never.”

Some of the meetings are said to be characterised by infighting. A feature that was prevalent in Freedom Park, where meetings became a contestation between leaders of different organization; in that instance, Sanco was a very dominant force but the actual power rested with the Development Committee and the ANC. While in Kliptown, the power seems to rest with Sanco, and the ANC just governs. The Kliptown residents stated that when they asked the Development Committee how they were expected to make financial contributions since most of them were unemployed. The issue was never discussed again and the leaders decided to impose the resolution on residents. The Development Committee even brought in a company that had been retained by the City of Johannesburg to oversee the development of the settlement. The residents were made to fill in forms. I had witnessed that happening in Freedom Park when a senior leader of the Development Committee forced some residents who had come to inquire about the housing programme to fill in subsidy forms even though at that point Sanco was still challenging the whole process.

Residents were told that those who do not pay would be relocated to Zuurbekom, an open farmland on the West Rand, Gauteng. Such cases were not farfetched since something similar had happened in Alexandra, when some of the residents were moved to Soweto. People had been relocated from areas closer to their livelihood to remote areas. Some residents lamented that these relocations were very costly. One feature of these meetings was that they tended to become a contest between leaders of different organizations. As one informant argued, “You often heard the ANC accusing the UDM of derailing the process, or the UDM accusing Sanco of doing the same.” They

lament that at the end of the day they are the ones who are negatively affected by this "buck passing" by their leaders. However these divisions are said to dissipate during the election periods.

The other aspect that is said to be contributing to lack of interest in participating in local politics is that leaders do not respect the people that they are supposed to represent. Some residents claimed that they deserted their organisations because of infighting and corruption. The other reason mentioned consistently was that these leaders tend to dominate these organisations leaving little room for members to participate meaningfully. As one male resident puts it, "When you try to raise a point or ask a question. You are told that you do not know anything. Your credibility is questioned." This is also true of Freedom Park where the leaders of the Development Committee complained about the lack of education amongst Sanco leaders, saying that their main problem was that they did not understand basic things such as the land and tenure project. The Development Committee would argue that the land and tenure project did not mean houses – something they felt Sanco did not understand. There was no attempt to get these leaders or ordinary people to buy in or to understand issues and projects under discussion, which is clearly a violation of their rights and goes against the spirit of the Municipal Systems Act. It transpired during the research for this thesis that local residents believe that national and provincial government officials know what they are doing and seem to have the interest of the people at heart; this is in contrast to their belief that the local leaders simply do not care. The reason cited for non-participation in local meetings was therefore the constant infighting within organisations and certain groups that were intent on disrupting these meetings.

Some residents believe that local leaders would sometimes try every trick possible to get people to attend meetings. As one male resident puts it, "They know that if they say that the meeting is about houses, we are going to attend

because they know that we need houses." However, it is not always easy for residents to raise their concerns in meetings without being a member of an association. Local power holders expect residents to produce membership cards of a dominant political party or a national civic body. Therefore, in an environment where there is high unemployment and those employed not earning decent income - getting a membership card for a political party or a civic association can be a costly exercise. These membership cards usually have to be renewed annually. This hinders some sections of the community trying to participate and benefit from local services. Focus groups participants claimed that this was prevalent in Kliptown.

Dwindling Stocks of Social Capital and Loosening Social Bonds:

One employed male resident argued, "If you can ask anyone on the streets about Kliptown – they will tell you that in this area, things are very bad. There is no unity and leaders are corrupt." Another male respondent added that "There is no order in this area. Our relatives do not want to visit us anymore – they say this place is not safe and they will become crime statistics."

In terms of participation in voluntary activities, it seems that the culture of volunteering did not completely disappear in Kliptown. The CPF gets a number of volunteers from the community. The majority of those who volunteer to patrol at night tend to be men, since it could prove to be very dangerous. However, the majority of those who are members of the CPF are women. Those who participate in the CPF patrols have sometimes been negatively affected. For example, some residents claimed that the houses of those who volunteer for the CPF are often an easy target for criminals since these criminal elements would know that the CPF members are patrolling at that time of the night and are therefore not in their homes. As one employed male resident who volunteered in the CPF before puts it, "All of us do engage in patrols. But there are people who take advantage of this. When they realise

that we are on the other side, they then break into our shacks." This is said to be one of the reasons discouraging people from volunteering for the CPF, even though they see the value in participating.

One of the reasons people come to the informal settlements is the prospect of owning a house. Many shack settlement residents used to rent backyard shacks in formal townships. As is clear in the following testimony, "I used to live in Tembisa (a historically black African township west of Johannesburg). Some people went to Orange Farm and they now own RDP houses. But those of us, who moved to Kliptown, are still waiting." This was the case in the previous chapter where the majority of Freedom Park leaders were at one time backyard shacks dwellers in Soweto. According to the Urban-Econ Consortium (November 2002: 23) research, "the majority of the respondents (71.5%) indicated that they haven't always lived in Kliptown … The majority of the respondents (91.7%) indicated that they have lived in Kliptown for 20 years or less." The more than 71.5 percent of residents who have not always lived in Kliptown, incorporated the urban and rural areas of South Africa as well as other African countries such as Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, and Mozambique (UEC 2002: 23).

There is a sense that people from better-resourced areas, such as the neighbouring Pimville, are responsible for who gets what. For example, one male resident protested, "I wanted to open a shop. I then went to the Sanco Chairman Kaizer and he referred me to Chauke who lives in Pimville. When he asked me what I wanted to do, I said to him I wanted a photocopying and faxing type of a shop. But the surprising thing is that people who stay in Pimville manage Kliptown affairs. But Pimville is ward 10 and this does not make sense since Kliptown is ward 19. The problem with the leaders here is that they employ their friends. At the municipality those are the people who are doing their job." It appears that those endowed with stronger networks are in a better position to take advantage of all the available opportunities. This

could sometimes border on corruption. However it also proves that being active in one's own community could give one access to crucial market information, as the saying goes, "who you know matters more than what you know". Participation in civic affairs has a number of advantages. It could be a value in itself, or could give the participant access to crucial market information. One of the major problems the Kliptown residents often raised during the focus group discussions was that even the ward councillor does not come from Kliptown but from a formal township. Kliptown is squeezed between the two formal Soweto townships of Dlamini and Pimville.

Like in Freedom Park, in Kliptown the same leaders have been in charge of community affairs for a long period of time. As one employed male respondent puts it, "If my memory serves me well – In 1998 we used to *toyi-toyi* a lot. We held several meetings. The current crop of leaders was elected. They have been in power since then. It has been more than five years but we have not seen any significant changes." What comes out of this is that, at the beginning, the leaders tend to behave in a democratic way, but this soon changes. The likely cause of this lack of significant change, might be the lack of job opportunities. Holding a position in a civic structure or a branch of a political party means access to opportunities which the beneficiaries are unlikely to have access to should they lose their positions of power; this prognosis is examined in the final chapter.

Sanco is said to be so dominant in Kliptown that most of the opportunities are under its control. They act as gatekeepers. As Steven Friedman argues, "Gatekeeping is also more likely where participatory development may disturb existing patronage networks, a factor in informal settlements but less so where civics are involved since they do not yet have patronage to dispense (1993: 32)." However, this observation had been made prior to the 1994 democratic elections, as well as the local government elections a year later. Some civics are now in control of resources such as job opportunities in the

development programmes within their settlements. This is less so in Freedom Park shack settlement, where the mainstream civic organisation is not in control of resources, but the Development Committee; however, the civic leaders are often the first to benefit from some of the opportunities offered by the developers. Most of the people who work with the Johannesburg Development Company (JDA) are the members of Sanco, whereas in Freedom Park, the Development Committee dominated that process. Nonetheless, the building of a local primary school with a contract worth more than R4 million was a preserve of Sanco. The Sanco leaders are said to release information tactically when they engaged in these structures. They are the first ones to know about future projects in the area. They then release this information strategically to benefit their closest associates – engaging in a form of "insider trading" in the marketplace.

As one unemployed female resident maintains, "We don't get information. There is no one who comes and tells us that on such a project, say, we need ten people. It is only those from the other section who are being considered. This Sanco is representing the other side from section C and D. We do not have representatives on this side. It is Sanco that should resolve this problem but they are part of the problem." They argue that they only get information from the people who live in other sections – friends, but not leaders. These associates sometimes assume that everybody has the information in question.

Females tend dominate CPF – one female resident believes that this is a shame. "It is very difficult for females to tackle difficult cases – especially dangerous situations."

Generalised Reciprocity – "Ubuntu":

Some focus group participants said that the reason they chose Kliptown was because of the fact that there were no gangsters. I think they were comparing it to the neighbouring Eldorado Park, which is associated with gangsterism. It

is a well-developed settlement, endowed with relatively better infrastructure. Some of the better resourced Kliptown residents left Kliptown for Eldorado Park. But Kliptown was not this congested and crowded prior to the 1994 elections. In fact, according to one unemployed male resident, "When I first came to Kliptown, it was not this full until 1992. Prior to that period we were able to socialise freely with other residents." Therefore, the influx of new residents has impacted badly on social networks, in the process creating a different culture altogether. He argued that in the past, it was easier to learn new languages through social interaction.

Unlike the neighbouring Eldorado Park, Kliptown residents believe that the culture of gangsterism is not entrenched in their settlement. However, crime is cited as one of the most serious concerns in Kliptown. Community activists believe the police turn a blind eye to it. A point a community leader I interviewed confirmed. This was a running theme in all the focus groups. While not denying that there is also crime in their area, some residents claimed that one of the reasons they had continued to stay in Kliptown was because there was still a spirit of 'ubuntu', that is trust in fellow residents. However, other residents believe that the spirit of 'ubuntu' has since waned. These differing attitudes might have a lot to do with when a person moved to Kliptown. The recent arrivals seem to have a positive attitude toward Kliptown, compared to those who came to the area prior to the first democratic elections in 1994. People who have been in Kliptown for longer believe that the spirit of neighbourliness is no longer there, because of the influx of new people. Thus according to one unemployed resident, "I would say that Kliptown was fine in the 1980s, there was a spirit of 'ubuntu'. Neighbours were there for you in times of need. But these days, people will hardly help you." On the other hand, the newer arrivals, who are mostly black Africans[13], believed that the threat of crime has subsided. They might, of

[13] According to the UEC study, "the majority of respondents (56.6%) moved from other areas (*possible farming areas*) of Gauteng province to Kliptown followed by Eastern Cape." "The

course, have come from areas with worse crime rates or would have had access to opportunities that were not available where they come from and therefore, crime might not have been their major concern.

Some people believe that there are jobs in Kliptown, despite the high levels of unemployment. But these, they fear, are reserved for people with the right connections. Therefore, they believe they are not benefiting from the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); while others say the salaries are too low for them to work there.

There are those who believe that organizations such as Sanco do not serve the community, but their own interest. There is a problem concerning self interest here. Unlike in the ideal 19th century America of Tocqueville, where he observed that even though people did serve their own interest – it was however what he term self-interest which was conscious of the needs of other fellow citizens. As Putnam expresses it, "Citizens in a civic community are not required to be altruists. In the civic community, however, citizens pursue what Tocqueville termed 'self-interest properly understood', that is, self-interest defined in terms of the broader public needs… (Putnam 1993: 88)."

The citizens of Kliptown believe that the behaviour of their community leaders is far from the ideal identified by de Tocqueville in 19th century United States. As one female resident argued:

> "There are all these organizations within the community. We just see them doing things without consulting us the community. There are certain

indication of the movement from other African countries are minimal with Mozambique showing the highest percentage of 1.1." As the report stated, illegal immigrants would not have willingly identified themselves, especially in a study conducted on behalf of a municipal agency, for fear of being deported. However, the sense is that there could be a significant number of residents from other African countries, especially Zimbabwe. In the focus group, there were no participants from other parts of the continent. However, there were other racial groups other than black Africans, with Coloured residents represented in some of the focus groups. Those who saw deterioration in the standard of living were those who have had longer history there.

> individuals within the community who just do things without consultation. They are mostly from Sanco. We do not know who they are. Whenever opportunities arise they are the first ones to grab those opportunities. Whenever there are meetings, they do not give us feedback. We get the information in the streets, from the people you know. Basically we are not informed about development in the area."

Therefore, what is clearly taking place in this environment is self-interest as defined by classical economists such as Adam Smith in the 18th century. It is also, as stated earlier, clearly a violation of rights as government policy clearly states that the ward councillor should give regular feedbacks to the communities they lead.

There is also a feeling that the ward councillor cannot be expected to empathise with the people of Kliptown since he has never lived in a shack. There is a lot of emphasis on the fact that areas considered similar to Kliptown are developing, while they are left behind, even though this is the 'oldest' shack settlement. As one unemployed female resident said,

> "What is important is that the whole world knows that the Freedom Charter was written here in Kliptown. It was the first squatter camp to come into existence but nothing is happening here. All they did was to build a taxi rank. I do not know what we are supposed to do with a taxi rank or maybe they expect us to stay in it. I just do not get their thinking. What about us who live in shacks. According to me the residents of Kliptown who are living in shacks would not have chosen Nkomo (as councillor) because he does not have clue how it is like living in a shack, because he lives in a brick house. They were supposed to choose someone who has lived in a shack and understands our suffering."

The official perspective is that those people who are complaining are those who do not qualify for houses in Kliptown – people who have benefited in other areas. But it seems that this is a feeling shared by residents across the

board. Most of the interviewees were from Section A, where Sanco is very active, although most of the leaders are not from that section. Most Sanco leaders are said to come from section C and D. Sanco is active in all sections, even though leaders come from better-resourced areas of Kliptown. Some sections are more dominant than others. People who tend to be dominant are those with formal houses and also those who have families in Pimville and Dlamini townships. The dominance of certain sections over other sections could be attributed to the unequal distribution of social capital within Kliptown.

The local residents are aware that the councillor for Freedom Park comes from within that community. Although Councillor Mofolo has had his fair share of problems, the residents of Kliptown still believe that it is better to have a councillor who comes from within the community. As one unemployed female resident stated, “I mean if there is something wrong they go to him (Mofolo). And say we want this and that. But here, our representative live in a brick house and has no clue how it is like to live in a shack.” However reality is sometimes stranger than fiction – the residents of Devland Extension 27 (Freedom Park which incorporates Ruth First) also believed that their councillor was inaccessible and ineffective and there was a lot of confrontation with the civic leaders who believed that the councillor was controlled by the powerful Development Committee.

Summary:

It is evident in this chapter that there is social capital in Kliptown, as in the other cases under investigation. But the sense is that the levels of social capital have dwindled because of the high influx of people from other areas, although this does not mean that the number of associations in the settlement has dwindled. Social capital talks to the quality of these engagements and not necessarily the number of associations in a particular environment. Kliptown witnessed a massive influx of people after 1994, which changed the

demographics of the area. It has also become evident in this chapter, as in the previous chapter, that high levels of unemployment have a negative effect on associations. It creates high levels of dependence of the weaker members of the community on their leaders, thereby reinforcing vertical relationships and individualism instead of a collective culture.

It has been demonstrated in this chapter that those endowed with better human capital stand a better chance in the creation of social capital. Those with better human capital tend to dominate local associations and in an environment where there are high levels of unemployment there is dependence on those at the top. Therefore, a balance between the leaders and those they lead is important to counter temptations of disregarding the needs of the ordinary residents. Finally, what has been evident in this chapter is that poorly resourced areas are able to form associations that produce social capital. Tertiary associations such as Sanco, the Kliptown CPF, the local branch of the ANC, and the newly founded MKMVA, are some of the voluntary associations found in Kliptown. However, this has not produced loads of social capital for all the local residents – it is unevenly distributed. It has created social capital that is exclusive rather than social capital that is inclusive.

Conclusion:

Evidence from this chapter as in the previous chapter, suggests that even in shack settlements there is vibrant associational activity through dominant associations such as ANC, Sanco, CPF, and various other groupings that make up the Greater Kliptown Development Forum. The leaders of these dominant groups tend to be those members of the community who are better resourced, some would have a trade union background, or coming from better resourced areas of Kliptown and Soweto. The persistent theme running through this chapter, as in the previous chapter, is that leaders are often reluctant to vacate their positions once their terms of office have come to an

end. Evidence also suggests that highly politicised forms of social life are crowding out those networks most likely to generate social capital and the availability of externally derived resources seem to discourage volunteerism and selflessness, as people attend meetings for purely materialistic reasons rather than out of sense of civic duty, which is a public good. Another constant theme in this chapter is that of information gaps, which shows a deficit in social capital. It seems these information gaps are as a result of limited participation in meetings and associations where issues affecting the community are discussed.

Participation in associations competes with other more urgent needs within the settlement such as informal trading and any other survivalist endeavours. This seems to have constrained the ability of residents to participate meaningfully in associations. It was also demonstrated that leadership in local associations gives one access to resources such as jobs that could be dispersed as patronage. Those who do not benefit seem to believe that participation in local structures will not ameliorate their lives. However, despite the gloomy picture I painted in this chapter, evidence also suggests that residents have not completely withdrawn from the public sphere. Some residents maintained that things could still change with more involvement from community members. Kliptown is a community that is in transition due to the massive influx of new people in the area; this has depleted the stocks of social capital, which will need to be rebuilt. The dynamics can be expected to be different in areas with a long history of existence and where the influx of new residents is limited; this is the subject of the next chapter, which is a case study of Sweetwaters village, a peri-urban village in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.

SECTION III: SOCIAL CAPITAL IN AREAS UNDER CHIEFLY RULE

CHAPTER FIVE
DECLINING STANDARDS OF LIVING AND THE STATE OF ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE IN SWEETWATERS, PIETERMARITZBURG[14]

Introduction:

This chapter seeks to test some of Robert Putnam's key propositions about social capital in the Sweetwaters (See, Map four and six) community. There has been a realisation that community level variables play a vital role in stimulating democratic culture. Institutional changes do not always lead to prosperity and democratic development. Social capital theorists imply that identical institutional forms may yield dramatically different concrete results, depending on the social context into which they are introduced (Widner and Mundt 1998: 1); Putnam has been one of the leading proponents of the view that social capital (features of social organisation such as trust, norms, and networks - that can improve the efficiency of a society by facilitating co-ordinated actions) is a vital component in the development of democratic culture. This chapter argues that Sweetwaters had high levels of social capital in the 1980s, but this did not necessarily lead to a strong democratic culture and economic development, although it facilitated peace up to 1989.Up to that date, Sweetwaters was an anomaly, given widespread violence in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly in the Midlands during the 1980's.

[14] The research for this chapter was done in July 1999. First, it relied on oral history of senior citizens and shop-owners. Second, participant observation played a crucial role. I would often start a conversation about the history of the area - sometimes other issues would come spontaneously. This was soon after the national and provincial elections. The environment was conducive to such a method as local residents had a lot to say. As in the Freedom Park/Ruth First case study – I spent more time in this case study.

During the apartheid period, associational life in Sweetwaters was vibrant. A wide array of associations existed but they were localised. They included football clubs, *stokvels*[15], youth church choirs, burial societies, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), and various other local organisations. Their membership usually overlapped, although *stokvels* were normally dominated by men and burial societies were a women's affair. These were dominated by working people or women whose husbands had full time decent employment. Members of these associations were mostly instrumental in infrastructural development.

Ironically, this owed much to neglect by both traditional leadership and the apartheid regime, which made the community of Sweetwaters self-sufficient and bolstered associational life. For example, most schools were built by communities themselves, as were churches. Ordinary people made concerted efforts to develop their areas. The evolution of civic associations in Sweetwaters can be interpreted as a direct response to neglect by the authorities. The culture of civic engagement diminished during political violence in the period from 1989-1994. This it appears presented an opportunity for women to shape the public sphere in a more inclusive and cooperative direction; the political situation was not as hostile to women as it was to men. During the political turmoil men tended to withdraw from active participation in the public sphere, this was partly because the violent conflict was between men; women were relatively safe from it. Women then took charge of most of the responsibilities and dominated associational activities such as stokvels (savings schemes). By the time violent conflict subsided, women had become an important part of the public sphere, where associational life was vibrant and outside the realm of traditional chiefs as these associations were not under their influence.

[15]*Stokvels*, in this case, are savings clubs – not simply associations for collecting money for a party at the end of the month, as in urban townships, it is a widely used term in Sweetwaters and surrounding areas. As mentioned in the text, contributions were made every month and normally there would be drinks and food after the meeting.

For most people the advent of democracy in April 1994 promised a better life. There was a widespread belief that the new government would make concerted efforts to improve the lives of the marginalised groups after years of neglect by the apartheid system. The result was a decline in civic engagement. The failure to transfer the energies and skills learnt under the previous order denied these communities an opportunity that democracy presented to them – the support they would receive from the government if they took initiatives. In post-apartheid South Africa, the law often promotes community participation in development projects. However, promises that the government will be actively involved in development might have created the impression that this is the responsibility of the government alone, and that communities are to be passive recipients of services. It should be noted that the culture of civic engagement did not die completely. The relative lack of basic infrastructure such as running water and efficient public transport meant that people continued to put pressure on their authorities.

Running water remained one of the most pressing necessities for the community of Sweetwaters. It was one of the services residents believed that, after the demise of apartheid, would be provided to them. People in Sweetwaters were accustomed to engage the government, traditional leaders, and other actors as members of burial societies, *stokvels*, or as individuals, these associations approached the Umgeni Water Board, the local water utility, bypassing their officially recognised local leaders. This process began towards the dying days of apartheid; some of these initiatives had started back in the 1980s. It appears that this strategy was adopted for two reasons: First, people seemed not to have any idea about the exact role of their chiefs, as they are not elected. Second, some might have believed that the chiefs were not interested in their welfare. Sweetwaters had a vibrant associational life where diverse issues were normally discussed and although stokvels and

football clubs dominated, even these might have inculcated a culture of civic responsibility.

But for the Umgeni Water Board to act, regulations required the approval of *amakhosi* (traditional chiefs). With the consent of *amakhosi*, Umgeni Water could then conduct feasibility studies. The communities were only informed about the event after this process. According to Umgeni Water this was necessary to avoid raising their expectations. As a business, Umgeni Water wanted to protect its image in case the scheme was not feasible in the short-term.

Based on the above observations, this chapter is an attempt to determine and test the validity of Putnam's argument in the context of Sweetwaters, to see if his "social capital" theory holds in this context. This longitudinal research undertaking looks at the period from 1985 onwards, investigating social organisation and networks. The aim is to see if social capital as defined by Putnam existed prior to the democratic era, i.e. up until 1994 as well as the post-1994 era.

> "Measuring social capital by voting patterns, newspaper readership, and participation in sports and cultural associations, Putnam then traced current patterns to traditions of civic involvement dating back to several periods of Italian history, as far back as Early Middle Ages" (Wall 1998:312).

