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THE ALEXANDRA RENEWAL PROJECT (ARP): A CASE STUDY OF DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN ALEXANDRA.

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