The main features of social capital examined in Sweetwaters were as follows: (1) football teams, (2) the relationship between the shop-owners and their customers, (3) burial societies, (4) "*stokvels*", (5) newspaper readership, and finally (6) Sunday schools. Traditional leadership (i.e. the chief and *izinduna*), political violence, and television are cited as the contributory factors in the decline of social capital in this area. Sweetwaters is approximately eight kilometres from the Pietermaritzburg Central Business District (CBD), it is a peri-urban area with poor infrastructure. Sweetwaters'

schools, shops, and churches were destroyed during violent clashes between the IFP and the ANC in late 1980s and there was lack of commitment from the leadership to redevelop it. There is a history of corruption by the chief and councillors'. The chief was once arrested for corruption in the early 1990s and sought payment from the people to apply for a court bail; most of the middle class left the area. During the research, there was a general feeling amongst the people that the chief is corrupt and therefore there is little trust in the traditional leadership. In the rest of this chapter, I present my findings.

(1) The Football Teams:

The overwhelming majority of respondents, spoke of the "brotherhood" that was part of the football culture, which, they felt, had broken down; in addition, most of the problems that were experienced were attributed to the political violence. The validity of this claim cannot be established convincingly as there might be other factors at play. To attribute it only to political violence is simplistic and ignores the role that is played by other variables such as television and the authoritarian tribal system.

Most respondents stated that football stadiums in the past were filled to capacity and children used to watch these soccer players even in the training sessions that took place during the week. They felt soccer activities brought the community together, acting as a glue. Three local soccer teams competed with teams from outside as well as among themselves. During the interviews, it became clear that these activities strengthened the ties within the community. The most popular football team was called Comrades Football Club (Comrades FC)[16], which had the largest following, and which I followed as a youngster. It was the equivalent of Kaizer Chiefs in South African terms. This kind of spirit also lowered the crime-rate, as people were preoccupied

[16] It was self-funded as most other teams in the area - it had no hierarchy as it emerged during interviews.

with soccer issues;[17] on average, they spent two hours per day on training and, on weekends, they were preoccupied with competitive football. The history of Comrades F.C. could be traced back to the early sixties; it had a long tradition of football and friendship. Consequently, this kind of history and success bred trust and it was called “the people's team.” The older generation which was no longer playing soccer still maintained close links that were established during the Comrades FC tradition. Football created a sense of reliability and reciprocity among the community, as the players and supporters were well organised and there was trust among them. This bred a community with high levels of trust and social responsibility, as members of the football team assisted in projects within the community.

As a middle-aged man explained, when someone had no resources but was seen to have the potential for success, they combined resources to help that needy individual.[18] There was a form of communalism, and generalised reciprocity based on knowing that when you help someone in need, people might come to your rescue if you encounter difficulties along the way, some form of altruistic behaviour was abundant in those days. This transcended the boundaries of the soccer team as this was not done only in football terms, but also in other relations that were established during the playing days. The norm of generalised reciprocity is a highly productive component of social capital (Putnam 1993:172), as players and supporters contributed without looking for any immediate benefits for themselves; in short, they did it for the good of the community. For example, women used to wash soccer kits for the players, without expecting any immediate rewards. They did this knowing that someone might help them, when they needed it most. If people can be confident that trusting will be rewarded, not exploited, continued exchange is more likely to ensue (Putnam 1993:172). The repeated exchange over a period of time tends to encourage the development of a norm of generalised

[17] This is what most of the respondents said.
[18] One of the interviews I conducted.

reciprocity. This kept these teams together and facilitated co-operation as they came to the realisation that they could not do without one another. Sometimes success depends on co-operation between individuals that involves pulling all their resources together. The solidarity in the Comrades FC was facilitated by just such factors.

What transpired was that in these teams trust was at a high level. Personal interactions generated this. The information about the members that could not be trusted was freely available. To accept someone who was new to the team it was necessary that that individual have a great football talent, which would improve the standards of the team. They could not just accept anyone; penetrating the already existing social group is not always easy. It might be the reason why political violence did not intensify in the northern parts of Sweetwaters. The level of trust and co-operation might have been higher than in other surrounding areas. Although, the conclusion I reached does not concur with the one put forward by Putnam, social capital made this possible. This is, because northern Sweetwaters was not as developed as the other parts of the area. The other reason might be that there were few new neighbours, so people knew each other well. That on its own might have prevented the outbreak of violence.

Trust and co-operation made it easy for the members of the community to support each other when one of them needed assistance. This happened at no cost. The relations that were forged by the players might have been translated to the other members of the community such as parents. These football players combined forces and helped in the construction of infrastructure such as roads that were going to help the whole community. Members of these teams saw themselves as having a moral obligation to serve their community, and their co-operation was facilitated by the fact that they were in those soccer teams. What I found out was that people who were active in the teams were those who were also participating in other social upliftment activities.

What was established during the research was that there was more than one factor that contributed to the decline of social capital in this community. In this discussion, I will limit these to television viewing and political violence.

The advent of television seems to have had a major influence in the interests shown by the people in football. In the early eighties, few families had television sets. It had no major effect on the relations that were forged in the previous years. People used to gather in one family to watch soccer games; they were still able to meet in one place. One respondent said that before 1985 there were only five families with television sets. However, in the late eighties and early nineties it started to show its effect, when almost every household acquired its own television set. There are many possible answers that explain the erosion of social capital, television-viewing being one factor identified by Putnam since it reduced the amount of time people had to interact (1995:667). Technological changes mean that people were now getting the opportunity of seeing a wider range of programs. Unfortunately, the sport that used to unite inhabitants became the casualty of this phenomenon, because people thought that the standard of their football had declined. Although the freedom of choice was a good thing for the individual, it did not augur well for the good of the community. The high levels of trust were threatened as people spent little time outside their community. This new culture produced individualism, whereas social capital requires repeated interaction.

The other factor that contributed to the phenomenon of social capital decline is the political violence and the kind of leadership that became a norm within the community of Sweetwaters; people became afraid to participate in activities that were not sanctioned by the chief. This was partly due to the political views that were held by the traditional leadership, which sought to prevent differing viewpoints. The traditional authority tried to impose its control over all activities and did not facilitate those activities that might

threaten its interests. According to Wall, "Organisations that make undue demands upon their members, without providing clearly demonstrable benefits, are unlikely to be successful in gaining or retaining members" (1998: 322). Although Putnam (1993) did not see political parties as reservoirs of social capital but as recipients, this chapter however seeks to prove that political parties benefit from areas that are endowed with positive social capital and could also act as reservoirs of social capital. In Sweetwaters the traditional leader and his subordinates tried by all means to interfere in all forms of human interaction, which alienated some residents of the village.

(2) The Relationship between the Shopkeeper and Customers:

Another reservoir of social capital was the widespread practice of credit offered to local buyers by the local shopkeeper. Mrs Kunene[19] (the shopkeeper of Muziwokuphumula Store) said that almost 90 per cent of the local pensioners used this credit facility. Buying through credit in the neighbourhood shop was the norm, especially for the pensioners, but they were not the only individuals who bought on credit. This credit was established because of the level of trust between the shopkeeper and the members of the community, as a form of showing appreciation for their support. The credit offered by the local shop to the community of Sweetwaters was based on trust between the parties involved. Not all residents utilised this system, but those who utilised it benefited in a number of ways. Those who benefited mostly from this arrangement were old age pensioners. Some of the respondents informed me that they appreciated it, especially in the middle of the month when they had spent all their pension money. They would go to the shop to buy on credit and settle the debt towards the end of the month when they got paid.

[19] All the interviews were done with Mrs. Kunene as the other shop had changed owners a number of times over the past ten years. Mrs. Kunene took over the running of the shop after her husband (Mr. W. Kunene) died. She also provided me with the records of customers who had failed to settle their accounts for almost five years.

It was a challenge to get oral testimonies with regard to the relationship between the shop-owner and pensioners since most pensioners who had used Mrs Kunene's credit facilities had already died when the fieldwork was conducted. But the local shop-owner was accessible and provided useful information on this relationship. What made this credit system more popular with the pensioners was that during the apartheid era they were paid only six times a year, unlike today where they are paid every month. This is what made this arrangement so popular with the pensioners, and trust was more important, because there was a great risk involved. A pensioner could die anytime before settling the debt. The shop-owner was prepared to take that risk. All the parties involved benefited. The pensioners were able to feed their families through credit and the shop received a reliable source of income from the pensioners. The shop provided free transport on the days that the pensioners were going to be paid on. The fact that they were provided with free transport showed how both parties appreciated this mutual relationship. There was some sense of social responsibility from the shop-owner's side.

The credit arrangements started in the early 1970s, because that was when the first large general dealer big retailer opened in the area. Business continuity and membership in voluntary associations are considered essential indicators for community level social capital (Wall 1998:317). This is the criterion that Putnam utilised to test the availability of social capital and this is what this chapter attempts to test in Sweetwaters; the environment was set in Sweetwaters where the retailer and the customers could establish the relations of trust. When this arrangement was started the shop encountered little difficulties if any at all. The pensioners were not the only people that benefited from this process but many members of the community. Very few hiccups occurred until the early 1990s, when the community started to fragment due to political violence. The shop-owner pointed out that the decrease in trust and sense of responsibility was due to the fact that most of the people who had started this arrangement with the shop had either died or

left the area. Therefore, they were now dealing with people of a new type who had not grown up in the culture that had been built over a long period. This breakdown in the culture of payment started to show its signs in the early 1990s. In this period, residents witnessed something that had never happened before. The names of those who were not meeting their obligations were displayed on the shop windows for all to see those who were not fulfilling their obligations.

However, there were no visible results from this system and it proved fruitless, because they were now dealing with a new breed of people who did not see trust as a building block to good neighbourliness. People had lost the sense of humanity that was prevalent in the 1980s; the social capital had been destroyed. What might have contributed to this trend was the exodus of people during political turmoil and the introduction of new members to the community. The latter group had little knowledge of the threads that kept the community together or perhaps they might have found a community that was already in decay. The emigration of members of the community contributed to this trend. People who left the area saw no need to meet their obligations and were no longer bound by the obligations of the society they had since left. In addition, political violence gave some people justification for not meeting their obligations, because of animosity caused by the violence that had engulfed Sweetwaters. The 1990s saw a complete breakdown of the norms that used to bind the community together.

Wall concurs with Putnam when he argues that social capital can increase with use and diminish with disuse, allowing for either a virtuous or a vicious cycle (1998:317); the community of Sweetwaters' disuse of civil society structures that produce social capital has led to a number of problems, namely, the non-payment of services and the decreasing quality of the infrastructure. Whatever this community tries to do, in order to rectify this, it encounters difficulties; the society has become more individualistic,

especially in terms of positive social capital; all the projects that required the co-operation of individuals have stagnated. For example, people used to plant crops for personal subsistence and neighbours would assist knowing that in future they would also need help: this no longer occurs. The saying that "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*", (i.e. you are because of others) no longer applies.

However, what is happening is that the community now relies on shops for everything. This has decreased the standard of living, as people can no longer supplement their income, although large tracts of land remain unexploited. If people want to satisfy their basic needs, they need to provide cash. This community was self-reliant in the years preceding the 1990s. Recently, we have seen a society emerge that could not supplement its income through cheap and readily available means.

(3) The Burial Societies:

Burial societies flourished in the years preceding the 1990s. They were a very helpful source of support especially for the poor. The "*Umasingcwabisane*"[20], as it was widely called, is the isiZulu word for burial society. These arrangements did not flourish during the period after 1990 when there was almost a breakdown in the services rendered by the community. Sweetwaters also had these societies, which had no specific leaders and were arranged horizontally (i.e. there were no hierarchies), although powers were delegated to members for the sake of efficiency. Burial societies fall into the category that Putnam saw as instrumental for the production of the norms of reciprocity. In the burial schemes women contributed equal amounts of money towards the funeral cover of the contributing members of this community. This project was a women's initiative, therefore no male individuals participated, but there were no laws that prohibited men from participating in burial societies. This burial fund covered all the members of

[20] The direct translation is "let's bury together."

the family, irrespective of the number. Having a bigger family did not compel someone to pay more money as it was meant to help in times of difficulties and based on the philosophy that everyone was equal.

Norms of generalised reciprocity informed this culture. It functioned like the life assurance companies. The only difference was that it paid equal amounts to its members and that it paid instantly, as members knew each other and stayed in the same area; this prevented bureaucratic obstacles and there could be no cheating as proof would be required before the funds could be released. This culture used flourished in the early 1980s. One woman revealed that when her children died in 1984 and 1985, the society scheme provided her with the money immediately after hearing about the tragedy. There were no complications and she said she relied on it, and made sure that she met her obligation by contributing every month. Unlike the culture that is prevalent now, as I was informed, cheating is widespread. Previously it was based on trust and the foundation of generalised reciprocity, as people did not calculate cost, but benefits.

Since the 1990s, the number of burial societies has declined[21], although funerals have increased dramatically. For instance, it was stated earlier that the community of Sweetwaters is becoming more individualistic. This has put more weight on many families who cannot manage to cover funeral expenses on their own. The community still contributes certain donations; it cannot make up for the role that was played by burial schemes. Besides offering funeral benefits, it was also a chance for the community members to interact. This gave them an opportunity to discuss a number of issues that affected them and created a bond amongst them; there is only one *Masingcwabisane* that has survived, although it is no longer as strong as it used to be in the 1980s and before that. The membership of this burial society has dramatically

[21] The respondents said that in the 1980s there were seven burial societies that have since decreased by 80 per cent, as there are only two of them now; these are not as powerful as in the 1980s.

decreased in the past ten years. However, this is not a unique phenomenon; in the United States most communities have been experiencing the same problem:

> "Membership of such diverse organisations as the PTA, the Elks club, the League of Women voters, the Red Cross, labour unions, and even the bowling league show that participation in many conventional voluntary associations has declined by roughly 25% to 50% over the last two decades" (Putnam 1995:666).

The burial societies (women's initiative) are also facing competition from the revolving credit schemes of a special kind. Members[22] contribute money that is not deposited in the bank (as is the case with *stokvels*). In this case, the members are compelled to borrow the money from this fund and return it with interest (in short, this is a sort of revolving credit system, but with interest); members are burdened by debt on money they did not need. It was clear from the interviews that this scheme has brought more hardship to the families involved; some villagers had to flee Sweetwaters after failing to meet their obligations. It is a clear departure from the stokvels and burial societies, which acted as reservoirs for social capital. The revolving credit association mentioned above is a sign that things have changed for the worst.

(4) The Stokvels:[23]

The membership of *stokvels* has also suffered the same fate, as the burial societies. There were around ten *stokvels,* but only three could be traced now. It appeared that they are not as strong as they used to be. In the *stokvels,*

[22] 70 per cent of these members have been members of burial societies, some still maintain membership.

[23] *Stokvels* refers to savings club – in this case they are not strictly about collecting money for a party at the end of the month but act as savings clubs as well, unlike in the townships. It is a widely used name in Sweetwaters and surrounding areas. As mentioned in the text contributions were made every month and normally there would be drinks and food after the meeting. It followed the same pattern as the traditional *stokvels*, but in this case the main factor was to save money.

members usually contributed money into the club account, so that it could accumulate interest. The money was divided at the end of the year so that the members could meet their year-end obligations for the festive seasons. "It is hard to draw a hard and fast line between *stokvels* and *shebeens*[24] because there is a lot of overlap between the two" (Lukhele 1992). For example, many *shebeens* are *stokvels* (parties) members and some *shebeens* allowed *stokvel* members (for a fee) to host their parties at their venues (Lukhele 1992). These schemes were very popular in the 1980s and before then. There were around ten *stokvels* in that period, catering for different groups. The membership was voluntary and it has not changed. There was a set amount of money that each member was expected to contribute into the fund. Usually, where members contributed more it was known that they were in high-paying jobs. That was not the criteria for membership, as they were not in any way exclusive clubs. The meetings were held every first Sunday of the respective month.

Stokvels are like a cultural organisation, which bring members together to discuss various issues, from local politics to social issues. These would take place spontaneously without any formal program. It is not surprising that these meetings contributed to the vibrant social life as witnessed in Sweetwaters in the 1980s as well as early 1990s. There was an instance in 1985 where the members of one of the bigger *stokvels* met and mobilised the community to contribute financially into the construction of a road in northern Sweetwaters. There was a consensus that there was a need to develop infrastructure. The members contributed more than the non-members did, to encourage maximum participation. The impression was that they realised that they could not rely on the local authorities for everything. This was also because of bureaucratic delays and neglect suffered by peri-urban communities before 1994. Putnam asserts that social capital means features of social life - networks, norms, and – trust that enable participants to act

[24] A *shebeen* is a sort of African township pub, where friends gather to drink and talk about the latest news and events. These were powerful in the early 1980s and most of the members of *stokvels* (savings clubs) frequented these places (interviews).

together more effectively to pursue shared objectives; whether or not their shared goals are praiseworthy or not (Putnam 1995: 665). However, the main thrust of this chapter is to look at whether social capital exists in South Africa and whether this social capital could lead to economic and democratic development. There is little doubt Putnam would have classified *stokvels* under this category of praiseworthy projects. They are part of those social activities that bring ordinary people together for the greater good of the communities that they are located in.

However, like all the dimensions of social capital that were present over the last decade, *stokvels* have declined in number and significance. Today, one can find people who cannot meet their obligations and there are some allegations of cheating. Dishonesty is now widespread. This scheme has suffered a similar fate to that of burial societies. This has led to the general decay of the community; its members fail to co-operate in collaborative projects as they used to do in the past, the *stokvels* that exist these days are faced with a number of challenges including declining membership. The other feature of social capital worth mentioning is that of newspaper readership.

(5) Newspaper Readership and Television:

The culture of reading newspapers is not widespread in this community; few locals read newspapers such as the *Natal Witness*. This newspaper is not sold in local shops- although there are people who read it. Those who read it are a fraction of the community. Usually, the readership of this newspaper have reached the educational level of grade nine and are in better paying jobs; the other group reads the *Ilanga*, which is an *isiZulu* newspaper, one of the eleven official languages in the country, since the promulgation of the South African Constitution in 1996; targeted at the peasantry, this newspaper is known to hold conservative views. For the news, they rely on the radio and television; the number of people who watch the news on television could be

as high as one in three, and this might have gone up in the past decade; the number of people who listen to radio is twice that of television. This might be because that it does not take an effort to listen to radio news, compared to reading newspapers and watching television.

However, Putnam's reliance on newspaper readership is likewise questionable, given that subscribing to a newspaper, or buying it, is no guarantee that people read it, or read articles in the newspaper that are pertinent to their communities (Wall 1998: 315); you can hardly find a letter in the *Natal Witness* that is written by the resident of Sweetwaters, on issues affecting their community, even though they have a lot to say about the state of affairs in the community. This points to low levels of social activism, which could be a direct result of deficiency in social capital. As stated earlier, it is very difficult to test the availability of social capital using the newspaper as your measure. The readership of newspapers remains low in Sweetwaters, even though the number of educated individuals has increased.

(6) Sunday Schools:

The other feature of social organisation that has declined in significance, because of continued disuse is that of Sunday schools which used to flourish in the 1980s. The membership in various churches has decreased significantly; this is the feeling you get from local churches (Interview, Local Churchgoers). The churches are struggling with the issue of trying to attract more young people to their services after the outbreak of political violence that engulfed KwaZulu-Natal in the late 1980's to the early 1990's. The northern part of Sweetwaters has three churches, and all have the same problem as there is a feeling that children spend most of their time watching television; however there has been a general decline in activities that breed co-operation in the community, from children's activities to adults' activities.

The Likely Reasons for the Decline of Social Capital:

Almost 90 per cent of the respondents concurred with the contention that the level of participation has declined dramatically. Although they all agree that the signs started to show in the late 1980s, the real damage became more visible in the 1990s. There have been efforts to revive these activities. It appears that there is a long way to go before these activities could be revived. Wherever capital is lost, from whatever cause, the income from it disappears, never to return until unless new capital is slowly and chancily accumulated (Jacobs 1961:138). It will take political will from the leadership to develop Sweetwaters as structures of social capital have declined to a very low level. This has been experienced in a number of projects which the community has tried to revive, such as the football teams, the *stokvels*, the burial societies and the Sunday schools. These efforts failed to bring the participation that was found in the previous decades. Of course this might be a result of the fact the successful accumulation of social capital tends to be unconscious.

The involvement of the political leaders in these features of social organisation might have alienated the people more, especially the youth who want to express their freedom. Voluntary activities have been affected by the involvement of tribal authorities seeking to extend their influence in every project that the society tries to engage in. It is even difficult to assess voter participation because of the fact that the authorities lacked the will to encourage the community to get identification for registering in the election. There were approximately two thousand people who were expected to vote but only eight hundred voted. This was caused by the lack of voter education. As many potential voters did not possess identity documents. The other reason was that the youth mainly voted outside their voting district for fear of vote rigging since they were unlikely to vote for the dominant political party in Sweetwaters. Many young voters, as was the norm during the 1994 elections, went to the nearby former whites-only suburb of Hilton, where they believed that their votes would be counted, as the institutions there were

transparent with checks and balances and different political parties being allowed to campaign and monitor voting as well as counting.

This case emphasises political violence and the availability of television as contributory factors in the decline of social capital, while also noting the role the leadership played in destroying the form of social organisation found in the community. This led to a community that was not well organised. Deficiency in the levels of co-operation leads to limited co-operation on issues that matter to the community. Political violence led to the exodus of people from the area leading to vacuums in the society as most progressive individuals had left the place.

There was also immigration of new people from remote areas who were not interested in the day-to-day running of the village but were in Sweetwaters in order to access employment opportunities in the nearby suburb of Hilton. People who continue to live where they grew up can be expected to have the strongest ties and social capital (Hofferth, 1998: 579). Those who have moved will have weaker ties; the more recent the move, the weaker the ties, because it takes time to build up social capital in one's new environment. The people who immigrated to Sweetwaters have found it difficult to adjust to their new environment; the people who have been here for a longer period view them with suspicion and they are seen as outsiders bringing with them foreign values.

During 1985-1989 the chief and *indunas* (headmen) were linked to Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe (it changed its name to Inkatha Freedom Party in 1990). People seen to be holding different views from the IFP were expelled from the area or simply kept a low profile for fear of victimisation. All those who were critical of this (corrupt and conservative) system were viewed as belonging to the United Democratic Front (UDF). These political divisions were uncharacteristic because, historically, Sweetwaters was a close-knit

community. Some of the community members interviewed for this thesis believed that this culture was foreign to Sweetwaters and was brought about by the corrupt leadership as well as outsiders.

In the past, money collected from the community built most of the infrastructure and schools in the area. In that period people had faith in the leadership (interviews 1999), and most of the projects tended to be depoliticised. In 1987 the number of school demonstrations intensified dramatically, and there was a threat of social breakdown with the youth challenging the status quo. To a certain extent, some levels of free political activity existed, because chiefs were concerned only with the allocation of land. The trouble began when the leadership tried to intervene in issues that students were raising against the KwaZulu Education department.

Consequently most of the infrastructure, i.e. schools, churches, and shops were destroyed as political conflict intensified. Community participation decreased and development was hindered by these factors. The pass rate in schools dropped precipitously, many pupils left school and parents withdrew support. Anecdotal evidence suggests that as much as 30 per cent of the population fled the area after 1989 (Group Interviews with Members of the Comrades Football Club). The structures that produce social capital in Sweetwaters must be analysed in this context.

The tribal authority then consolidated its strength and became more oppressive. The families that did not leave the area were subjected to taxes to support the corrupt leadership. I was informed that almost every month they were called to *imbizo*[25] (traditional gathering), where they were expected to part with their hard earned cash (interviews). I also witnessed some of these events. The solidarity and trust among the people decreased dramatically

[25] This practice has since been popularized by government, which occasional goes to communities to hold these gatherings.

from what it was in the early 1980s. This affected development of the infrastructure, even human capital development suffered a great deal, because of the breakdown in the culture of learning. The schools were only opened for a short periods of time. The leadership became more corrupt than before, exploiting the low level of co-operation that was now the order of the day in Sweetwaters. They built an inferior infrastructure as a result of the low levels of solidarity and trust in this community. The feeling of neglect by the leadership was the feeling of most people I interviewed.

At least a third of middle class left the area through fear of political violence and intimidation (Authors' own observations). One would find a limited number of educated individuals in the community, because of what happened in the late eighties and early nineties. Social capital as a product of social organisation in the form of trust, networks, and norms between people, is a bottom-up process that cannot be imposed on anyone by anyone, and where people participate in projects voluntarily. Although, if one looks at the other case studies which are subject of this thesis, there is evidence that the state can contribute to the creation of social capital and social capital can influence the behaviour of formal institutions if nurtured well by the people who use it and those who benefit from it.

What transpires in the case of Sweetwaters is that the level of social capital has declined due to the role played by the authorities and political violence. The economy of this community has been stagnant for the past ten years; it has also failed to produce good leadership that possesses vision for the future. However, this chapter disputes the contention that development is path dependent and there is nothing that the leadership could do to rectify the situation. As one reformist from an uncivic region in Italy protested:

> "This is a council of despair! You are telling me that nothing I can do will improve our prospects for success. The fate of reform was sealed centuries ago." (Putnam 1993:183)

However, I tend to disagree with Putnam on this point; I argue that there is a role the leadership can play in places like Sweetwaters, where the levels of social capital have declined and the level of community participation decreased dramatically, I strongly believe that the leadership has a special role to play in development and in the creation of an environment that will be conducive to the revival of civic duties and engagement. As Fukuyama asserts:

> "Where there is a deficit in social capital, the shortfall can often be made good by the state, just as the state can rectify a deficit in human capital by building more schools and universities. But the need for state intervention will depend very much on the particular culture and social structure of the society over which it presides." (1995: 16-17)

In a small community like Sweetwaters, it would be much easier for the leadership to make up for the deficit in social capital. The fact that it is a peri-urban area would make it much easier if the authorities could show the necessary determination.

This chapter has pointed out that in the 1980s there were some characteristics of social capital similar to those identified by Robert Putnam and other proponents of the concept of social capital and its role in both economic and democratic development; it was mentioned that voluntary association such as soccer teams, burial society schemes, and *stokvels* prospered in the 1980s and the decades before then. Children participated in Sunday schools that forged co-operation that lasted to their later years, based on trust; however it was highlighted that since the 1990s there has been decay in this community. The features of co-operation and trust have been eroded in the community, the

credit that people obtained from the ship-owner was misused and the shop-owner cancelled this service for a number of its beneficiaries. All this was attributed to the political violence that broke down the co-operation and trust formed long ago within a decade; political violence destroys social capital as much as it destroys the local economy. The challenge becomes how to revive it.

The advent of television was also seen as one of the factors that led to this culture of individualism, as this decreased the importance of things like soccer teams and Sunday schools. It should be pointed out that there were, however, some features of co-operation; although these did not breed the same levels of economic development and co-operation as espoused by Putnam. But the importance of these features in reviving the community of Sweetwaters is recognised.

What can be deduced from the Sweetwaters case study is that the social capital that was produced by its reservoirs such as the soccer teams, the burial societies, buying on credit, and the *stokvels*, helped in maintaining peace for a long period of time. On the issue of development and democratic culture, it contributed very little. In this case, the institution became a hindrance to the development of a democratic culture. Some of the institutions found in Sweetwaters are those of neo-patrimonialism - where the impact of the modern state has not been felt, as prevailing social norms make no distinction between private and public realms (Hyden 1997: 25). Neo-patrimonialism by its nature poses particular problems for the development of social capital through civil society, as this regime uses its power to discourage any forms of co-operation that is seen as threat to its interest. Hyden argues that these sorts of regimes are typically unfree, even if they may rhetorically accept principles of democratic governance. Under this setting, we see the reluctance of the community members to invest in physical capital nor in social capital,

because the rule of law is not upheld. People who want a better kind of life have moved out of Sweetwaters as the leadership does as it pleases.

In the absence of social capital there is a need for a strong government to deal with this problem; this is the norm in rural South Africa. That is why decentralisation (i.e. handing more powers to local level leadership - in this case chiefs that are accountable to no one), could actually reinforce unequal power relations. As Das Gupta et al argue, while certain kinds of development initiative may benefit from decentralization and community engagement, others may not (2004: 51). Sweetwaters is a case in point, especially in those projects where a lot of resources are likely to be spent. The field research that I did in this community revealed this phenomenon. The issue of what comes first - institutional change or social capital (community level variables) becomes purely an academic debate.

Conclusion:

This chapter examined the following reservoirs of social capital viz: local football teams, the relationship between the shop-owners and their customers, burial societies, *stokvels*, newspaper readership, and Sunday schools. Evidence from the field suggests that these associations were vibrant during the Apartheid era until the outbreak of violence and the acquisition of television sets in most households. Therefore, I argued that the exodus of relatively privileged residents, the availability of television in almost all households, the outbreak of violence, and the intransigent traditional leadership were the main contributory factors to the depletion of relatively high stocks of benign social capital that had been accumulated and was in evidence during the Apartheid era, and it thus also weakened local networks. In the post-Apartheid era, the widespread belief that the new democratic government would be more responsive to local needs further added to the decline in volunteerism, which, in the past, had contributed to relative peace, stability, improved local infrastructure, and other public goods. Evidence

from this chapter also suggests that areas under chiefly rule can have a vibrant associational life and have the capacity to produce positive social capital that is good for development. What also came out strongly was that each community has relatively few "change agents" who participates in local associations because of their privileged access to organisational resources acquired in factory floors, middle class professions and so forth. Some of the other factors that have contributed to the decline of social capital producing civic associations, which are exogenous and therefore beyond the control of local associations, will be covered in chapter seven.

The next chapter will focus on the rural case study, viz. of Manyavu/KwaXimba, where stokvels, Water Committees and School Governing Bodies (SGBs), which are reservoirs of social capital, will be examined. It will also look at how two neighbouring villages dealt with the challenges of infrastructural development and general welfare, of the citizenry as well as at state agencies responsible for providing services in these two villages.

CHAPTER SIX

ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT IN KWAXIMBA AND MANYAVU, KWAZULU-NATAL

Introduction:

This chapter attempts to compare the villages of KwaXimba (see, Map five and six) and Manyavu (see, Map five and six). I was first alerted to this case study by the fieldworkers at the Umgeni Water Board who had observed something peculiar about the dynamics in the two neighbouring villages. They argued that even though these villages are separated by the main road, economic development in the two villages has been uneven. They fall under different traditional authorities as well as municipalities, however these two variables cannot account for the disparities found today. I set out to investigate the reason for the observed disparities. Freedom Park (and Ruth First section) fall under the same municipality and are also managed as a single settlement.

As stated in the introduction, these two settlements are divided by the main road that cuts through the settlement. However, one would not have expected them to turn out so differently. Like Manyavu and KwaXimba, they have turned out differently, especially in the quality of associations found in the two settlements. At one stage they fell under the same local authority, that is, prior to the 1996 local government elections and new boundaries. This case study, like the cases before it, presents an opportunity to test the applicability of the concept of social capital in areas under chiefly rule where most studies have proclaimed that an independent civil society is absent and which therefore lack the ability to generate social capital. These villages are characterised by rising unemployment and poverty in almost the same way as the informal settlements of Johannesburg.

KwaXimba Traditional Authority and Infrastructural Development:

Ximba Traditional Authority (T.A.) falls under the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality (see Map five and six). It is approximately 45 kilometres away from the Durban central business district (C.B.D.), which is the only metropolitan municipality in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Ximba falls under the jurisdiction of *Inkosi* Zibuse Mlaba, who took over after his brother was assassinated in the late 1980s.

Infrastructural Development:

Ximba T.A. has a population of approximately 21 236 (KZN DTLGA – Development Planning and Inland Region; 26-11-2002). This rural village is served by about seventeen public schools, which means that there is one school per 1 249 people. The schools available in KwaXimba are almost twice the number of schools found in Manyavu, which has half the population of KwaXimba. The names of these schools are: Ntukuso C.P., Nonqanda C.P., Othweba C.P. Insimangwe C.P., Nompihlela C., Nomfihlela C.P., Mdepha J.S., Luphaphe J.S., Ngidi C.P., Pulellos, Emkhathini, Emuni C.P., Zizamele J.S., Zifikele S., Ndunakazi C.P. Sthumba L.P., Intongela P., and Intongela C.P. Like Manyavu and Sweetwaters, most of this infrastructure came about as a result of local initiatives and limited government support, especially with respect to financial aspects. Historically, rural communities have been able to mobilise funding from both government and the private sector. It is important to note that a large chunk of the funding came from the local residents, in the form of school fees. Therefore, community contributions have in the past played a very important role in the building of schools. Some of the teachers were paid from this contribution. These teachers were paid by the school committees, which are now known as school governing bodies (SGBs). The vibrancy of a community could be judged by the number of teachers that could be paid in this fashion.

The Ximba chieftaincy is one of the most well known in KwaZulu-Natal and one of the most researched. This is attributed to its openness compared to other rural villages under chiefly rule. Its neighbour Manyavu T.A. remains one of the most difficult to access. It is characterised by high levels of gate keeping. However, it needs to be emphasised that these villages remain difficult to access without the prior approval of local chiefs. Sweetwaters is relatively open compared to the other two; however, this could be attributed to the weak traditional structure in the peri-urban Sweetwaters. But unlike in Manyavu, ordinary people in KwaXimba are prepared to talk to strangers, something that could pose serious risks in Manyavu.

For reasons that appear political, the Municipal Demarcation Board decided to put KwaXimba in a different municipality from Manyavu. KwaXimba falls under the eThekwini Metro that has about twelve traditional leaders under it. The majority of KwaXimba residents belong to the ANC, while the IFP dominates Manyavu. It has been speculated in certain quarters that the ANC, through the Municipal Demarcation Board, was trying to increase its majority in the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality by incorporating KwaXimba, which is dominated by the ANC, and excluding the IFP dominated Manyavu Traditional Authority. Manyavu was kept under the more rural municipalities of uMgungundlovu District Municipality and uMkhambathini Local Municipality. As stated above, critics believe that the Demarcation Board was biased towards the ANC and that the boundaries were drawn in such a way that they benefit the ruling party. It would be recalled that the ANC had won the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality by a slender majority. The boundary drawing process benefited the ANC run Metro Council a great deal and strengthened the ANC in strategic areas in the economic engine of the KwaZulu-Natal province.

Ximba T.A. has a vibrant node made up of shops, the police station, the community hall, a taxi rank, and a traditional court located in the eastern

entrance to the village. It gives Ximba a more developed outlook. Most of this infrastructure was put in place soon after South Africa's first democratic elections in April 1994. The location of the police station, which is well resourced, is strategically located in the border between Manyavu and KwaXimba. This made a lot of sense since the two villages had been locked in bloody political battles. Although tensions and levels of violence have subsided – tensions remain.

Water Services Act, No 108 of 1997:

In fact, before the new democratic dispensation in April 1994, Ximba was already one of the most developed villages under chiefly rule. It was one of the few rural areas which had electricity, water, telephones, and a community hall (*The Natal Witness*, 03-11-1993) and the schools in the area have increased significantly in number since that period.

The role of leadership in development:

As stated earlier, Ximba T.A. falls under the chieftainship of Inkosi[26] Zibuse Mlaba, he was installed as an Inkosi in 1989 – having taken over after the death of his brother Inkosi Msinga Mlaba, who was gunned down in 1988 while watching television (The Natal Witness, 03-11-1993). Inkosi Mlaba became a member of the ANC when it was unbanned in 1990. Subsequent to that, he was active in the local structures of the United Democratic Front (UDF). He was a founding member of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa). He worked closely with the president of Contralesa at the time, Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo, who was killed in 1991, allegedly by the security police. This was after he had fled Maphumulo Traditional Authority, which neighbours both villages.

Inkosi Mlaba still commands a lot of respect among both the youth and the old people in the area. People you meet in the streets of KwaXimba always

[26]An isiZulu name for a traditional chief.

say positive things about him as a leader. This has been so for the past 15 years. He is active both in his community and provincial and national structures of the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

Inkosi Mlaba argues that his main role in these organizations was to lobby chiefs to allow people from different political parties to organise in their areas. He spearheaded a number of cultural festivals both within KwaXimba and in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (*The Natal Witness*, 03-11-1993). He was behind the organisation of the successful Sonke Festival in Durban, which brought people from all over KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. These festivals were also held to dispel the myth that cultural events were a preserve of the IFP and that the ANC was anti-culture, and Zulu culture to be precise. In the village of KwaXimba there are annual cultural festivals, which survive to this day.

Inkosi Mlaba held a number of meetings with traditional leaders asking them to give space to different social and political groups. As he puts it, "The main problem is that they have been told that the ANC will abolish chieftainship and that to remain in power they should get their subjects to support Inkatha. We explain to them that what threatens chieftainship is their failure to change (*The Natal Witness*, 03-11-1993)." But the main problem that some of these chiefs cited was the close association between the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP) which had at best an indifferent attitude to traditional chiefs, some traditional chiefs believed that the ANC aligned youth disrespected traditional institutions and the ANC failed to appreciate *amakhosi*, and the institutions of traditional leadership in general. The attempt by the two political parties to woo traditional leadership stemmed from the fact that these institutions have a lot of legitimacy in KwaZulu-Natal. As a senior official in the KZN Department of Traditional and Local Government Affairs puts it, "I have been surprised how the traditional leaders are able to

call a meeting at short notice and their meetings are always full. This is something that the political parties, both the IFP and the ANC, have failed to do. Their meeting are always full. As the department we have realised that if you want to get things done in rural areas you cannot exclude traditional leaders (Interview)."

It appears that *Inkosi* Mlaba understood the ambiguity of his position since his organisation argued that traditional leaders should not join political parties to avoid divisions in their communities, which could undermine their position. It was an argument they often cited when they argued against the IFP's confusion of tradition and political party activities. Impartiality was the main rallying point for Contralesa and *Inkosi* Mhlabunzima Maphumulo stayed neutral allowing people from different political parties who had been displaced by the bitter political rivalry between the IFP and the ANC, in the late 1980s to move into his area; which had until that point not been affected by the political battles. However, this relative calm did not last as the political violence that had engulfed most parts of KwaZulu-Natal Midlands eventually broke out all over Table Mountain (Mkhambathini), where Ximba and Manyavu are also located. *Inkosi* Maphumulo had to flee to Pietermaritzburg.

Inkosi Mlaba explains why it is divisive for traditional leaders to take sides:

> "It is divisive for chiefs to become politically aligned especially in areas that are politically mixed. I did it because I was in a unique situation. The majority in my area chose to back the ANC so I have no problem. But in mixed areas, a chief can get killed or chased away when seen to be taking political sides. That is why we do not recruit them as such; we just want to permit freedom of association (*The Natal Witness*, 03-11-2003).

Inkosi Maphumulo might have been assassinated because he was associated with the ANC, despite his proclamation to the contrary. He was always seen as close to the ANC and the organisation he led was seen as against the IFP.

As stated earlier, KwaXimba has had its fair share of political conflicts with the neighbouring Manyavu. These tensions continue to this day. "About 50 people were killed in violence between his people and their neighbours Manyavu in 1989. The violence ended after Mlaba held talks with the chief of Manyavu and after Mlaba and local leaders won a court interdict restraining police from interfering in the conflict (*The Natal Witness*, 03-11-1993)."

People from the villages of Ximba and Manyavu have in the recent past held joint sporting events and organised other sporting projects to mend relations between the two villages and revive long lost networks, they draw from long held traditions of working together. *Inkosi* Mlaba believes that, "Festivals bring people together, even those who had been fighting before. They also help us to get rid of the claim that the ANC is anti-Zulu." Mlaba emphasizes the role of people in the reconstruction of their lives. Ximba has had long traditions of civic engagement that bridge the gap between localized associations and the national social movements (NSMs). However, the spirit of *ubuntu*[27] survived even the most intense political upheavals that engulfed the two villages. As the principal of Ntweka Lower Primary School in Manyavu puts it, "At the height of political violence a spirit of *ubuntu* was retained. If, for example, somebody who was going to KwaXimba ended up in Manyavu, people would give him or her directions without harming that individual; even though there was a bloody conflict between the two villages." This clearly demonstrates that norms that were developed in the past could endure political upheavals. This shows the durability of some elements of social capital, even under very difficult conditions.

As far back as in the 1950s the women of KwaXimba T.A. supported the ANC's call to close or to cover animal dips as part of its passive resistance

[27] This is a Nguni word for humanity, which is also one element of social capital. Ubuntu, like trust, is an element of social capital and not social capital as has been claimed in the South African literature on social capital.

campaign (*The Natal Witness Echo*, 17-03-1992). *Inkosi* Mlaba argued that the Ximba clan has a long history of community engagement that precedes even the presence of the ANC in Manyavu, and could even be traced back to before its formation. *Inkosi* Msinga Mlaba, who was succeeded by *Inkosi* Zibuse, worked closely with Inkosi Maphumulo before he was killed. According to *Inkosi* Mlaba, "He was against the legislative members joining the Inkatha (*The Natal Witness Echo*, 17-03-1992). He used to receive threats, allegedly by people who were against his radicalism in the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly (KLA). As stated earlier, his brother was killed while watching television in his house.

According to *Inkosi* Mlaba, "All the neighbouring chiefs used to be called to the Camperdown Station's Commander's office where the plans were discussed to clear out UDF elements. We were told that the UDF is not wanted in the area (*The Natal Witness Echo*, 17-03-1992). KwaXimba fell under the jurisdiction of the areas that were served by this police station. However, it now boasts its own police station.

Mlaba said that he gave the police a chance to come and talk to his clan. As he puts it, "My people said 'yes', because they were against Inkatha. They said their chief was allegedly killed by Inkatha (*The Natal Witness Echo*, 17-03-1992). There were times when *Inkosi* Mlaba did not even sleep at his house because of the tensions between his people and the Manyavu clan. But the antagonism between his people and Manyavu has since diminished. Nonetheless there have been a number of violent outbreaks in post-apartheid South Africa.

In some interviews conducted with people from KwaXimba, they argued that traditional leaders should do what people want. They should reflect the views of the people. It is therefore no surprise when *Inkosi* Mlaba argues, "What chiefs need to realise is that times have changed. People may have tolerated

this before, but now they will not accept it. Chiefs cannot dictate to people in a democracy (*The Natal Witness Echo*, 17-03-1992)." He argued that the local government acts would bring chiefs closer to the people. This view was not shared by the IFP, which believed that this new form of local government was going to take powers away from traditional leaders. It must be mentioned that this remains the main concern for the IFP. On the one hand, chiefs aligned to the ANC wanted to see tribal areas neighbouring cities joining the municipalities of those towns in which their subjects worked and get their services. On the hand, the IFP-aligned chiefs wanted their subjects to remain semi-autonomous since they believed that traditional administration operated on different ordering principles from those used in urban areas; for instance, people did not pay for services in areas under tribal chiefs, that is, there were no rates. It is no surprise therefore that KwaXimba TA is one of the 12 tribal areas that fall under the eThekwini Metro.

Voluntary Association and Good Governance:

The local Water Services Authority (WSA) for Ximba T.A. is eThekwini Water Services, which took over from Umgeni Water when the new local government dispensation came into effect. Ethekwini Water Services has an operating budget exceeding R1.2 billion and a staff component of 2000 people serving 2.5 million customers including Ximba village. EThekwini Water Services believes that it has the necessary capacity to function as a WSA in terms of the Water Services Act of 1997. Umgeni Water still acts as the bulk water services provider to the eThekwini Metro Council. Ethekwini Water has been dubbed as one of the most efficient water providers.

What has been their achievement in mobilizing community support?:

The water supply is limited to 200 litres per household per day. The supply has been made free to all consumers in terms of the national government free water policy. But normally a connection fee of R279, 20 is required from each household in the scheme and KwaXimba is no exception. Durban Water

has created opportunities to employ people from the poorest families on the municipalities' labour based construction projects to earn monies for payments of their water connections, therefore, the efficiency of a local government structure can be judged on its ability to effect as much connection of water to its residents as possible.

The community is informed through the ward councillor, the project steering committee (PSC) members and the development committee that this is a free water project; eThekwini Water appoints project facilitators drawn from the community who have been on a training course covering the roles and responsibilities of households in operating and maintaining their water services. Some of these facilitators get employed to conduct house-to-house visits to provide information to individual households. The observation from the officials at the eThekwini Water is that this system functions optimally in those communities where there are strong civic bodies. The staff at Umgeni Water also testified that it was much easier to engage the KwaXimba community compared to Manyavu. The former was said to be more accessible.

Associational life and infrastructure development in Manyavu:

Manyavu Traditional Authority (T.A.) falls under the uMgungundlovu District Municipality and Mkhambathini Local Municipality. It is approximately 60 Kilometres away from Pietermaritzburg (DTLGA, KZN), the capital city of KwaZulu-Natal and the seat of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. Manyavu falls under the chieftainship of H.S. Medulla, a very young traditional chief in his late 20s. He took over after the death of his father.

Infrastructural Development:

The population of Manyavu T.A. (see, Map five and six) is approximately 9 605 (DTLGA – Development Planning Inland Region, KwaZulu-Natal; 26-

11-2002). This community is served by eight public schools. These are, Unobhela J.S., Ntweka L.P., Gcina C.P., Phangindawo C.P., Inhlahlayabebhuze, Banqobile H., Asizenzele C.P., and Sansikane C.P. Most of this infrastructure came about as a result of local initiatives drawn from a number of sources; from the local educated elite, stokvels, soccer clubs, kinship networks, and to some extent the traditional authority. Both local and governmental resources were mobilised.

In spite of its remoteness from the industrial heartlands of Durban and Pietermaritzburg, Manyavu has been able to achieve significant infrastructural development. The local roads have improved a great deal and the area has now witnessed an influx of teachers from other areas; who otherwise would not have wanted to work in the village of Manyavu. The area struggled for qualified teachers at first but the trend has now been reversed. Many prospective teachers had cited the lack of infrastructure as the main reason they were reluctant to work in the area. The other reason was high levels of political violence in Manyavu, which kept many outsiders away from the area. However, partnership between different sections of the village has led to major improvements in the levels of safety. This was achieved through partnership with the neighbouring KwaXimba Traditional Authority as highlighted earlier.

According to Lodge, "Black people tended to organise their lives outside the state rather than around it, and much associational life tended to compensate for the state's inattentiveness to their needs rather than seek control of public resources (2002: 205)." These local voluntary associations were democratically structured. Since associational life was organised outside the state and traditional leadership there was no reason that it should mirror its authoritarian character (Lodge 2002: 205). They are purely local initiatives and at first most of these associations were concerned with the immediate needs of their members.

Like the village of Sweetwaters, which is also under chiefly rule, the community of Manyavu is highly involved in voluntary associations. Most of these take place without any assistance and cooperation from the traditional authority and government. Members are strictly scrutinised. In most cases a prospective member has to be referred to an association by a trusted member of the association. They are mainly composed of like-minded individuals. The Manyavu community was highly endowed in these voluntary associations in the past but their significance has dwindled in the last decade, due to a number of factors. The political violence that engulfed the area in the late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a large number of people emigrate from Manyavu tribal authority. The advent of television, and the fact that women no longer have to fetch water from the river, were some of the contributing factors to the decline of activities that foster cooperation, thereby producing social capital. These social activities acted as a reservoir for social capital. These and other factors have meant that there are now fewer opportunities for neighbours to have face-to-face interactions. This has contributed to the individualist culture in a community that was previously heavily engaged with a variety of associations. As Putnam puts it, villagers are now "bowling alone", which has limited the production of positive social capital. This has been the case for Sweetwaters as well.

As stated in the Sweetwaters case, television was not a threat to social intercourse at first, since there were few households that owned television sets. But now even the community of Manyavu laments the impact of television on interaction between members of the community. Women's groups also lament the fact that women rarely engage their neighbours as they used to do. Now every family has running water - thus, although the introduction of running water is good for the welfare of women it has come at a cost; Putnam states that in America multiple television sets per household have proliferated (2000: 223). By the late 1990s three-quarters of all

households in America had more than one set, allowing people to lead even more private lives (Putnam 2000: 223). In Manyavu and other rural villages the situation is a little different. One used to have one television set per 50 households but these days almost every family has its own television set (MaMdluli, interview, 13-03-2003). Initially the introduction of television did not pose threat to community engagement as people would meet in one household and most of the time was spent talking as most programmes were in English. The problem only became serious later when most households could afford television sets. This is when a threat to social engagement became more pronounced, this has negatively affected the three traditional villages under study.

Locals are weary of the fact that a number of educated individuals have relocated to urban areas to the detriment of local institutions such as stokvels. People, they say, are these days highly mobile and do not stay in one place for a long time as was the case in the past; most educated and formally employed individuals leave the area to look for better opportunities in urban areas, therefore people who participate in these associations are now mostly women. But some individuals who work in the cities do come back at the end of the month. One still finds them in these local associations. There are also those who have relocated permanently and no longer see themselves as belonging to the community of Manyavu.

According to MaDlamini Mdluli, her son, who is a teacher by profession was a member of a local *stokvel* which was made up of people who belonged to the same social class, whether teachers or people who work in the factories (Interview; Manyavu), these were usually people who had grown up together and went to the same schools. MaDlamini was not too sure if her son was still a member of the local *stokvel*. Most of these stokvels are formed along gender and occupation lines. This, might be as a result of the fact that contributions differ depending on one's income, so membership is sometimes a matter of

status. For example, a *stokvel* made up of mainly male members will involve contributions of more than R200 a month; whereas one made up of widows, housewives, and domestic workers, might require contributions of around R100 a month.

Therefore, even if there are no rules that forbid women and men to be in the same *stokvels*, economic considerations often dictate this. This is also dictated by other factors, for example in stokvels that are dominated by men, meetings are often accompanied by heavy drinking and discussions on sports and politics. This would keep most women outside their reach. Women stokvels, on the other hand, are likely to focus on issues of welfare and this might be the reason why burial societies tend to exclusively attract female members.

Women are also likely to hold their meetings during the week, as is the case in MaDlamini's *stokvel*. Men are more likely to be found in high paying jobs than their female counterparts since, in this environment, men are expected to be breadwinners. They are likely to leave their areas of residents to look for decent job opportunities in the cities. Few women worked full-time in the past, unless they were nurses or teachers. A number of male residents have been retrenched in Manyavu. This is also the case in other parts of the country. But the reality is that women are still likely to be found in lower paying jobs.

MaDlamini Mdluli explains how she got involved in the building of the school. This is how she puts it, "we used to discuss in *stokvel* meetings the need for a primary school in this area, as other schools were far away. Therefore, I was involved in the initial idea to look at the possibility of building a new school in our area as our children had to walk long distances to school. In the process, I made some of the unused space in my house available as classrooms. This was to be until such time that the community had mobilised enough resources and acquired land to build a new school. We

held a number of community meetings before the place for a school was found." MaDlamini was not educated herself but had a strong interest in education. She was very knowledgeable about many issues, partly due to her active role in the community. She was one of the people who had seen the value of education when the standards of living for those who had educated children improved. She was one of the beneficiaries as some of her children were educated and had managed to secure better paying jobs.

Therefore, to survive families now had to look for opportunities in distant cities and towns. It must be noted that the village economy and civil society has not always relied on the industrial economy for sustenance. The peasant economy could hardly sustain any lives on its own. This is a trend found almost all over the rural KwaZulu-Natal, if not the whole of South Africa. Therefore, what you find in these villages chosen for this study is a microcosm of life in rural and peri-urban South Africa.

Most, if not all, rural areas were not planned to accommodate institutions such as schools and clinics. There is often no space to spearhead such much-needed development. Some families own large tracts of land, whereas other areas were already densely populated, in terms of households per square kilometre. Most of the rural economy was centred on livestock, and land was reserved for farming and grazing. But the peasant economy had already diminished in importance. There was lack of fertile land because of land dispossession as well as failure to maintain the available land properly. Some people had deserted their land because of demand for black labour in the mines and industries. Few, if any, families rely solely on farm produce these days.

In spite of the devastating effect of political violence in KwaZulu-Natal, the people of Manyavu have been able to recover from it. In the process they tapped into those norms and networks of social organisation that make

collective action possible. These networks were not completely suffocated by the high levels of political violence. For example, MaDlamini's former neighbour, who left the area during the political upheavals, between Manyavu and the neighbouring KwaXimba tribe made his piece of land available for the building of a local school. This proves that despite animosity that had been caused by the political conflict, MaDlamini and her former neighbour maintained a cordial relationship.

The political battles were between Manyavu, which was dominated by the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and KwaXimba, which was controlled by the African National Congress (ANC). In order to establish strongholds the local warlords and youth activists respectively made sure that their areas did not have people of the opposing political party. A number of people left these areas during the political violence and Manyavu was the worst affected by this exodus, compared to KwaXimba. Some people were killed and these villages became no-go areas for rival political groups. Even though there is still some tensions between these two villages, there have been a number of attempts to bridge the gap between the members of the two communities, mainly through football tournaments. The community members revived associational activities such as football teams that have sustained these communities in the past. The political violence has to a large extent subsided and you seldom read any articles in the newspaper about conflict in the two villages. The Natal Witness, a Pietermaritzburg based daily, was inundated with stories of political violence in the late 1980s and 1990s, taking place between the two villages (The Natal Witness, 1991-1994). It reported a number of political killings and assassinations in the area. As much as there are still tensions, they are nothing close to what happened during that period.

Manyavu and KwaXimba are one of the highly politicised areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Therefore, it did not come as a surprise when some of those who were involved in the school building process did not want to use the site that had

been donated by people they might have considered enemies in the past. The process, however, did go ahead as planned but after long and intense deliberations. Most of the problems were resolved through deliberations.

It appears that high levels of engagement and deep community ties were called upon during difficult times. The overlap of the local associations makes consensus possible as some members of the community were members of more than one association, both voluntary and those associations such as kinship that people are born into. One would be a member of a particular *stokvel* or a football club and then belong to a particular clan, which could be called upon when needed. Therefore, to borrow from Granovetter, this shows the strength of weak ties such as being a member of the of the same football team. However, the strong ties also proved to be crucial in resolving or preventing conflict.

The testimony of the school principal mentioned earlier is a case in point. It is a classic example of generalised reciprocity, which is still found in Manyavu. The fact that people could still move from one village to the other irrespective of the negative history of conflict between the two villages share is a case in point. I believe that this was informed by the spirit that says you might be the one in the same situation in the future. It was a form of investment. Villagers were ready to help each other irrespective of political differences and affiliation. It was clear that some form of generalised trust had withstood the political battles that had engulfed the two villages.

Both communities are now recovering from the devastation caused by the political violence. The government has been able to put much-needed infrastructure in place with the help of the local community – though even Manyavu lags behind KwaXimba in this respect. In the latter a traditional court was built sometime ago, whereas in the former this took until 2004. These traditional courts are expected to act not just as places to resolve minor

community disputes, but to function as administrative centres as well. They are equipped with modern amenities, such as fax machines, personal computers, photocopiers, telephone, and other necessities to ensure the smooth running of community affairs.

The balance of power between the traditional authority and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Traditional and Local Government has made the efficient delivery of infrastructure possible. The pressure from the neighbouring long time foe of KwaXimba village, where infrastructural development is at an advanced stage, has meant that the Manyavu traditional authority could not just wait and do nothing, lest it loses its legitimacy in the community.

Manyavu remains a very close-knit community with a lot of mistrust for outsiders. But it had to open up; otherwise, it was likely to lose out on the much-needed infrastructure. Most rural traditional authorities lack resources and revenue and therefore, for development, these communities rely mostly on government support. The competition between different traditional authorities, especially those that belong to different political parties, has contributed to improved governance in these areas.

The government comes with financial resources and as a result of that leverage it is able to ensure that these projects do not become just an extension of patronage which the *inkosi* could use to legitimise itself in the eyes of the community. It is able to impose certain conditions such as the need for quality management before the project can be implemented. The government is also able to insist on a clause that if the traditional authority fails to fulfil its side of the bargain, the project could be withdrawn. This ensures that there is minimal corruption, if any, and that accountability is enforced. Officials from the KwaZulu-Natal DTLGA assist traditional authorities in the drafting of proposals and business plans in order to mobilise

funds for infrastructure development, such as traditional courts, schools, and roads; in return, the signing of the contract means that the DTLGA cannot withdraw its funding without due process being followed.

During the traditional court building process, the Manyavu Traditional Authority was represented by the chairperson of the Development Committee, the Project Co-ordinator, and the *Inkosi* himself. They are the ones who are signatories and represent the traditional institution. They gained much-needed skills in project management and quality assurance. This empowers the traditional authority with skills to deal with developers and avoid being swindled by unscrupulous builders. It also guards against corruption from the traditional institution itself and the possible mismanagement of community resources.

Although the only source of funds for the traditional court was the KZN Department of Traditional and Local Government Affairs, the skills acquired during the project went a long way in empowering the institution of traditional leadership; the Manyavu traditional authority acquired business plan writing skills and the other skills that come with managing a project of that magnitude. This will help them in raising funds from other government departments as well as private sources in future.

For the government being the only source of funding gives it some leverage in the process. It is able to enforce some of the democratic and equity principles enshrined in the Constitution. For example, it can make a demand for the representation of women in the process. Older men tend to dominate traditional institutions and Manyavu was no exception but the government and the water utility supplier, Umgeni Water, were able to compel traditional authorities in KwaZulu-Natal to increase the number of women involved in local projects. This has not always been easy in Manyavu, but, overall, the provincial government was able to get the traditional authority to commit to

good governance during the building of the traditional court; the traditional authority has partly opened up in the process to the benefit of the community, sometimes what makes these institutions wary of change is the lack of skills and knowledge, the traditional authority gained skills on how to manage large sums of money. Almost R300 000 was budgeted for this project. Initially, R150 000 was allocated and the traditional authority felt it was not enough and appealed for more funding from the DTLGA. The appeal was successful since they were able to justify it. This shows the traditional authority that development can take place without necessarily undermining its powers and status in the community.

The condition that the contractors use local labour where possible was very important since it created much needed employment for the local people, it is likely to contribute to local economic development and to improving the local skills base. As Amtaika argues, "A democratic state needs to provide not only a formulated framework for agents of civil and political society, but also basic services without which civil society cannot function (2002: 36)." The money that people earn in these public works jobs can go a long way into achieving that, as people revive their local associations such as stokvels and burial societies where financial resources are important for their survival and sustainability. It also gives them some independence and less reliance on traditional authority and government for their survival. As Amtaika argued, without this independent source of income it would be difficult to sustain voluntary associations. Even football teams need resources to survive.

But the traditional authority could exploit the process by employing locals deemed sympathetic to it. That would be difficult to monitor unless the local residents alert government officials to any violation of corporate governance principles. However, these problems were not that prevalent in Manyavu, where there is evidence that people who benefited from these public works jobs were from the poorest families. If there was any corruption it was not on

the scale of the informal settlements of Freedom Park and Kliptown, where local residents lamented the fact that the people who benefit from these projects are outsiders and the local elite.

In rural villages, the *amakhosi* are able through their structures to locate the most needy families who could really benefit from these projects; in fact, the public works programme has been able to achieve this in the Mkhambathini Regional Authority. Manyavu is part of this area. Women who are employed in the public works programme confirmed this point. They had been chosen from the neediest families and the majority of the beneficiaries were women. They were very happy to be part of the public works programme and a significant number of them had never worked for a wage before.

One observes similar dynamics in the formation of voluntary association in Manyavu and other case studies. As Skocpol et al. argue, "Classic American voluntary membership groups are widely presumed to have been spontaneous and particular creations, fashioned within relatively bounded local communities; neighbours and friends coalesced outside politics and apart from involvements with extralocal government (2000: 527)." But what I argue is that these voluntary and spontaneous groups are the building blocks for political and national oriented social movements. There is no dichotomy between localised associations and national social movements as the micro-level associations are the foundation for macro-level associations.

The Manyavu Water Committee:

When Umgeni Water was operating in Manyavu prior to the new structures of local government, they used to approach the traditional leaders directly. But in some cases what one finds is that some members of the community would first approach the water utility. There were no proper structures in these villages to mobilise resources on behalf of the community and, in most cases, traditional institutions, such as *amakhosi,* were weak. The people who

approached Umgeni Water were mostly from local associations such as stokvels and football clubs. But when Umgeni Water came in, its officials had first to go through the local *inkosi* and tell the *inkosi* that his subjects wanted water – and then ask the *inkosi* to call a public meeting. That is where the Water Committee members are chosen. The Water Committee's task is to coordinate, in the absence of any democratic structures. One must concede, however, that some traditional leaders are still directly involved in the infrastructural development in their areas.

Umgeni Water would, after the agreement with the local *inkosi* and the community, get on with its job and they employ mostly local labour, as was the case in Manyavu. It was not a standard practice to remunerate members of the Water Committee. The residents, who participated in this structure, did so on a voluntary basis. The people who were paid were those that dealt with water connections and metre readings. The Water Committee in Manyavu was handed a cheque of about R 1 800 for operations. This was called the injection fund. But the repairs were done by Umgeni Water. This was a procedure followed by Umgeni Water before the new structures of local government were put in place (Interview, Umgeni Water employee; 08-08-2002), Umgeni Water believed that involving people early in the process would give the community ownership of the project and make paying for these services possible. It was also required by law to help to strengthen local democracy.

The Water Committees tended to be different depending on the area. To some extent, they reflect local dynamics. For example, in some areas the *inkosi* just appoints the local headmen. In other areas, the local residents elect people they believe would best represent their interest. In Manyavu, it was found that people who were active in the Water Committee were also active in other associations. In some areas, the dominant political party will sometimes take

over the project. The IFP, which is the dominant political party in Manyavu, was very active in these structures.

Umgeni Water's officials stated that their approach was always to maintain neutrality, since some communities were divided into two factions or more. The rationale that informed this approach from Umgeni Water was that this enabled it to recoup its investment, even if the balance of power between local political groups changed (Nhlapo, interview, 2000), but in some areas the Water Committees later acted as a unifying force. But things were different in Manyavu; the Water Committee was sometimes seen as competing with the role of the traditional leader. Its main support came from women who needed running water the most, as stated earlier, it is women who bear the burden of fetching water from the traditional water sources such as springs or rivers.

According to an Umgeni Water fieldworker, "In Manyavu, the Water Committee and Umgeni Water experienced problems at the inception phase. The majority of the Water Committee members were women. They were disrespected by some members of the community. It was very difficult to get people to cooperate (Interview, 08-08-2002)." Most of the resistance came from the *isiGungu seNkosi* (Committee of the Chief). It controlled everything. There was always this tendency from Manyavu to control everything, especially if it had to do with development. But voluntary and localised membership groups were free to operate as they pleased, since they were not seen as competing with the traditional authority for legitimacy.

At one stage, Umgeni Water suggested that a community hall be reconstructed so that it could be used to generate income for the Water Committee. It would be rented out when there were events in the village and the income generated be used to sustain the Water Committee. But *isiGungu seNkosi* wanted to control everything, even the Water Committee. But when

it came to repairing the infrastructure the *isiGungu seNkosi* was simply not interested. It was clear that the traditional authority was not interested in doing the job but in getting its hands on resources and imposing its own will. However, the traditional authority was not without tensions. In this environment the role of the state becomes even more important. The state must, therefore, represent the interest of those who do not belong to associations and are therefore not part of civil society (Friedman, 2003: 18) to prevent associations such as the *isiGungu seNkosi* from complete dominance of developmental benefits to the exclusion of other interest groups. It was clear that the *isiGungu seNkosi* was focus on its immediate interest. Umgeni Water and the DTLGA played an important role in breaking the hold traditional leaders had on vulnerable groups such as women and rural communities at large.

What also made working in Manyavu difficult was that there are a number of unresolved murder cases. Therefore, some power holders were also wary of outsiders. The *isiGungu seNkosi* has what we could term negative social capital. The strong ties within this group – which could be termed social capital, - "… enable it to bar others from access (Portes 1998: 15)," to resources within Manyavu, this gatekeeping kept even people with noble intention away from the village. The traditional authority wanted to know everything that took place within the Manyavu village, especially when the outsiders were involved. During one of my field trips to the area, an employee of the DTLGA said that he could not accompany me to the area because it would be dangerous for two young men to go to Manyavu unaccompanied, he then referred me to his colleague who was in his mid-fifties. When we got there one of the local man ask who I was without paying much attention to me. One of the explanations given by Umgeni Water fieldworker was that there were a number of unresolved murder cases in the area which made them very suspicious of total strangers.

Members of the Water Committee were volunteers. The youth in Manyavu was not keen in getting involved. One of the informants stated that the majority of youth in Manyavu are members or supporters of the ANC and have close links with people in KwaXimba. Those who got involved usually gave up early, sometimes due to pressure from local power holders or simply lack of interest. The Water Committee was mainly dominated by older people and a few women. It was very weak in Manyavu and it was not part of the very influential Development Committee, which was closely aligned to the traditional authority. The Development Committee was represented by its chairman in the traditional court building process.

After the promulgation of the new local government act, the Water Committee was taken over by the Indlovu Regional Council, with head offices in Pietermaritzburg. The council was always wary of taking over the responsibility of handling water and kept on delaying the handover process (Umgeni Water Official, Interview, 10-10-2001). After the initial period of interference by the traditional authority, the Water Committee was to be dominated by the women and youth. When the Indlovu Council took over the chairperson of the Water Committee was a shop owner. The participation of elites in the Manyavu Water Committee, such as teachers, increased, during this period. The traditional authority did not have a good working relationship with the Indlovu Regional Council as its employees were young and therefore, associated with the ANC.

At one point a crèche in Manyavu was associated with a particular individual and a certain faction wanted to sabotage the whole process, politics was said to be at the centre of these divisions (Indlovu Regional Council fieldworker; interview; 17-03-2003). It was always important to know who brings development in the area. If the traditional authority felt threatened by the whole process, that particular project was likely to face serious resistance. It is always important to engage the traditional authority and deal with its

concerns first. Some elements within the area, such as the ward councillors, were also not always on good terms with the traditional leadership, and they also had the power to frustrate any form of infrastructural development; therefore, there are a number of visible and invisible power holders. In all the cases under investigation, Manyavu remains the most challenging one. The levels of gate keeping proved to be enormous.

Summary:

If we talk of an open society in a rural setting, then KwaXimba fits that bill, while the neighbouring village of Manyavu is the opposite. However, both villages have a vibrant associational activity. In KwaXimba, the development structures are dominated by both youth and the elderly. As one interview with a community activist in KwaXimba testifies: "The change came from below. If the *Inkosi* was not sympathetic to our needs he was not going to stay in his position for too long." Walking around KwaXimba people spoke openly and they were never afraid of engaging strangers; in contrast to Manyavu where local residents found it difficult to relate to total strangers. But they were still able to achieve modest levels of infrastructural development. As stated earlier, an employee from the DTLGA who was in his mid-30s declined to accompany this researcher to Manyavu for fear of victimisation and instead asked his elderly colleague who was in his fifties to accompany me. His colleague had a strong rural background. For access to this site I had to solicit help from government officials. However, I also used other networks, for example, teachers from the Ntweka Lower Primary School who then introduced me to important informants. Something a senior official from DTLGA informed me that it was very dangerous to do. Everything that happens in that village has to be approved by the local *inkosi*; however, it was still possible to find other entry points as I managed to do in this instance. Nevertheless, both cases were endowed with voluntary associations which had been observed in the Sweetwaters case study. However, as with Sweetwaters, levels of participation in voluntary associations had dwindled,

which could partly be explained by the argument I will put forward in the next chapter, i.e. the impact of the informalisation of the economy on associational life.

This case illustrates the contribution of social capital to the creation of human capital and the contribution of human capital in the creation of social capital. MaDlamini Mdluli's son, who was relatively well educated, was brought back into the School Governing Body from which he had resigned. This case has also shown how people who are involved in local associations that are deemed as non-political can contribute to the development of local infrastructure; this has been the trend in all the case studies presented in this thesis. These cases confirm that human capital is very important in the creation of social capital; this case also confirms that where communities have limited resources the state can play an important role in mediating different interests using its resources as leverage.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, in this case study, I showed that the two neighbouring villages of Manyavu and KwaXimba had a vibrant associational life, which had a positive impact in the development of infrastructure. This suggests that both closed (Manyavu) and open (KwaXimba) societies could have associations that contribute to economic development in the form of infrastructure such as schools, roads, and community halls. It was shown how civic associations such as football clubs played a critical role in healing divisions caused by political violence between and within the two villages. Associational such as football clubs were able to bridge sectional concerns. Evidence coming from this chapter also suggests that the state can play a meaningful role in creating an equitable society through schemes such as Water Committees. For instance, the state ensured that the Water Committee in the village of Manyavu was representative of its main beneficiaries, which is women. In both villages the state ensured that those residents who lacked resources were

given jobs so that they could have running water. Families that were destitute were also assisted by neighbours as part of efforts by the state to ensure that there was cooperation within the community. This case study demonstrated that rural villages are capable of producing positive social capital that is good for development. It also showed that local associations are facing many challenges such as the middle classes deserting villages for urban areas. In all the case studies chosen for the purposes of this study, it was demonstrated that the middle classes, formally employed residents, and other elites were a cornerstone of most associations as well as developmental initiatives. The case studies, including this case study, suggest that organisational and financial resources are a strong determinant of who participates in associations that produce positive social capital.

SECTION VI: GOOD GOVERNANCE, CIVIC ASSOCIATION AND CHALLENGES OF AN INFORMALISING ECONOMY AS WELL AS CONCLUDING REMARKS

CHAPTER SEVEN
STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS FACING SOCIAL CAPITAL PRODUCING CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS AND STATE'S ATTEMPTS TO ENGENDER IT.

This chapter addresses the following hypothesis, which had been highlighted in the introductory chapter where I argued that positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income. The case studies in this thesis demonstrated in detail challenges faced by civic associations such as the unwillingness of leaders of these associations to vacate their positions once their term of office has come to an end due to the fact that there are no alternatives sources of income. For instance, most of the retrenched union members interviewed in Freedom Park and Kliptown were middle-aged, while I also argued that urbanisation has had a negative impact on associations in peri-urban and rural villages. Informalisation of the economy has had a negative impact on associations by denying citizens reliable and steady independent income. Later in the chapter, I will demonstrate that the picture is not that gloomy and state has contributed directly and indirectly to the revival of civic associations that produce social capital. It will show how bottom-up processes in the informal settlement and state-driven processes have facilitated the creation of positive social capital.

The changing nature of work and its impact on local associations[28]*:*

Informality, it is argued, makes organisation more difficult and therefore ensures that the poor face considerable barriers to collective action. It may also be inimical to democratic values and practices. To name but one example, South Africa has witnessed an increase in vigilantism. This practice is more prevalent in poor communities, where levels of poverty are very high and where levels of lawlessness have increased. It might be linked to informalisation, in that those who participate in it see no value in remaining engaged with the state for the protection of their lives and property. Changes in the production process which force the poor out of the formal workplace could also place citizens beyond the reach of formal institutions and the norms which underpin them, prompting lack of faith in formal government institutions; these might be seen to require the poor to submit to regulation, but without offering incentives or rewards for active citizenship in return.

This hypothesis, however, is only the beginning of an attempt to understand whether and how the poor, living or working informally, can use the rights of democratic citizenship to secure the formulation and implementation of policies which will narrow social inequality: it opens a host of questions which need to be addressed if we are to shed light on the circumstances in which the informal poor might participate effectively in democratic politics and in the development of their communities.

We need, for example, to determine whether structural factors are at play in the informal economy which have a negative effect on the organisation of the

[28] This chapter was initially written by this author for publication by the Centre for Policy Studies and the reference is as follows: K. S. Hlela. 2003. Dilemmas of Collective Action in the Informal Economy: How the Other Quarter Lives?" ***Policy: Issues and Actors***, 16(4), Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies. Parts of this chapter were subsequently published as part of this author's contribution to a book chapter (see Friedman, Steven, Kenny Hlela, and Paul Thulare (2005)

poor and by implication on positive social capital producing civic associations. We identified challenges faced by poor people in shack settlements of Johannesburg and villages in greater Pietermaritzburg with regard to dwindling numbers of people who join and participate in local associations. Some of the literature implies that no such barriers exist – and points to the opportunities that the informal economy presents for union organisation. But this analysis has failed to demonstrate empirically how this is possible: the evidence suggests that there are structural dynamics which make it difficult to organise in informal settings in the ways in which trade unions traditionally organised. But it is also possible that new circumstances have not made organisation impossible (or even, perhaps, more difficult) but that they have created an environment in which new types of organisation are needed. This suggests a need to determine the dynamics of any form of organisation and mobilisation that could be identified in informal settings - the identities of those involved, their methods, strengths and weaknesses and the extent to which we can distil out of these experiences general conclusions about the circumstances in which organisation among the informal poor is possible, as well as its possibilities and limits. We need to find out if people in the informal economy organise to make use of their status as enfranchised citizens. And if they do, under what circumstances do they do it? If the poor do not use democratic politics to advance their interests, what strategies do they use? Some of the challenges faced by the poor have already been identified in the case studies contained in this thesis.

This chapter seeks to contribute to a greater understanding of these issues by assessing whether people who work and live informally are able to act as democratic citizens by using the rights which they are granted by the constitution. It will examine what the literature says about some of these questions, as well as South African experiences found in the case studies chosen for this thesis. Its purpose is to identify exogenous factors impacting on associational life in shack settlements and villages.

The growth of informality in work, it is argued, has two main causes: the global economic crises and the way production is being organised (Gallin 2001: 534). Others, however, have tended to see it as a result of deliberate policies of weakening labour movements pursued by employers such as subcontracting.

The key question, for the purposes of this thesis, is whether this process is reversible – clearly, if it is simply the result of a temporary policy shift, an analysis which assumes that the poor will, in future, work only or mainly in informal settings, may be quickly overtaken by events. Gallin (2001) writing from the perspective of the trade union movement, argues that even if the inclination towards informality is the product of policy decisions, which can by its nature be reversed, a reversal involving the adoption of different macroeconomic policies at a global scale depends on a fundamental shift in global power relations between capital and labour (Gallin 2001). He argues for a union position which accepts informality as a given because:

> 'Whether such a shift can be brought about depends in turn, at least partially, on the very question of whether the informal sector can be organised by unions. Even assuming a shift of a global economic policy can occur in the short term, its effects will be felt at the earliest in about a decade or two.'(Gallin 2001: 534)

On the face of it, it appears that the trend towards informality is reversible because it is partly a result of strategic decisions - the casualisation of labour is not an inevitable process but is influenced by business decision-making. But the brokering system and informalisation of the economy appears to be working perfectly for business and therefore we are unlikely to see it reversed in the near future - already some organisations are advising business on how best to implement these changes. For example, the Confederation of Employers of South Africa "advises employers on restructuring their

production such that employment contracts are converted into service contracts and employees become independent contractors (Valodia 2001: 877).” These are some of the strategies that employers are embarking on to bypass labour legislation and collective bargaining agreements (Valodia 2001: 877). Those pushing for such arrangements insist that they are empowering workers. But in the process the unions have lost many of their members and there are fewer interruptions in the production process. It has made it more difficult and expensive for unions to organise. As alluded in the case studies on Sweetwaters and Manyavu/KwaXimba, residents of these villages who had formal employment played an important role in stokvels, water committees, school governing bodies and other civic associations found in that space, therefore, this trend towards informalisation has had an impact in the villages as much as it has had an impact in urban centres.

In the current global context it appears that a radical shift in how the economy is managed is unlikely. On the contrary, for the foreseeable future we can expect more deregulation and a further growth of the informal economy, which constitutes at least half of many Third World economies. In South Africa, it is estimated at 16 to 40 percent of gross domestic product (Shinder 1998: 73) – although some analysts suggest that this is an underestimate. However, as a share of total non-agricultural employment, informal employment constituted 30 percent of those who were employed in 2007 (Wills 2009: 1). This is likely to grow because the strategies which produce informality are partly supported by policies approved at an international level - global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank usually press for them. This is in itself a reflection of a global balance of power in which the voice of organised labour, and the poor, is barely heard. A shift in this balance towards labour and the poor is unlikely when union memberships have been falling in most countries.

South Africa seems an exception to the trend in union membership: its largest and most dominant union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), reports a growth in membership from 1 317 496 in 1994 to 1 770 155 in 2003 (Naidoo 2003). But this growth is deceptive because it has occurred mostly in the public sector, where political change has opened up new organising options. In fact, Cosatu membership fell by approximately 100 000 members overall: the decline happened mostly in the traditional sectors such as mining and manufacturing (Naidoo 2003). This membership decline happened between 2000 and 2003, which was said to be the first membership decline in Cosatu's history. If you look at this over the period of 10 years it would be difficult to point to this decline; this only become apparent if one looks specifically at the period identified above, this has meant that unions concentrate on preserving current membership rather than organising new members (Freeman and Rogers 2002).

With the labour unions on the defensive here too, it is unlikely that the current pattern could be reversed. The trends discussed here have been successful in undermining the gains made by labour in fighting for the rights of their members. For now business appear to have an upper hand in policy debates. In the past, the unions had been able to counter the power of business through their numbers. But, with the weakening of the labour movement we are unlikely to experience any shift in favour of labour.

The deconstruction of the formal economy through outsourcing and subcontracting is a long-term trend that cannot be reversed unless the cost/benefit calculations of companies on employment policies change (Freeman and Rogers 2002) - unions clearly lack the muscle to change them. These policies are already impacting negatively on the lives of the poor and are, it is argued, shaping the nature of urban and peri-urban politics and to a certain extend of rural villages. Thus, in his narration of experiences of poor people, Desai argues that the casualisation of labour (that meant workers only

received wages for two months of the year), the labour brokering system (that meant that they were no longer eligible for any benefits) and similar changes in the labour market, were all linked to the failure of families to meet escalating rent, water, and electricity costs, and thus were partly responsible for evictions and cuts in services (Desai 2002). While this creates the potential for protest, it also means labour is more fragmented and dispersed, making collective action more difficult.

Can this trend be changed by a vigorous union effort to organise informal workers? South African unions, like those elsewhere in the world, have been debating the issue of recruiting informal workers because there is a feeling that a failure to do so is detrimental to their survival given that the pool of formal workers is shrinking (Naidoo 2003). The key question, however, is whether it is possible for unions to organise these workers, who work in very different conditions from those which spurred union organisation. The reason the organisation of workers is deemed to be important for the production of social capital emanates from the research coming out of this thesis. It derives from the idea that the most active members of the community are, in most cases, the salaried individuals who tend to join and form local associations. They often play a prominent role in both villages and shack settlements as identified in this thesis.

Union Organising:

Gallin, a strong advocate of union efforts to organise informal workers, admits that the heterogeneous nature of employment relations, the difficulties of locating and contacting workers in informal employment and—in some instances—obstacles created by legislation, make organising informal workers difficult (Gallin 2001: 531). But he goes on to claim that unions underestimate the capacity of informal workers to organise – contrary to some of the views suggested here, he believes that it is easier to organise informal workers, as they are resourceful and dynamic.

His optimism does not, however, seem to be borne out by the evidence, certainly not in South Africa. Recent research (Bennet 2003) here has shown that there are various obstacles to organising the informally employed, both by the traditional unions, as well as by unions established solely to organise informal workers. The Self Employed Women's Union (Sewu), an association formed specifically to cater for women working in the informal economy, and the Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu), a Cosatu-affiliated union which has taken a particular interest in organising workers working in informal conditions, (see Bennett) find it difficult to recruit new members in the informal economy. One of the most daunting tasks has been to solicit membership fees - this has proved detrimental to Sewu, which lost 35 percent of its members when it shifted from accepting cash for membership fees and introduced debit orders (Bennett 2003), the change alienated most of its membership and one of the reasons cited was the inability to open and maintain bank accounts because of the lack of steady income: there appears to be a huge gap between informal workers and formal institutions such as the banks. This can affect the mobilisation of these workers, as they cannot rely on these institutions to take care of some of their businesses. It also shows the lack of resources and poverty engulfing this sector. Sactwu has encountered a number of difficulties in trying to recruit in the informal economy (Bennett 2003). It also realised that recruiting and mobilising informal workers needed more resources than those usually devoted to formal workers.

Sewu has cited another reason for its limited success in organising informal workers. It reports that it encounters informal workers who are reluctant to join because of their previous experience of union membership (Bennett 2003). Thus while, as this thesis will note below, some of the literature and preliminary research contained mainly in the Freedom Park and Kliptown case studies suggest that a union background may encourage organisation by

the informal poor, there may also be cases in which union experience discourages it; the other obstacle, the union argues, is that some of these potential members expect immediate benefits. These workers also often expect private benefits and do not see engaging in unions as a public good that is likely to benefit their circumstances in the long run.

Further to these factors, the diversity of interests in the informal economy and the lack of a clear employer-employee relationship, emerges from the literature (see Sanyal 1991 and Widner 1991) as some of the reasons that make organising difficult. For example, most informal street traders work independently and have nobody to bargain against for salaries. Their protests are often directed at the municipalities that control the streets but not for salaries. Optimistic assessments of potential for organising the informal also tend to neglect the role of informal power holders and all those groups who might have an interest in maintaining the status quo because they benefit from current arrangements to which informal workers are subject, there are powerful groups that benefit from informality - whether within a particular sector, in business generally, or in government.

For some authors, these obstacles do not mean that organising in the informal economy is impossible – merely that it needs to be approached differently. Sandoval argues that in Brazil the national trade unions failed to respond to the needs of informal workers. He argues that they have not taken advantage of the organisational capabilities of street vendors and informal taxi operators (see Sandoval) who have been involved in various confrontations with their local government. But the question he does not ask is whether these workers were prepared to be represented by the labour movement. His assumption that they are interested in channelling their energies into union-organised activity lacks the backing of grassroots interviews which seek to test whether these workers recognise the legitimacy of formal trade unions to intervene on their behalf. Nor are we told whether the informal workers have ever tried to forge

links with the formal trade unions. Sandoval never mentions the identities, strategies and activities of informal sector unions. One of the challenges for union organisation is that the confrontation with local governments in these settings appears to be spontaneous and it will be difficult for the unions to forge these alliances with the informal sector associations where there are no clear leadership structures.

For example, Sanyal (1991) argues that informal workers are rarely organised into groups with which trade unions representing formal workers can easily cooperate. Most informal sector unions are very localised - based in particular cities - while formal workers' organisations are national in scope. This makes it difficult for the informal associations to forge alliances and combine resources to maintain a national presence that might give them more leverage in negotiations, especially at national level. Informal sector unions are also often loosely organised internally, while trade unions are required by their constitutions to have a well-established internal hierarchy. Informal unions are, as suggested earlier, also less financially stable than national trade unions. Informal workers are not organised into trade groups and will require huge resources to organise, something which even the national trade unions cannot afford. This means that the kind of networks and social capital produced in the informal economy might not be as fungible as that produced by other local associations identified in the previous chapters.

While this prognosis is largely pessimistic for those concerned to champion union organisation of informal workers, some of the literature does suggest that there may be opportunities for organisation. It has been argued that informal workers who reside or work in the same area are more likely to be organised than those who are scattered (Sanyal 1991). Proximity is said to create conditions for shared experiences, which can be a cohesive factor and make the task of organising in that sector easier - it may be no coincidence that mineworkers have been one of the most militant and vociferous category

of workers in South Africa; whether, however, this factor outweighs the drawbacks noted above is an area for further research.

Even if it is found that traditional unions are unable to organise informal workers – and this is not assured – union experiences may play a crucial role in shaping organisation outside the formal economy. Thus some studies (see Desai 2002) have identified retrenched union members as the key initiators of collective action in informal settings, that is, as key reservoirs of social capital. Common sense would tend to support this claim – the poor usually lack the resources to organise in a way which would enable them to take part in formal democratic politics and this explains why movements of the poor are so often organised by people who are themselves not poor, retrenched workers would be expected to possess skills and experience of organisation (i.e. social capital) which most of the poor do not have - and, because they are retrenched, to have developed a common interest with the informal poor. This hypothesis has also been supported by the research in informal settlements as stated in previous chapters, where these workers are at the forefront of some organisations: former union members facilitated the initial land invasion in the Freedom Park shack settlement, south of Johannesburg. Evidence from both Freedom Park and Kliptown suggests that these retrenched union members often play a positive role in the early stages but tend to change later, failing to follow democratic principles. This could be attributed to the fact that these positions are now for the individuals concerned the only source of income. Therefore, evidence suggests that they rarely behave as democratically as when they were engaged at the shop floor level. If further research supports this finding, it opens up an important area of inquiry – what prompts people subject to one set of values and ways of acting socially when they are formally employed to adopt new ways when they are forced into informality?

Associational activity in the informal economy:

Whether or not union organisation proves a means to participation in policy debates by informal workers, this is not the only form of collective action among these workers. Even if they do not appear to exercise their democratic right, informal workers do not live and work in environments devoid of collective action, associational life – and politics.

Despite much writing about the importance of informality, limited information is available about the politics of the poor who derive their livelihood from activities in the informal economy: the home-based workers, informal street traders, and working poor who, even if they work in the formal economy, can be expected to live in informal environments because they are unlikely to be able to afford to live in formal residential areas; indeed, the respective influences on collective action of informal work and residence is itself an important area of study because little is known about the differing effects on collective action of informal work and residential settings - it will be important to investigate how people who work formally but live in shack settlements engage in collective action. We also need to understand how these arrangements impact on the behaviour of these individuals in their relationship with the state. Answers to some of these questions have already been provided in the preceding chapters.

Thornton argues that workers in the informal economy are engaged in economic activities for which the state either plays no supportive role or may actually be an impediment (Thornton 2000). Workers in the formal economy have a workplace in which the state regulates safety and enacts other regulatory protections (even a state hostile to worker protection may regulate the work environment, giving it a formal character). According to Thornton, connections to the state would seem to create an environment in which formal sector workers have more of a stake in government action and, therefore,

more of an interest in supporting and participating in the political system (Thornton 2000).

But the assertion that workers in the informal economy have limited connection to the state has been challenged. Jennifer Widner argues that there are instances where participants in the informal economy have a commonality of interest with some government officials. In these cases, they are more likely to cooperate with government (Widner 1991). This is a view supported by other researchers. According to John C. Cross, some street vendors have been successful in defending their interests in Mexico City because they were able to take advantage of certain structural features of the Mexican state, notably the weak integration of interests between policy-makers and policy-implementers, (Cross 1998) which was often manifested when local government officials failed to implement policies formulated at national level. They then forge alliances with representatives of informal workers by striking deals such as recognising one association and excluding rival associations. South Africa has also experienced cases of this sort – this is illustrated in a case to which this chapter will return, where the Pretoria city council forged links with one of the informal traders' unions.

Diana Mitlin's analysis of the development literature reveals some interesting insights into the dynamics of association among the informal poor. In general, these draw attention to severe limitations on democratic organisation among people working informally.

Mitlin's literature review shows that the extent to which organisations provide vehicles for the informal poor to participate, and to develop a belief in their ability to change their circumstances through collective action, is questioned. It has been "expressed that community leaders dominate the

organisations that they belong to, reinforcing the belief among residents that they have little control or influence over their lives and their local organisations (Mitlin 2001: 156)."

This might be reflected in low turnout in meetings organised by some community organisations. These organisations have also sometimes been shown to command limited visible support. What seems to sustain them is not their support base among citizens, which is often assumed to be the key source of influence in democratic systems, but their ability to establish strong links with politicians or state bureaucrats.

This finding is supported by the South African literature, which, for example, paints a bleak picture of membership density in organisations of informal traders. A number of informal traders claim that they do not belong to any association, because they do not know them (Lund 1998: 36). Some argue that association leadership does not deliver on its promises (Interviews with Hillbrow informal traders, 2001). Most of the unions in the informal sector cannot deliver any consistent membership numbers nor can they claim to represent specific constituencies (Lund 1998: 36). Some traders are said to become members of the associations in an involuntary way, (Lund 1998) by virtue of where they are located. This power is sometimes accorded to these associations by the municipalities who are desperate to demonstrate that they are consulting their constituencies. These factors might be impacting on the levels of collective action amongst those participating in the informal economy. In most cases, positive social capital is produced by voluntary associations. Therefore, these associations of informal traders are unlikely to produce benign social capital contributing to democratic and economic development as they are imposed from above.

Some writers have shown little faith in the ability of grassroots organisations to represent the interests of the urban poor and help them to solve their problems (Lund 1998). Mitlin believes that this pessimism stems from problems linked to leadership and participation within these organisations. She argues that this cannot be separated from the broader context of state officials' and politicians' relations of patronage with community leaders. Another concern which has been raised is that some associations in the informal economy remain unrecognised by those with whom they need to bargain (Gallin 2001: 544): in the absence of clear-cut employer-employee relationship, unions in the informal economy bargain not with employers or with others who may be able to influence their circumstances (labour brokers, for example) but with local councils. Local government often passes rules that work against the interest of informal traders or informal settlement residents - for example, the provision of housing or the allocation of trading sites – and this may suggest that, contrary to this literature, informal unions negotiate with councils because their members are directly affected by council decisions, not for a lack of any clear power-holder with which to negotiate. But the choice of bargaining partners, both by the informal poor and those with the power to influence their circumstances, requires further investigation.

There are, as suggested above, cases in which negotiation relationships are determined by strategic decisions by local governments which exclude some associations. In the case of informal settlements, the relevant local authority might decide to recognise one association and ignore its rivals. In the inner city, local government might declare that all traders should belong to one association. This tends to give the designated union power over the other associations. In Pretoria for instance, the Council is said to have a close relationship with one street trader organisation and was even instrumental in establishing it (Skinner 2000). This association was made responsible for selecting those who were to be given trading sites (Skinner 2000). The

situation results in a closing of democratic space and limits choices for the traders. This raises the possibility that the powerlessness among the informal poor that has been mentioned in the literature might be emanating not from deep-rooted structural problems but from arrangements chosen by government actors who, wittingly or unwittingly, give some actors in the informal economy a powerful hold over others.

This is not, however, to say that divisions among the informal poor are always created by external agents such as local government. It is important to emphasise that deep divisions sometimes characterise communities which are normally seen as homogenous. Research has shown that elites usually dominate these organisations, exercising an influence which goes well beyond the 'normal' leadership role found in democratic organisations, fluency in English is crucial for those people who want to take up leadership positions because this provides access to official decision-makers. Fieldwork by this author in informal settlements of Freedom Park and Kliptown found that the same individuals, all of them able to speak English fluently, dominated proceedings in meetings.

An indication of how some unequal power relations can operate in a rural setting is provided by a study of Botswana, where the *kgotla*[29] system of local deliberation in rural areas is said to offer a form of direct democracy. But this is complicated by the existence of a variety of ethnic identities within most geographic areas, which in turn shapes power relations. According to Mompati and Prinsen:

> "… The issue of ethnicity cannot be ignored when community participation is becoming a cornerstone for development planning. This is not only because

[29] A traditional meeting place, especially for the major ethnic *Tswana* groups.

> most communities are composed of different ethnic groups, but because if participatory development efforts prioritise the most marginalized areas for intervention, as they often do, then it is likely that it is precisely these areas that are also characterised by strong ethnic divisions.'(Mompati and Prinsen 2000)

The authors suggest that during elections the subordinate groups usually vote for a candidate from a dominant group because the well-entrenched belief among the ethnic minority groups is: 'We cannot speak so eloquently and do not understand things (Mompati and Prinsen 2000: 628).'As an almost inevitable consequence of these ethnic power imbalances, subordinate ethnic groups were systematically impoverished by being denied the right to own cattle and access to land.

In the *Kgotla* not everybody feels free to talk – it provides a forum for the dominant ethnic groups to exercise power and authority. Therefore, as stated in chapter one, the reliance of the South African Government on *izimbizo* to determine what people want has serious limitations. It is natural therefore, that the group in power will feel threatened when members of the subordinate groups attempt to speak in this forum, as it is seen as undermining their power base: 'subordinate groups are very conscious of the risk of reprisals and will normally withdraw before they expose themselves to such risks (Mompati and Prinsen 2000: 628)." These power relations and their impact on the poor were outlined in both the Freedom Park and Kliptown case studies. This confirms that, where subordinate people do not have independent sources of income, their rights will always be at the mercy of power holders. Poor people in rural areas and in the informal economy have rights guaranteed by the constitution but have always found it difficult to exercise them.

In shack settlements, some people do not have legal rights to what they own. This sometimes puts them in a similar situation to their rural counterparts. These people in theory have access to certain defined rights of citizenship. They are all entitled to elect the leaders they desire, have access to social grants, and they can lodge cases in civil courts. But in rural, especially in areas under chiefly rule[30], some people have found it difficult to exercise some of these rights and it is possible that this could also be the reality in informal settlements, a key task is, therefore, to examine the degree to which they do exist and, where they do, to identify those groups that have a vested interest in the maintenance of the status quo.

There is also evidence in the literature that change in power relations – either in their immediate environment or in the society - is not seen by organisations of the informal poor as a means to improve their circumstances. Mitlin notes that: "Despite the enthusiasm of development agencies and other professionals for civil society, many grassroots organizations are more concerned with poverty alleviation than with poverty reduction; with maintaining existing social relationships rather than with securing ones that are more equitable (Mitlin 2001: 164)." The reason for this may be varied. But it appears that the leaders have no other forms of livelihood and therefore might be scared that, if they empower the poor, there is a strong possibility that they will lose some of the privileges that come with being a leader. This should be expected particularly in countries affected by high levels of inequality and absolute poverty. This situation is likely to differ in countries where there are high levels of employment and these are likely to be highly industrialised economies, therefore, though evidence of the existence of associations that produce positive social capital was put forward, its impact on development in these communities is constrained by high levels of need.

[30] This is a situation that could be found in commercial farms, however, that was not the subject of this study.

Collective action in the informal economy:

Are people who work or live informally willing and able to use collective action to advance their interests and enforce their rights as citizens?

Bryan Roberts argues that the poor do not lack an interest in collective solutions, but that there are structural conditions which foster individualism (Roberts 1996). The chapters on Freedom Park and Kliptown identified at great lengths the challenges faced by poor communities in organising. It identified lack of resources as being at the epicentre of the difficulties faced by poor people. Roberts contends that the poor are rarely in a similar life situation to their neighbours: informality has meant that they are "differentiated by the type of employment, by stage in the life cycle, and above all, by the importance of individual household and its labour resources as a means of survival (Roberts 1996: 49)." Social and economic divisions in this environment tends to encourage "vertical, rather than horizontal, political relationships as individuals sought patronage and protection from above as a means of securing what little they had gained in housing or as a means of obtaining more benefits for themselves and their neighbours (Roberts 1996: 50)." Therefore, organisation for collective benefit might emerge where informal settlement residents or workers are concentrated in a similar occupation where benefits are almost equal and they play a complementary role – as in the taxi industry and this might emerge from the new municipal market established by the City of Johannesburg for the informal traders. The experiences in Latin America are relevant here, market traders have often become one of the most vociferous interests in urban politics. However in sectors where there is excessive competition among traders we are likely only to experience periodic cooperation - for example, when there is threat of eviction. In the Freedom Park case study, I showed how leaders of Sanco were enticed by the developers with offers of employment, thereby,

weakening the civic associations in the area. This is exacerbated by the fact that unemployment in the area is very high and most leaders are unemployed.

Some studies have found the level of association to be lower among the urban informal sector, (Davis et al. 1999) in relation to urban interests such as factory workers. This has been linked to the reality that the organisational resources of most societies tend to be heavily concentrated among the economically and educationally advantaged (Davis et al. 1999). The case studies in this thesis provided evidence to support this claim. It is argued that "the dispersion and economic vulnerability, of the urban informal sector do not facilitate collective organisation (Davis et al. 1999: 59)." Which means that informal, but not dispersed occupations in the informal economy such as the taxi industry mentioned above might produce a different finding since the employer-employee relations are clear in this case. This tells us that lack of resources and proximity might present a serious challenge to organisation in the informal economy and that those sectors which have overcome these factors might be at an advantage.

But resource constraints and logistical barriers may not be the only factors impeding collective action by the informal poor - according to Douglas Thornton "there is a relationship between informality and political attitudes and behaviour… (2000: 1306)" although he goes on to argue that informal employment may not always be an important variable in relation to political attitudes and political participation (Thornton 2000: 1306). Now, if the latter two terms refer purely to participation in party politics, Thornton's qualification is relevant to South Africa: the author's fieldwork (which was unpacked in chapters three and four) in informal settlements suggests informality is not a barrier to participating in formal politics. During the interviews some informants articulated negative attitudes towards the ruling party, the ANC, but still state that they would vote for it and attend meetings organised by its affiliates or branches. The often-mentioned reason is that

they want to keep abreast of the latest developments. Therefore, political attitude is not always linked to political behaviour or participation. More research is needed, however, not only into the link between informality and participation in formal politics, but also in the extent to which informal actors participate in politics understood more broadly as attempts to influence the content of public decision-making.

What is often seen as the unwillingness of people to participate in issues that affect their lives might not be what it appears to be: it might reflect not unwillingness to act but power relations within the community, whether it is composed of informal traders or shack settlement residents. In Kliptown, residents claimed that if you are seen to be too active in raising community challenges you are likely to get killed. Several studies have reported situations in which the likely beneficiaries destroy projects that are meant to benefit them. For example, Sihlongonyane found that in Mohlakeng, a township situated west of Johannesburg, shack and backyard dwellers affected by high rent and ill treatment by the landlords, favoured a project that was meant to build them houses (Sihlongonyane 2001: 38). But the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco), dominated by people who had formal housing, was against this project. It was joined by some people in the shack and backyard dwellings who participated in the project's destruction. This suggests that there are powerful pressures within shack settlements and other poor-resourced areas to maintain existing arrangements.

There may be solid reasons why people who live or work informally prefer to maintain prevailing arrangements rather than risking something new. But by implication, some of the literature suggests that this mobilisation to maintain the *status quo* may be initiated by leaders who are not responding to their constituents but mobilising them to preserve the leadership's dominance. Mitlin states that, "… questions have been raised about the motivations of leaders within the community and the extent of membership participation

(Mitlin 2001: 156).” In some contexts, it might be a reaction to leaders who fail to win the trust of constituents. Scheper-Hughes illustrates how the elected official in a small town in Brazil began to control access to resources in the community (Mitlin 2001: 156). It is alleged that this official was using general meetings for his personal benefits. “When one such meeting was called, the level of violence was such that the meeting was abandoned and he then declared himself president for life (Mitlin 2001: 156).” Mitlin argues that these relations within organisations in shack settlements are not predetermined but are a reflection of several factors, such as pressures on local the leadership and the difficulties of self-organisations where there are scarce resources (2001: 156).

The view that associational leadership may prompt violent behaviour from constituents is challenged by Widner when she argues that “only where government prevents legal association or where local bosses prevent association by resorting to coercion, is spontaneous rebellion or rioting on the part of those heavily invested in informal activities and without clear opportunities for advancement likely (1991: 34).” Nevertheless, this is the form of political action that is usually identified by academics and evidence from Kenya (Widner 1991) suggests that it is not the only possible strategy or the one that is most often used by traders, it is the task of future research to identify other likely forms of participation in this environment. Therefore, more research is needed not only into relations between leaders and their constituents, but into the structural conditions which may make responsive and accountable leadership in organisations less or more likely.

There might also be other groups within the informal economy who have an interest in maintaining prevailing arrangements. Friedman (1993: 53) argues that, “While organizations with the ability to mobilise protest clearly cannot be excluded [*from development decisions*], those who do not may represent

important constituencies and may have the capacity to disrupt any agreements at the forum. If they do not do this at the forum, they are likely to do so outside it – in more costly ways." The possible role of less visible and vocal organisations (whether or not the associations are formal themselves) is a feature that my fieldwork in the shack settlements failed to identify. I focussed more on visible organisations. There is however a need for research to move towards a greater understanding of such less visible organisation. We still need to identify informal networks that have a stake in various outcomes and see how much influence they have in these settings, if any. As one informant exclaimed, "I was surprised to see how many foreigners are in our settlement (Civic Leader in Freedom Park, Interview, 2001)" This may not be the only surprise awaiting an attempt to understand patterns of organisation among the informal poor.

The informal economy is characterised by various interests that are not easily identifiable. Widner (1991: 34) notes: "People move in and out of the informal sector for a variety of reasons, from a desire to supplement farm income where either land or labour are short, to a lack of formal sector alternatives for new entrants to labour markets, to unattractive wages for local contract work, to the expectation that children, especially adolescents, will help their families or at least supply their own needs during seasons where stores of food are diminished and purchase of food is costly (Widner 1991: 34)." This makes it difficult to organise these individuals because they appear less likely to share interests with other informal workers – many key issues may affect them differently, making united or collective action impossible. People who expect to be engaged in informal work temporarily are also unlikely to be willing to act to change their circumstances. Some studies (Sanyal 1991 and Widner 2001) have also established that some workers in the formal economy also keep jobs in the informal economy. This is particularly true when the formal job market is affected by wage freezing and the prices of basic commodities are on the increase. The informal economy

becomes an option for those who want to supplement their incomes; again, this militates against organisation or mobilisation.

The extent to which it is possible for an entrepreneur to move from lower income informal pursuits to higher income activity, or, indeed, to graduate to formal activities, affects how interests are perceived as well as forms of participation. According to these understandings, informal economy entrepreneurs are more likely to organise politically to demand lower license fees, more amenities, less regulation, lower food costs, or other benefits if they believe themselves trapped in a particular occupation or a particular income level. In South Africa there is still a strong perception by those participating in the informal economy that they or their children will get jobs in the formal economy despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, this is probably the consequence of a history unlike that of many Southern countries, especially Brazil, Ghana, Kenya, and India, in which occupying a job in the informal economy was, until relatively recently, the norm; but its consequence is clearly that informal economy participants still see their conditions as temporary. If it is true that perceptions of mobility affect levels of participation, (Widner 1991: 37). South Africa might have a long way to go before we see strong organisations in the informal economy. Again, it would be enlightening to test these propositions by examining whether there is any evidence of informal workers becoming more inclined to act collectively the longer they remain in informal activity, and the more it begins to seem as if informality is likely to be permanent.

Another crucial factor highlighted in the literature (Sanyal 1991 and Widner 1991) which affects availability for, and the nature of, collective action, is that of information. It was argued that participants have to understand the impact of government policies before they can challenge them. But the levels of misinformation in the informal settlements are of serious concern. One case in point is an interview with a local civic leader in Freedom Park who

said that, “the President (Mbeki) on national television said that people who do not vote for the ANC will not be given an Aids cure which he already possesses. He said people will only be given this drug if they vote convincingly for the ANC,” however, this civic leader does not own a television set: the fact that there is no electricity makes it difficult for most of these people to acquire one in Freedom Park and other settlements with no electricity and high unemployment. So it is not clear where she obtained this ‘information’. More generally, it is important to examine where people in informal environments get their information. Future research needs to focus on these information gaps. These information gaps could be classified as deficiency in a certain type of social capital.

Another feature that has been observed is that organisations in the informal economy have a very short life span and are less likely to take on even the form of democratic interest associations: while in some associations in the informal economy, leaders purport to take on representative functions on behalf of members, here the organisation does not even attempt to play a representative role. According to Widner (1991: 37), “A significant proportion of those in the sector does participate in economic associations, but rarely take on either clear-cut representational functions or democratic form.” These are usually partnerships or business associations designed to yield private benefits, not public goods, and they tend to collapse after a few months’ or few years’, unless they are based on family ties. This last point is also of some importance: since family and kin ties do often play an important role in the social and economic life of people outside the formal economy, and the extent to which these influence association among informal workers and residents is an important area for future research.

The next sections of this chapter will show that the state could still play a meaningful role in the creation of positive social capital by creating

conducive environment that will allow space for local initiatives to prosper. This is despite, the gloomy picture coming out of the literature above where I demonstrated how the weakening of the formal economic through the changing nature of production processes undermines norms of cooperation and trust and denies shack settlements and rural and peri-urban villages much needed resources that come with people who are in steady employment.

Development in informal settlements and the role of the state and local communities[31]:

Well-meant government intentions to develop poor communities can have undesirable consequences since "development could destroy something that existed in order to build something new and some groups within these communities may have a stake in what is destroyed which they may wish to defend (Friedman 1993: 41)." However, I also argue that, in spite, of the challenges presented above, there is still a role the state can play in sustaining civic vibrancy. There are interventions that have been made by the state, which have led to the revival of positive social capital producing associational activities such as the ward committee, development committee, water committees, and other structures that have come about as a result of government intervention. The state has also created legislations that favours the growth of community initiatives and associations as demonstrated in the case studies that are part of this study. Depending on the nature of associational activity in a particular area, a state could both be a partner or an enemy.

"Community participation' in development is seen not only as an article of faith amongst the specialists: it is prescribed by law in South Africa (Hlela 2001). Yet the insistence on participation is not matched by the capacity to

[31] This section is based on the article the author wrote while at the Centre for Policy Studies entitled, Kenny Hlela (2001) ***Top-down Recipes Violate Rights and Risk Rejection***, Synopsis 5(1), Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies

make it a reality. From the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act of 2000 to the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) specified by this law, 'community participation' is a legally guaranteed right, not a privilege. But this promise is undermined both by the government's stress on physical 'delivery' and by the reality that 'communities' are not unified: their heterogeneity means participation by one section can exclude another. The preferred definition of community for this thesis is that which limits it just to people living within the same geographical area as defined by law or by its residents.

Delivery's downside:

On the first score, the South African government's insistence on being judged by the speed with which it brings 'products' to citizens, be it houses or water, limits the extent to which communities can participate, because allowing them to do so slows delivery. In any event, if delivery targets have been predetermined, there is little room for participation. Since participation is required by law, it may often mean little more than a meaningless gesture aimed at being able to say that beneficiaries were consulted. But if those whom development is meant to benefit have no say in its priorities, they may reject it.

Not all development is beneficial: Ben Turok, an ANC MP and former RDP Commissioner for Gauteng Province, notes that many development initiatives have had harmful consequences. It could be detrimental to the culture (including social capital) within that particular setting. This was observed in Freedom Park, which was discussed at length in the case study in chapter two where residents from Ruth First section did not want to be mixed with people from other sections as they believed that these other residents were going to bring crime with them because they lack family values. Technocratic governments and some foreign agencies have operated in a top-down fashion, which has violated rights: some have displaced people, deprived them of their

land, destroyed their environment, damaged communities and disempowered them (1999: 12). A feeling which is held by people in the Ruth First section of Freedom Park, as narrated above.

Balance needed:

A similar trend is the insistence that elected government be given the latitude it needs to deliver, unbothered by voter demands. ANC MP Yunus Carrim (2001) thus asserts that the new system of local government seeks to provide a balance between giving residents the fullest space to participate in municipal affairs and ensuring the right of ward councillors to govern.

While this may reflect the valid point that elected representatives are entitled to the final say, it ignores the likelihood that, like development, governing does not always enhance quality of life – and that those who govern are far more likely to misunderstand what is needed if they are not fully in touch with voters. There is a widespread view in government that it is the structure best placed to deliver and can do this with minimal cooperation from communities. The result is the violation of the right to a say in decisions – and less effective planning because it proceeds in ignorance of local conditions.

But, if the government risks delivering to people that which they do not want, like electricity before houses, as was the case in Kliptown where a taxi rank was built instead of houses; an uncritical insistence on participation may ignore the differences within communities, ensuring that only the strong participate – and that those who are excluded have a ready reason to frustrate or destabilize development. This situation is more pronounced in Kliptown shack settlement than in Freedom Park. The youth and criminal elements have destroyed streetlights, a fact that was observed during the focus group discussions highlighted in the Kliptown case study. ‘Participation’ could, then, exclude as many from the decisions as top-down delivery would.

The answer may lie in a difficult but potentially valuable approach: people centred development (PCD). For those who believe that development is a matter of applying recipe, PCD is a disappointment: it is not a formula so much as an attitude. Its key is a willingness to take the time to understand beneficiary communities and then to listen to and respect as wide a range of views as possible.

A key feature, therefore, is a respect for local specifics and knowledge: one aim is to build on the latter to enhance beneficiary skills (Work 1998: 3). PCD is sensitive to the need to respect social capital: stocks of social trust, norms and networks that people can draw on to solve common problems (Putnam 1993). These are not always developmental – they can serve to entrench the position of local power holders. But ignoring them is likely to ensure that development runs aground on the rocks of resistance from those whose norms have been violated. PCD therefore relies more on local networks. It also respects and seeks to build on the resources that are normally neglected in most communities. By its very nature, it empowers beneficiaries. It complements local government by providing the local knowledge official planners lack (Skidmore 2001: 59). The developers of Freedom Park, Urban Dynamics, were conscious of this fact, which is why they always sought to recruit members of local associations such as Sanco and the Development Committee. Although, it might also have been motivated by selfish goals of weakening their main adversaries. According to Portes and Landolt, "It is advisable on whatever exists, that is, to reinforce existing social ties and work alongside the definitions of the situation of community members rather than seeking to impose them from the outside (2000: 546)." This expresses the concept of PCD, nurtures the existing networks, thereby creating social capital.

The theory in practice:

Evidence that PCD can be implemented in practice is the record of the Homeless People's Federation (HPF), which has achieved credible results with meagre resources. The HPF consists of various savings schemes predominantly managed by women. Through these they finance their own houses and complement this with government subsidies. It encourages its members to be active recipients of development. It argues that there is a desperate attempt in South Africa to try to legitimize development in formal terms, presenting it as something complex, rule bound and beyond the conception of poor communities. But the more formal and refined a process, the more elitist it becomes and the less accessible to the poor (SA Homeless People's Federation 1999: 1).

This was often a concern in Freedom Park shack settlement. Most residents who were interviewed feared that they might be subjected to bonded houses they obviously could not afford. In Kliptown most residents interviewed said that in meetings they are told that they will need R 2 700 to secure a formal dwelling – a figure that is said to fluctuate (Focus Group Discussions, 2004). Alternatives are never discussed with all the interest groups and the result is uncertainty and a negative attitude to development. By contrast, the HPF method allows people to make their own decisions on how to use the government-housing subsidy. It takes advantage of whatever resources and networks that are available in the community.

The top-down approach can have very negative ramifications for social networks. James Scott notes that states' attempts to impose standardized formulas for development from above can lead to disastrous failures (1998). By contrast, successful development requires that planners give attention to the realities of social life in particular communities (Skidmore 2001: 59). There needs to be appreciation of the local associations and social capital that they have cultivated over a long period of time.

As the HPF example shows, the alternative to top-down development is not another recipe: it is, rather, respect for grassroots people and a consequent willingness to listen. Thus, observations in shack settlements show that people normally attend in numbers those meetings where they are likely to be asked to make a meaningful contribution, not to be lectured. The result may be a willingness to support development programmes, which may do much to ensure their success. Contrary to some current beliefs, development has not been stalled by too much democracy, but by too little. Sanco tended to attract more people in its meetings. One of the reasons for this could have been that the agenda was not rigid but accommodated the needs of local residents.

In rural villages, though, the state has played a more meaningful role by helping to constitute alternative sources of moral authority and access to power in previously patrimonial communities without completely undermining the role of traditional authorities. State resources have been deployed in the democratisation of public sphere through incentives rather than force, which would be more sustainable.

Rural development and the politics of participatory democracy: The role of Water Committees[32]:

As stated earlier, many government policies and policy initiatives in South Africa are usually laced with notions of empowerment, consultation, and consensus but most importantly, stakeholder or community participation in processes of development, policymaking and service delivery. This is even mandated in the post-1994 Municipal Structures and Systems Acts. Local government in South Africa is therefore legally mandated to promote participatory democracy in communities throughout South Africa. Using case

[32] This section is based on the article the author wrote while at the Centre for Policy Studies, Kenny Hlela (2001) ***Traditional Leaders Still Turn on the Taps in KwaZulu-Natal***, Synopsis 5(3), Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies.

study material from Water Committees in a number of rural communities in KwaZulu/Natal including the case studies of Sweetwaters and Manyavu/KwaXimba villages, which were covered in chapters five and six, this section of this chapter attempts to explore a set of complex dynamics at local community level, including the conflicting interests of local elites that may often serve to compromise the process of promoting participative democracy as an integral element of rural development in South Africa by undermining local experiences and networks.

The Rural Water and Sanitation Supply Programme – Key Principles:

In line with this general political objective of participatory democracy, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, through its White Paper, identified a number of key principles that underscore the importance of promoting local democratic participation in the implementation of its policy on Water Supply and Sanitation. Among these principles are:

- Development should be demand-driven and community based,
- Equitable regional allocation of national development resources,
- The user pays,
- Integrated development: water and sanitation development should go hand in hand with education and training, job creation and the promotion of local democracy.

The department therefore intends that these key principles be the core of all development projects and programmes related to water and sanitation supply throughout the country. Underlying these principles is the idea of community participation and stakeholder consultation to shape outcomes.

Legacy of neglect, the promise of democracy:

South Africa has a severe legacy of neglect among rural communities and lack of clear policies to guide rural development. Infrastructural development was often left to individual community initiatives. This point has been

recognised by the ruling party – the 2009 ANC Election Manifesto highlights rural development as one of the priorities that it has identified as central to the development of the country. For example, communities often had to rely on their own meagre resources to build their own schools and churches, as demonstrated in the Sweetwaters and Manyavu/Ximba case studies. Often, the *amakhosi's* seeming indifference or powerlessness during the Apartheid era in the face of the desperate need for development and infrastructure in their communities, led to a proliferation of community self help initiatives in rural areas to meet their needs and fill in the gap left by the state. This was demonstrated at great length in the rural and peri-urban case studies, which are a subject of this thesis. Ordinary people made concerted efforts to develop their areas and the dawn of democracy had promised to complement their efforts in this respect in terms of an injection of more resources and the provision of infrastructure by the new government.

Water Committees - A Social Capital Reservoir:

Umgeni Water Supply Authority devised a programme to supply water in rural areas, called Rural Water and Sanitation Plan (RWASP). It covers a number of areas such as Vulindlela, Ndwedwe, and Umbumbulu. Umgeni Water argues that the principles of the plan are fully in line with those of the White Paper.[33] Umgeni Water states that it supports the promotion of local democracy. Umgeni Water Supply Authority established Water Committees (WCs) as part of Development Committees (DCs) in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (then Natal Province and KwaZulu "Bantustan"). The WC is a sub-structure responsible for water and sanitation. There are other sub-committees responsible for other services. The average number of people served by one WC is 10 000. A Water Committee consists of a chairperson and other members as determined by the minister responsible for water from time to time.[34] WCs hold meetings at least once a month to share ideas and

[33] http: www.umgeni.co.za/operations/uplift/rawsp.html
[34] Water Services Act 108, 1997; South Africa, p. 46

they are expected to report back to their communities. Prior to the new system of local government, the areas under the control of local *indunas* (headmen) determined the boundaries of each water committee. However, the new ward system now forms the new boundaries of WCs.

Umgeni Water also established offices where the water committees could hold their meetings. These offices also served as customer service points where community members pay for their water bills and buy electricity cards (*The Natal Witness*, 18-04-2002). Umgeni Water established these offices in a central place to increase their accessibility to everyone. Moreover, Umgeni Water and the Indlovu Regional Council usually facilitate the meetings in the initial stages and as well as help in training water committee members.

The primary purpose of the Water Committees is to facilitate water service delivery to rural communities. However, there is also a secondary but no less important task of promoting local community participation among the beneficiaries of water services. Obviously, on the surface of it, the idea here is to encourage the beneficiaries of the water and sanitation services to get involved and help shape the provision of services to their communities in a democratic way.

However, there is a need for Umgeni Water itself and its role in promoting local community participation to be analysed and therefore understood in terms of its underlying organisational interests. This should throw some light on whether or not it possesses the capacity to promote participatory democracy among rural communities. For instance, a number of questions may be posed in this regard: to what extent can service providing organisations such as Umgeni Water promote a democratic culture among rural citizens? Are such organisations appropriate or even capable of promoting local democracy? And what are the limits to the strategy of

promoting democracy through service providing agencies such as Umgeni Water?

Obviously, Umgeni Water is first and foremost a service delivery and project implementation agency as it appears to be performing this task efficiently – it is an acknowledged fact that more areas have access to running water than was the case before 1994. As a service provider, Umgeni Water possesses more technical and project managerial capacity and expertise than the necessary political and social skills that are often so critical in forging social compacts with local rural communities, the latter skills are essential in order to mobilise local communities around values such as democracy, empowerment, consensus, and stakeholder participation, in addition to winning their consent to accept the necessity for paying for their water consumption.

This lack of political, social and popular mobilisation skills might hinder technical agencies such as Umgeni Water from successfully building bridges with local communities, thus rendering them vulnerable to being held ransom by local elite groups, such as *amakhosi* and Development Committees (or *IsiGungu seNkosi* as in Manyavu, which was covered in chapter six) with claims to popular legitimacy among local communities. Therefore, the Water Committees may serve as tools for Umgeni Water to enter into elite pacts or even patron-client relations with local power brokers as means towards a particular end: convincing recalcitrant water consumers to pay for their water usage. There is nothing wrong with this. However, if this becomes the major role of these WCs and eventually supplants the other task of promoting local participation as an integral part of the developmental process, then the WCs may lose their legitimacy.

In fact, WCs have experienced different levels of grassroots participation. There are preliminary signs to suggest that many WCs may already be

experiencing significant loss of their initial attractiveness among many local communities and many of them have actually ceased to function due to dwindling levels of support and participation among local communities, as well as corruption; corruption and mismanagement were cited by the local councillor as reasons why the Mpumuza/Sweetwaters "community no longer depends on the Mpumuza office for services because when they come to pay water bills or buy electricity cards they often find the office locked (*The Natal Witness*, 18-04-2002)" A local headman who is also a member of the Sweetwater water committee, Mr. Sticky Hlela, stated that, "for the past two years, we have lost more than R35 000. The situation is made worse because we couldn't afford to pay the telephone bills. We had no telephone which means that the alarm system is affected (*The Natal Witness*, 18-04-2002)." Among the reasons that account for this: is the fact that committee member work on a voluntary basis and are not remunerated; At one stage, members of the Sweetwaters WC were remunerated but funds eventually dried up due to corruption and mismanagement. However, the failure of these WCs points to the lack of social capital in the identified cases. Where there are strong local associations and a vibrant civic culture these WCs seem to thrive.

Democratic community participation in the face of local power relations:

Due to the enduring inability of traditional authorities to effect significant levels of development in many communities where they exercise authority, new and modern institutions with better resources, superior institutional capacity and, more importantly, an infrastructural development mandate, have come to occupy a central position in the process of rural development in South Africa, the Umgeni Water Supply Authority is one of these institutions. Umgeni Water has come to serve as an alternative source of developmental services, especially in respect of water and sanitation, which fills the gap that traditional authorities are unable to fill due to lack of capacity and resources. Many rural communities are increasingly approaching Umgeni Water directly for such services, over the heads of their local traditional leaders, these areas

usually have neither capacity nor the institutions to run water schemes on their own.

Often in the past, *amakhosi* in areas such as Vulindlela, would approach Umgeni Water for assistance in terms of running water schemes and Umgeni Water would conduct feasibility studies with the consent of *amakhosi*. This tended to place *amakhosi* in positions where they not only wielded significant power and influence over the direction of developmental processes in their areas, but also the power to grant or withdraw authorisation to rural development initiatives, in this case water and sanitation projects; the problem with this is the inherent danger it poses in terms of excluding local communities from agreements reached between local chiefs and Umgeni Water, local people were often not informed about these processes or decisions taken in respect of infrastructural development initiatives. For instance, the initial exclusion of local communities from preliminary feasibility studies was done ostensibly to avoid raising the hopes of local communities unrealistically, in case infrastructural development projects were eventually not feasible. However, this helped entrench a culture of elite dominance at the expense of those who are the intended beneficiaries of development initiatives.

Modern rural development initiatives sometimes may have the potential to threaten the prevailing relations of power between local chiefs and their subjects. The principle of democratic community participation in development projects itself holds similar implications as it tends to be based on the notion of equality of citizens. It elevates citizens, irrespective of rank or status, to the same level as their *amakhosi*, thus disregarding existing traditional systems of authority and hierarchy. Consequently, the presence of developmental institutions such as Umgeni Water and its efforts to promote democratic participation among rural communities has often drawn mixed responses from local elite groups, especially *amakhosi*. Obviously, *amakhosi*

have a vested interest in maintaining their positions of dominance in terms of control over the flow of resources, allocation of privileges and distribution of patronage in their areas of authority. Umgeni Water's establishment of Water Committees has therefore often been received with mixed responses among the local chiefs who often perceive these efforts as having the potential to undermine their authority.

However, many traditional leaders have had to forge adaptive strategies either to maintain dominance over, or place themselves at the centre of, the activities of the WCs. For instance, members of WCs are elected in public meetings convened by *amakhosi* and *izinduna* (local headmen). This results from prior consultations between the *amakhosi* and Umgeni Water. Umgeni Water also acts as a facilitator in this process. This arrangement obviously serves the interests of traditional authorities, particularly in giving them privileged access to Umgeni Water, which in turn has access to significant developmental resources. For instance, the biggest share of funding for these water projects came from the Department of Water Affairs' Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) fund. Umgeni Water helped traditional authorities to apply for the RDP funds; in turn, this places Umgeni Water in an invidious position in that it has the potential to render the organisation reliant on traditional authorities for access to *amakhosi*'s subjects.

However, this might also serve as a double-edged sword in that due to the privileged access to resources desired by *amakhosi*, Umgeni Water may often be in a strong position to exert pressure on, and exercise influence over, traditional leaders to adopt more progressive attitudes and practices towards some of their subjects. For instance, Vusi Ziqubu of Umgeni Water indicated that women were usually not represented in the memberships of WCs (Interview). He argues that *amakhosi* had a tendency of attempting to gain control over the running of the WCs thereby entrenching hierarchical and patriarchal practices that marginalized women. In some cases therefore,

Umgeni Water was in the position to prevail upon *amakhosi* by making *amakhosi*'s continued privileged access to developmental resources depend on greater gender balance in WCs. It should be noted that *amakhosi* also have an interest in an uninterrupted flow of developmental resources to their areas, albeit under terms and conditions favourable to them. As a result, they would be keen not to appear as obstacles to community developmental initiatives by disregarding the wishes of developmental agencies such as Umgeni Water, especially when these agencies help *amakhosi* by facilitating privileged access to valuable developmental resources.

At the end of the day, however, *amakhosi* still exercise a great deal of authority and influence over their subjects. They usually possess the charisma, the political, social and cultural legitimacy that developmental agencies are unlikely to have. This makes them valuable partners or formidable foes, depending on the nature of their relations with developmental and service delivery agencies in rural areas. They still command the loyalty of their subjects in ways that may undermine modern developmental agencies, especially those with mandates to promote modern notions such as empowerment, gender equality and democratic participation. For instance, many anecdotal stories abound indicating that *amakhosi* usually inform their subjects that the newly established structures of local governments are a threat to their traditional ways of life in that they promote political agendas inimical to the interests of rural communities. This has the potential of sowing the seeds of doubt among rural communities in respect of many developmental activities, thus undermining the willingness of rural dwellers to participate in the initiatives driven by these modern structures.

Charting the adventure into the future:

In this chapter, I have argued that, under current conditions, it will be difficult for those who have an interest in improving the lives of the poor to exact enough pressure on government without organising informal workers in inner

cities such as Johannesburg, and residents in shack settlements such as Freedom Park and Kliptown, as well as of villages such as KwaXimba/Manyavu and Sweetwaters; Gallin is correct to insist that the trend towards informality is unlikely to be reversed in the immediate future. Therefore, it would be a legitimate research exercise to begin enquiring into its politics. The literature and the case studies presented in this thesis offer some pointers but a number of questions remain unanswered. The answers that we have remain speculative and are not supported by empirical evidence presented in the previous chapters. There is an urgent need to move beyond the obvious and to chart a research agenda for those working and living informally to determine whether there are circumstances in which they may engage in similar political behaviour to people who derive their livelihood in the formal economy.

It is only through pressures from those affected negatively by these policies that we are likely to witness any significant changes. The chapters on Freedom Park and Kliptown showed challenges faced by these communities in terms of organisation. Changes in the production process have weakened the labour movement, thereby weakening other civil society structures. Many individuals in the communities studied lacked interest in participating in local civic bodies or simply did not have time to participate because of the nature of informal work, a factor that came out strongly in Kliptown; for the working and the non-working poor, few new opportunities have opened up, apart from backyard sweatshops where people toil long hours without any protection from labour legislation or trade unions (Van Kessel 2002). In these areas we have limited understanding of the politics of those involved and I believe that the research presented in this thesis has only touched the tip of the iceberg. The time people could dedicate to voluntary activities and other community issues has diminished, by implication has impacted on the production of positive social capital; during the research for this thesis, unemployed residents of Kliptown said that meetings can be a waste of time

since one of their most pressing issues was to try to look for opportunities. The case studies confirm some of the issues that the literature highlights as possible inhibitors to collective action: lack of resources, reliance on government to upgrade areas, lack of property rights, and the prevalence of identity-consciousness over class or material concerns. This has been supported by some of the evidence presented in this thesis.

Some studies (see, Widner 1991) have shown that when the reality has sunk into the poor participating in the informal economy that these arrangements are likely to be permanent, they are likely to attempt to change their circumstances. In those countries where there is a long history of informality, informal sector workers appear to be more organised; this, of course, makes it possible that many of the impediments to informal organisation identified in the literature are temporary. Future studies need to establish how those perceptions are likely to influence organisation in South Africa. In addition to the inquiry into longer-term informal workers discussed above, it would be appropriate to determine if people with the longest history in informal settings present different political attitudes to those new in this environment. Does time spent in informal settings matter to political attitudes and participation?

Future research would need to investigate how the leaders of the organisations of the poor come to dominate the organizations they lead. Themba Ncusana of the Informal Business Forum (IBF) stated that "some of the associations that are members of the IBF have not had leadership changes in the past 20 years." The IBF is a forum of informal businesses in the Johannesburg Innercity that represent traders in their interaction with the council. Therefore, Mitlin's prognosis in this instance is relevant, i.e. the lack of opportunities for status, power and wealth makes leaders resistant to change which, in this environment, might mean the loss of access resources or income. This was evident in the cases of Freedom Park and Kliptown. In

return, these powerful interests then forge alliances with high-level politicians in exchange for votes at local level.

In order to find answers to this problem we might have to look at the role of local government policies in the organisation of interests in the informal economy: in understanding the constitution of power in the informal economy, the role of government cannot be ignored. Future research will need to establish whether informal power is also responsible for the inactivity of people in informal settings, or whether the poor in these settings put too much faith in their leaders. A second concern emanates from this, *viz*. what makes one a good leader in informal settings? What leadership styles and strategies make for effective and legitimate leadership? Some of these questions have partly been answered in chapter three.

One other issue that appear to be prevalent in dealings with the people who ply their trade in informal settings is the question of what the organisation is going to do for them; meaning there's no generalised reciprocity here, which is an important feature of social capital; therefore, a question that needs to be asked is what these people are doing to change their circumstances. Concerns have been raised about the power of leaders in informal settings but little has been asked about the role of poor people in informal settings in fostering these power relations. We need to determine the role played by illiteracy. It is important to find out if people in informal settings believe that community organisations can ameliorate their lives. If they do, we then need to ask why they think that would be possible.

Some actors in the informal economy tend to express hostile attitudes to those in power but continue to give support and thereby legitimise the institutions of power through voting and attending meetings; this was demonstrated at

great length in chapters three and four. However, the majority of residents do not attend these meetings. This would be understandable were democratic institutions functioning properly; but there is little (or no) evidence that this is a consequence of the satisfaction of residents with their circumstances or the extent to which their voices are heard, indeed, it is difficult to conceptualise how people affected by poverty become so withdrawn from these institutions. Do the power holders keep them away? If not, what is keeping them away? Are the institutions in the informal settings hostile to grassroots participation? Or there is something else keeping people away? Some of those groups that might be unwilling to participate are likely to be criminals, illegal immigrants and other similar groups that have a reason to operate undetected.

Fieldwork conducted for this study has highlighted the issue of resources as one of the obstacles to effective participation. How much of this is as a result of the informalisation of the economy? There are valid reasons to believe that there are structural factors that prevent the poor from participating effectively, and their leaders appear to be trapped in similar circumstances in relation to the state and politicians.

To conclude, although the literature as well as the testimonies from Kliptown, Freedom Park, the Johannesburg inner city, the rural villages of greater Pietermaritzburg, Sweetwaters and KwaXimba/Manyavu, provide rich insights into the circumstances of the informal poor and the impact of these circumstances on participation in public life, there is much we still need to know before we will be able to discern whether the relative absence of organised pressure within democratic rules for social policy change among the informal poor is a temporary phenomenon while people living and working informally learn how to exercise their rights –or whether the dynamics of informality place structural constraints on the exercise of rights and the practice of democratic politics among the informal poor, making it

very difficult for them to participate in democratic policy-making . The answers may tell us much about the circumstances in which the weakest members of our society may be able to turn the promise of political participation into reality; as well as whether there is hope for the production of positive social capital in under-resourced communities, bedevilled by high levels of unemployment and need.

This chapter helps in interpreting the data presented in case studies presented in this thesis. I argue that any development that ignores the experiences of beneficiaries and local social networks that are reservoirs of social capital is likely to fail. I also argue that the potential to cultivate and generate social capital in South Africa is supported by legislation. However, I also raise the challenges faced by civil society organisations, despite the legal framework being in place. It is argued that those working in these communities should be careful not to destroy existing networks and, by implication, social capital in the name of development and progress. I have shown how state or parastatals' intervention in villages under the control of traditional leaders could help improve organisation and, thereby, cultivate social capital. I also outlined the power relations that prevail and the constraints faced by civil society associations in rural and peri-urban settings.

CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSIONS: CHARTING A PATH INTO THE FUTURE

***Introduction*:**

I deliberately chose case studies in villages under chiefly rule since it has been argued in some quarters (e.g. Mamdani 1996 and Sachikonye 1995) that these communities do not have an independent public sphere necessary for the growth of civil society, and, by implication, lack the capacity to produce an independent civil society. I then brought in case studies in urban environments where people do not have the right to what they own and where residents are mainly drawn from rural South African villages and other rural parts of the African continent. Most studies on civil society have been conducted in urban settings and therefore, as stated in the introductory chapter, the purpose of this thesis was also to address this urban bias in the literature. Significant numbers of people in South Africa reside in areas considered rural or peri-urban. Another developing trend is that of shack settlements, which are a common feature in most developing countries. Therefore, studies which provide a glimpse into the dynamics in those settings – where a significant number of developing countries' populations reside – are critical, if good governance and economic development are to take place. It is hoped that the research findings coming out of this study will have implications, not just for South Africa, but for most countries in the developing world and sub-Saharan African in particular. Based on the outcomes of the case studies selected, I will now revert to the questions posed in the introductory chapter. I acknowledge that these are not yet fully worked out but suggest this research has some way in attempting to address them and has dealt with some of the claims concerning civil society in rural and peri-urban settings.

One common feature of all the case studies was that they all have vibrant associational life. Politically inclined associations (i.e. issue based

associations) tended to dominate shack settlements, while rural and peri-urban villages were dominated by non-political associations such as stokvels, burial societies, football clubs, parent-teachers associations, church groups and so forth. The dominance of politically inclined associations in shack settlements might be a result of how they were formed, i.e. it is mainly through land invasions and a quest for services that are usually not available that these settlements are formed. Shack settlements, unlike the villages studied, do not have a long history of existence and therefore non-political associations were likely to develop over time.

The Research Questions:

In the introductory chapter, I put forward six pertinent questions that arise out of debates in the social capital and civil society literature. The aim of this thesis, therefore, was to address these questions and these are: How is social capital identifiable? Is its production exclusively confined to horizontally structured forms of associational life? Can peasant societies generate social capital? Do social capital networks accentuate divisions within communities between those who have access to authority and those without? Can political institutions play a role in producing social capital or does the enlargement of state authority take place at the expense of the associational networks which produce social capital? And what kind of organisations in rural settings can best bridge sectional concerns and promote wider communities of trust? Can traditional existing political institutions be adapted to modern democratic requirements? I believe that through these questions, I have been able to test and explore two sets of hypotheses. First, I argued that there is a causal relationship between civil society and social capital on the one hand, and good governance, economic and democratic development on the other. Secondly, I argued that positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income.

The first question is: how is social capital identifiable? This question was tackled through the literature review conducted in chapter one where I argued drawing from Widner and Mundt (1998) who were heavily influenced by the work of Robert Putnam, that social capital is unobservable and multidimensional with many components. These components will include trust, frequency of social contact, the extent and form of perceived obligations to invest or co-operate, norms that accord prestige or status to people who generate and sharing of information and so on. For instance, in my fieldwork in Freedom Park I showed how a former member of the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) was isolated by other members when she started cooperating with the developers. She was excluded from further benefiting from the association as trust was broken and she was isolated and could no longer tap into the reservoirs of social capital in Sanco. Trust was a cornerstone of engagements in stokvels, credit from the local shop owner, football clubs and other associational activities. Information amongst residents on what was happening in the settings I studied was transmitted through networks of social engagements and those who had access to this critical resource had an advantage over those residents who lacked access to it. Findings in this study confirmed what is already in the literature in so far as the frequency of social contact is concerned, however, they go beyond that and I argue that the quality of these interactions is also critical. Residents in the case studies chosen for this research often showed an appreciation of the strength of weak ties, that is, that they needed networks beyond their immediate environment, which we classify as bridging social capital. Residents of Freedom Park shack settlement, for example, who had formed a local residents association, knew that they would need access to a national body such as Sanco, which had national reach and would act as a counterweight to the Development Committee and the local councillor. This showed appreciation of bridging social capital as well as the strength of weak ties.

Second, one of the enduring questions in the social capital literature has been whether or not social capital can be produced by vertically structured associations or is it the exclusive preserve of horizontally structured associations. Evidence coming out of this thesis supports the latest thinking in the social capital literature, that is, that social capital can be produced by both vertically and horizontally structured associations. It is not definitely a preserve of horizontally structured associations. For example, the Developmental Committee in Freedom Park was a very hierarchical organisation formed by backyard shack dwellers in Soweto who later invaded the land in Devland, south west of Johannesburg (now known as Freedom Park), with the intention of ensuring that continued exploitation of backyard dwellers ended and that homelessness be eradicated, that was their stated intention. Churches, through Sunday Schools and other initiatives, such as donating land in Freedom Park, and other 'public good' initiatives contributed to the production of social capital. Vertically structured associations are not inimical to producing positive social capital. In fact, most associations tend to have both hierarchical and horizontal features in them. This is borne out by evidence from the field.

The focus of the literature should not be on whether any given association is structured horizontal or vertically, but should be about whether participants have an option to opt out without any punitive measures being taken against them. Is there an opportunity to exit these organisations? I think this is an important question, i.e. what are the sanctions for those who want to exit? Are they going to be excluded from benefitting from public goods emanating from initiatives taken by these associations? Based on my field observation I argue that the structure of the association (horizontal/vertical) is not as important as the outcome, i.e. what is produced. Evidence from the field suggests that what matters the most is the competition between various associations, i.e. how competitive is the environment in which they operate. As was shown in the introductory chapter, the legislative framework that governs local government

guarantees this right (i.e. participation in the affairs of government). A village or a shack settlement needs to have a multiplicity of associations operating or competing in the same space for economic development, or for democracy, to flourish. The Freedom Park shack settlement is a case in point where Sanco and the Development Committee stood on different sides, both claiming to have the interest and a right to represent the residents of Freedom Park. It was through competition between these rival associations that sustainable development took place through vigorous interactions, which threatened to spill out of control at one stage. This is something that lacked in Kliptown where Sanco worked closely with the local leadership and dispersed patronage.

Third, can peasant societies generate social capital? I have demonstrated at great length that the peasant communities studied had a vibrant culture of associational life, which in fact resembled those found in urban settings and thus the capacity to generate social capital. However, South Africa might be an exception to the rule here and other societies will need to be studied. As Mamdani correctly argued,

> "Not surprisingly, just as migrants carried forms of urban militancy from towns to reserves in the 1950s, so they did the flame of revolt from the rural to the urban in the coming period: the so-called decade of peace that followed Sharpeville came to an end with the predominantly migrant strikes of 1972-74, at first in Durban, and then on the Reef and the Cape." (1996: 220-21)

Thus, in the context of South Africa, the dichotomy between rural and urban is artificial as there is significant interpenetration between the two due to the way in which the Apartheid project was implemented. Most of the civil society associations found in South African townships are also found in rural villages. Here I refer to associations such as stokvels, burial societies, football clubs, school governing bodies, traditional choir groups, Sunday

schools, and so on. I observed closely the interactions within water committees, which drew members from some of these associations. Schools were often formed as an initiative of stokvels and other associations found within these villages. Often those who were instrumental in forming these associations were semi-professionals and factory workers. I therefore argue that, in the case of South Africa, peasant communities have the ability to generate social capital and evidence from rural and peri-urban case studies supports this claim. In the Sweetwaters and Manyavu/KwaXimba villages those who were instrumental in the building of schools, roads, bringing running water into the villages, to mention just a few these initiatives, were often members of stokvels, burial societies, school governing bodies and so forth. The propertied class also played an important role in some of these initiatives, which shows the importance of access to resources in the establishment of associations and associational life.

Fourth, do social capital networks accentuate divisions within communities between those who have access to authority and those without? What emerged from my research confirming claims in some of the current literature, is that civil society can be exclusive. Evidence from this study agrees with the contention that in civil society you often find people from the same class, ethnicity, age-cohort and regional background. But the conclusion is that this is not always a negative thing, social capital often accrues even to those outside associational circles and networks. This was, for instance, evident in stokvels, football teams, residents associations, and other associations observed in Sweetwaters, Manyavu/KwaXimba, Freedom Park, and Kliptown. For instance, the building of schools, roads, day-care centres (crèches), the reduction in crime, as well as many positive externalities, often benefited both those who were inside these associations as well as those who were outside these associations. Therefore, positive social capital accrues not just to those who have access to authority but even to those who opt not to partake in associational life. As Skidmore stated that there are those "benefits

of social capital that are generalised and non-excludable, tending to spill-over beyond the producers themselves (2001: 68). However, there are those benefits that accrue only to members such as organisational skills and some of the market information critical in ones daily life. This is the reason participation in local associations has a value in itself, which is what keeps some people engaged in these activities.

Fifth, can political institutions play a role in producing social capital or does the enlargement of state authority take place at the expense of the associational networks which produce social capital? Evidence coming out of this thesis suggests that political institutions can play an important role in producing social capital, however, it also recognises that in some instances the enlargement of state authority can take place at the expense of social capital producing associations. Therefore, evidence coming from the field has not completely annihilated the arguments of either the statists or the neoliberals. Statists believe that the state can play a meaningful role in supporting those associations that produce social capital while neoliberals believe that the enlargement of state authority would destroy the social capital producing associations. In the rural and peri-urban case studies evidence suggests that the state played a meaningful role in revitalising local associations through setting up water committees in which local residents participated. The state, for instance, insisted that women and youth had to be represented in those structures and where there was resistance from local power holders the state threatened to withdraw its support for those community initiatives: thus the state ensured that there was an equitable distribution of resources. In the expanded public works programme (EPWP), the state ensured that locals were employed. Income from the public works was used, in some instances, to contribute to stokvels and burial societies. In families where there was no one who could participate in the EPWP, the state encouraged those from other families to assist and work together with those families that were not in a position to help themselves. The state provided

incentives for cooperation, thereby, assisting in the production of social capital.

Therefore, the state was found not to be necessarily negative for social capital production. For instance, in the Sweetwaters and Manyavu/KwaXimba case studies, Umgeni Water and, later, Durban Water and Indlovu Regional Council respectively, used their power to encourage representativity in local associations. They stipulated to *amakhosi* that women and youth need to be included in Water Committees as a condition for providing support. This was done by *amakhosi* even though they were reluctant at first; the pressure from the local communities for water meant that they had to agree to these conditions, and thus local residents were given a chance to participate in these committees, thereby creating new forms of local organisation and also drawing from existing sources of social capital such as stokvels, burial societies, and soccer teams. How far this went in opening the public space, especially in closed communities such as Manyavu, deserves to be the subject of another study.

However, this evidence did not completely obliterate neoliberal arguments against the enlargement of state authority. Some of the evidence from the field does suggest that the state should exercise caution when intervening as noble intentions could have unintended consequences. For instance, a sudden introduction of financial resources in areas characterised by high levels of inequality and poverty, could crowd out civil society associations. This has come out strongly in this study. An example that stands out is drawn from the Sweetwaters case study. Local women had established a crèche that was very successful and had filled a gap that was created when donor funded crèches were closed. When they received funding from donors who were impressed by their efforts, it attracted the attention of the local chief's wife who then took over: as she had no interest in the crèche at all, this initiative quickly

failed. Though the crèche had struggled as it relied on contribution from parents, it had been able to survive on its own for more than five years before this intervention. Therefore, how funds are introduced into poor communities could determine the death or the survival of such voluntary endeavours, perhaps destroying social capital in the process. In some instances, such as Freedom Park and Kliptown, state interventions brought in services which were not seen as a priority by the intended beneficiaries, and this often lead to unrests within these communities. Therefore, local knowledge is often critical in this environment and state intervention should happen in a way that is sensitive to local conditions. Water Committees in rural and peri-urban villages and the building of a school in Freedom Park are classic cases of government interventions that are sensitive to local conditions and where the state works closely with local associations, instead of working around them.

Finally, I looked at what kind of organisations in rural settings can best bridge sectional concerns and promote wider communities of trust, i.e. can traditional existing political institutions be adapted to modern democratic requirements? Practitioners who work in areas under chiefly rule where I conducted two case studies had mixed feelings about the role of traditional leaders and their institutions in supporting local associations and initiatives. Evidence from this thesis suggests that it will depend on the character of that particular traditional leader. For instance, Chief Mlaba of KwaXimba encouraged the growth of civil society associations within his area, whereas in Manyavu, Chief Mdluli had an indifferent attitude to associations and was often wary of outsiders, which does not bode well for the development of bridging social capital. Manyavu village was more inward looking compared to KwaXimba. The two approaches have both positive and negative dimensions and evidence suggests that the blending of the two is often necessary. A process of closure could be important at the initial stages of development in particular areas; however, as development progresses linkages and bridges with associations beyond that particular association's

immediate environment would be necessary. A case well illustrated by the transformation of Freedom Park residents association into a branch of Sanco, which is a national body.

Stokvels and burial societies are some of the associations that have the ability to bridge sectional concerns and promote wider communities of trust. These, though widely common even in urban settings, had origins in rural settings where neighbours usually assisted each other in the burial of family members and in ploughing the fields. As I argued elsewhere, membership of these associations is not always open to everyone who wants to join and members are often carefully selected, based on criteria such as class, gender, age-cohort, and various other criteria as determined by members. Despite this exclusivity these associations seems to bridge sectional concerns and contribute to the public good as shown in a number of initiatives started by some of these associations.

Lessons from the Research Questions:

As stated earlier, the questions posed emanate from the literature review in chapter one. The purpose of the case studies was to respond to these questions through empirical research. I have attempted to do justice to this task, however, a number of questions remain unanswered. Like McAdam et al (2001: 312), I have learned that statists (state-centred explanations), neo-liberals (market-centred explanations), and culturalists (civil society-centred explanations) cannot, on their own, explain the relationship between on the one hand civil society and its product, social capital, and, on the other hand, good governance, economic and democratic development. It is prudent that one employs all these perspectives in order to understand this relationship. Evidence coming from the field suggests that the state and the market have an important role to play in the creation, nurturing, and development of civil society producing positive social capital, which, at the same time, would be an important feeder to the markets and a responsive state. There is thus

clearly a symbiotic relationship between the state, markets, and civil society. Therefore, any research agenda that excludes one of these perspectives is unlikely to do justice to these longstanding debates. The bigger question, however, was, does civil society in developing country conditions, (particularly South Africa, which was subject of this thesis) play the same role that it has played elsewhere, i.e. especially in the developed world. Evidence coming from the field suggests that it does play that important role where conditions permit, i.e. where the state and markets are effective. I have shown the kind of challenges civic associations are faced with in the four case studies chosen for the purposes of this research (Freedom Park, Kliptown, Sweetwaters, and Manyavu/KwaXimba).

Tackling the hypotheses:

I think it is now opportune to revert back to the two hypotheses outlined in this thesis. Firstly, I have argued that civil society and social capital lead to good governance, economic and democratic development. The first hypothesis has been partly addressed in the previous paragraph. Secondly, I have argued that positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income.

There is a causal relationship between civil society and social capital on the one hand, and good governance, economic and democratic development on the other.

One of the findings from this thesis is that competing voices and interests could be good for democracy, as they tended to neutralise each other. Therefore, there is a need for dynamic equilibrium instead of static equilibrium. This was especially true in Freedom Park, where rivalry between Sanco and local leaders in development structures often saw to it that there was delivery; initially, both groups might have been pursuing their sectional and selfish interests, but, since they are on opposing sides and both needed to

win the hearts and minds of local residents, they tended to identify deficiencies in the system and this meant better governance in the cases that were studied. Initially a big project to build a local school was very successful, even though one might have thought it was going to fail based on the tensions between Sanco and the local ward councillor (who worked closely with the Development Committee). Out of all those long meetings characterised by tensions between these adversaries, a good product finally emerged. The success was partly due to the efforts of a community consultant employed by the Gauteng Department of Education who was responsible for opening up space for local residents to vent their dissatisfaction.

The members of a *stokvel* in Sweetwaters did more than just belong to a savings scheme – they participated in infrastructural development; in fact, they initiated a number of these initiatives to the benefit of all. It was mainly retrenched workers in Freedom Park who were the instigators of land invasions, but these latter benefited not just themselves but other homeless people who were renting backyard shacks in the township of Soweto and beyond; parents who were responsible for establishing a school in Manyavu were not the only beneficiaries. I argue, therefore, that social capital is often produced in bonded networks but usually accrues also to those beyond these networks, that is what makes it a public good. It does not only accrue to those who created it. This does not necessarily lead to free-riding, as has been suggested in social capital literature. Since, for example, members of a *stokvel* who were instrumental in building a road in Sweetwaters, benefit as members of that *stokvels,* and also benefit from improved infrastructure. This case, and other cases that were investigated, show that social capital is fungible, that is, some of the associations investigated served a different purpose from the primary task for which they had been established, while fulfilling their primary objectives in the process. The joiners also acquire skills they would not have gained if they had opted to stay out of these associations in the first place.

Therefore, I have argued that there is, at the very least, a very strong causal connection between civil society (by implication its product positive social capital) and good governance, economic and democratic development; however, this is constrained by rising levels of unemployment and changing production processes that lead to outsourcing and other new work arrangements. This has had a serious impact on the kind of worker who used to participate in community activities without expecting any remuneration for it.

Positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, that is, where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income.

In Freedom Park, the Development Committee was very altruistic during the initial land invasion and, although there were cases of favouritism in how they allocated shacks, they had something that brought them together – that is, shared experience of homelessness in the backyard shacks of Soweto, as well as in the labour movement. Perhaps however, as Tocqueville said, we should not necessarily be looking for simply altruistic behaviour but self-interest that is constrained and conscious of the needs of those around you. There was a unity of purpose in Freedom Park – until developers were brought into the fray. In an area characterised by high levels of unemployment leaders who were initially democratic changed, and the consultative style was sacrificed. Since being a leader in this environment meant access to resources, unemployed civic leaders were, in a number of instances, promised jobs in order to endorse the projects they had initially opposed.

Evidence from this thesis suggests that the changing nature of work could be detrimental to the strengthening of local associations. Through chapter seven, I conclude that the landscape has changed. People who had the propensity to

engage in stokvels and other associations are people who have access to resources. Residents who had a steady income were likely to participate in associations. I concluded in that chapter that the trend towards informal employment has been detrimental to the associational life that produces positive social capital. This is especially true for associations promoting the sort of self-interest conscious of the broader needs of the community, as articulated by Tocqueville. Those who join local civic associations see these as their only chance to earn an income. I agree that more work still needs to be done on how rising unemployment affects associations promoting social capital, development and good governance. This would contribute to filling in the lacuna Ben Fine identified in the Social Capital literature, when he argued that:

> "What is equally important is what has been left out. As much of the critical literature has observed, contributions to social capital have tended to focus on civil society and it associational forms ethos. This has been in isolation from, and exclusive of, serious consideration of the economy, formal politics, the role of the nation-state, the exercise of power, and the divisions and conflicts that are endemic to capitalist society although, of course, these can be added if you want them." (2001: 191)

This thesis has attempted to respond to this challenge through looking at the implications of the changing nature of work to the well-being of communities. It has shown how leaders are reluctant to leave their positions once their terms of office have ended. Evidence from the field suggests that this is (at least) partly as a result of a lack of access to alternative sources of income. I showed how some residents in the shack settlement case studies join local associations so that they can have access to temporary employment.

Therefore, public works jobs, such as those provided by the Durban Water, for households that could not afford to pay for water connection, contributed

to the creation of social capital. This was done by empowering those who were unemployed, encouraging them to work for a minimum of three weeks with a certain amount contributed to the connection fee, and another percentage given as wages. Local women sometimes contributed some of the money earned to pay their monthly dues for stokvels and burial societies. This is evidence of state intervention in the creation of social capital. Residents in this scheme were also asked to help those families that could not help themselves. These were families mostly consisting of the elderly and children. Therefore, the assertion in some of the social capital literature that the state can destroy social capital but cannot help in creating it, is challenged by the evidence provided in this thesis; the conclusion is that the state is not always negative for social capital development, thus challenging the libertarian assertion that the state should stay as far away as possible from civil society and free enterprise in order for democracy and economic development to occur.

The conclusion reached here concerning the difference between rural and urban (shack settlement) social capital and associational life, is that in rural and peri-urban areas one finds the traditional civic associations – such as school governing bodies (SGBs), stokvels, churches, football teams, burial societies, etc. In the urban cases that were studied, the results show a lot of activity happening through politically inclined civil society associations. There is a lot of interaction with the outside world and linkage with national level associations. The only linkage you find in the villages is mainly through political parties, but they are also not as engaged as in the urban areas. A strong link was established between social capital as a product of civil society, and good governance, something that has been observed elsewhere. I would conclude by saying that the informalisation of the economy and high levels of unemployment certainly inhibit civil society from playing its important democratising and governance role.

This thesis has demonstrated that social capital and its impact on good governance and democratic development cannot be understood fully without looking at the prevailing economic relations; there is consensus that the status quo has changed from the days of Karl Marx and Max Weber when industrialisation was gaining momentum. The reverse trend started taking shape in the last quarter of the 20th Century and, as argued earlier, it is unlikely to be reversed in the short to medium term; we therefore need new tools to discern whether or not current economic relations are inimical to associations that produce positive social capital, i.e. to the citizenry pursuing collective endeavours for the benefit of their communities. Evidence presented in this thesis seems to point to a very difficult and challenging road ahead.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I will argue that, contrary to Putnam, although social capital production has always been driven by the elites in communities, such as teachers and other professionals, the benefits have often accrued to the general citizenry. However, as a result of the changes in the production processes, the continued informalisation of the economy, and the exodus of teachers and other professionals (including unionised factory workers) from poorly resourced areas to urban centres, has denied poorly resourced areas access to much needed human and social capital. The exodus of professionals, semi-professional, and other elites has been common in the rural and peri-urban case studies; while shack settlements which were often established by the unemployed, retrenched union members, migrants and other marginalised groups, are built on a foundation where there is already a deficit of professional, semi-professional, and working class residents. I believe that these observations from the field support my hypothesis, that is, that positive social capital will be under-produced in societies in which there is a weak market economy, in other words where members of civil society do not have independent sources of income. I must admit though that in the

shack settlements which were subject of this thesis, there was no middle class nor many factory employed workers; but there was a dominance of elites, that is, retrenched union members – but they who were also constrained by not having an independent or regular source of income. This is what has constrained civil society associations in Kliptown, Freedom Park, Sweetwaters, and Manyavu/KwaXimba and this finding has implications beyond the four cases that were studied and I believe similar trends could be observed where there are similar conditions within South Africa.

This thesis has avoided romanticising the public sphere, which is occupied by civil society, admitting that the space occupied by civil society is not free of conflict. I have also made a distinction between positive and negative social capital, addressing the often-made criticism against social capital advocates that social capital is always presented in positive terms while the negative consequences of social capital are rarely addressed. As with other forms of capital, I concluded that social capital has its limits and it is not always good for development. I have also challenged the assertion that the space where civil society operates should be free of conflict, in fact I argued that where there has been competition and contestation, there is often good governance, economic and democratic development.

Some of the findings in this study correlate with the findings in the international literature; for example, the link between local level face-to-face associations and national level associations. Minkoff (1997) argued in her study that social movement organizations (SMOs) play a critical role in civil society, and in the production of social capital, by providing an infrastructure for collective action, facilitating the development of mediated collective identities that link otherwise marginalised members of society, and shaping public discourse and debate; this is very clearly demonstrated in the Freedom Park case. The South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) had initially been a local resident association, which dissolved in 1999 and was

absorbed into a national body. The benefit derived by the civic association was that when challenged by the developers and the Development Committee it could call upon the provincial and national leadership of Sanco to intervene on their behalf, and this happened on various occasions I observed some of these interactions first hand and these were discussed and analysed in the third chapter. I have argued too that where there is more bridging social capital, we are more likely to witness more sustainable development with KwaXimba and Freedom Park being cases in point. Civic associations in these areas appreciated the value of links with other structures outside their immediate environment and formed them accordingly.

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These interviewees provided ethnographic accounts and therefore these interviews are not dated because the author met with the informants a number of times between 1999 and 2006.

1. Ms. Smangele Manzi – Umgeni Water
2. Ms. Lindiwe Ngcobo – Umgeni Water
3. Ms. Zama Ngcobo – Umgeni Water
4. Mr. Atwell Mhlophe – Umgeni Water
5. Mr. Patrick Nhlapo, Umgeni Water
6. Mr. Vusi Ziqubu – Project Officer [Umgeni Water]
7. Mr. Bongani Dumisa – Water Services Manager [Indlovu Regional Council]
8. Mr. Phili Mkhize – Facilitator [Indlovu Regional Council]
9. Mr. Sandile Ngcobo – Social Empowerment Officer [Indlovu Regional Council]
10. Ms. Madlala – Community Facilitator [Indlovu Regional Council]
11. Mr. Dumisani Bukhosini – District manager: Pietermaritzburg – Rural development Facilitation [DTLGA – KZN]
12. Mr. Sbu Khuzwayo – Director Inland Region [DTLGA – KZN]

13. Mr. T.J. Mbatha – Rural Development Facilitation [DTLGA – KZN]

14. Mr. M.J. Ngcobo – Chairperson of Development Committee [Manyavu, oQweqweni]

15. Mr. N.A. Mdluli – Project Co-ordinator appointed by Traditional Authority and Secretary [Manyavu, oQweqweni]

16. Ms Mildred Nobuntu Qinisile – Sanco BEC Ruth First

17. Ms Charlotte Mamba – Sanco BEC Ruth First

18. Mr. Thami – Sanco BEC member, Ruth First

19. Mr. Thomas Thaga – Sanco Chairman, Ruth First (later Sanco Housing HOD – Johannesburg Region)

20. Mr. Albert Mosiye – Sanco Chairman, Freedom Park (trade union member)

21. Mr. Mofolo Mofolo – Councillor (Ward 24) which incorporates Freedom Park (Devland Ext. 27)

22. Mr. Willie Dlamini – Development Committee, Freedom Park (former trade union leader)

23. Mr. Biza Phiri – Development Committee, Freedom Park (former trade union leader)

24. Ms Thandi Ziqubu – ANC Freedom Park/Ruth First

25. Mr. Moffat Shoyimba – ANC and Community Policing Forum, Freedom Park (former trade union shop steward)

26. Mr. Donovan Williams – Sanco National Executive Member

27. Ms Sizakele Nkosi – Councillor and Mayoral Committee Member in the City of Johannesburg

28. Mr. Napoleon Masetlha – Urban Dynamics (Development Consultants based in Parktown)

29. Mr Matla Matetoa – (Architecture) Community Facilitator contracted by the Gauteng Department of Education

30. Mr. Eddie Makue – South African Council of Churches and formerly an activist in Eldorado Park Township.

31. Mr. Eric Nkomo – Councillor (Ward 19), which incorporates Kliptown and Dlamini township

32. Father Edward Risi – Formerly with the Diocese Johannesburg and he is now with the Diocese Keimoes-Upington in the Northern Cape since 2000.

33. Ms Aletta Webster – member of the Greater Kliptown Development Forum, former trade union member and local activist

34. Mr. Reg Bailey – Acting Manager: Research and Development, Durban Metro Water and Sanitation

35. Mr. Ednick Msweli – Community Liaison Officer: Durban Metro Water and Sanitation

36. Mr. Mkhanyiseli Ngubane – Youth Development Leader and ANC Youth League member (KwaXimba Traditional Authority)

37. Ms Zodwa Mkhize – Principal, Ntweka Junior Primary School (Manyavu Traditional Authority).

38. Ms Adelaide Hlela – Teacher, Ntweka Junior Primary School (Manyavu Traditional Authority).

39. Mr. Levi Sithole, Former Comrades Football Club Player, Mbutshana (Mpumuza Tribal Authority)

40. MaMkhize Ntombela, Former Crèche Manager, Mbutshana (Mpumuza Tribal Authority)

41. Mr. Ndombo Ntombela, Member of the Water Committee in Sweetwaters, Mbutshana ((Mpumuza Tribal Authority)

42. Ms Eunice Hlela, Former Assistant Crèche Manager, Mbutshana (Mpumuza Tribal Authority)

FOCUS GROUPS AND GROUP INTERVIEWS:

1. Focus Group Discussions with the Unemployed Women, Kliptown, Soweto

2. Focus Group Discussions with the Unemployed Men, Kliptown, Soweto

3. Focus Group Discussions with the Employed Men, Kliptown, Soweto

4. Focus Group Discussions with the Employed Women, Kliptown, Soweto

5. Group Interviews with the members of the Development Committee, Freedom Park.

6. Group Interviews with the Members of Sanco, Ruth First Section, Freedom Park.

7. Group Interviews with former members of the Comrades Football Club, Mbutshana in Sweetwaters (Mpumuza Tribal Authority)

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2. The Natal Witness Echo, 17 March 1992

3. Sowetan, 23 June 2005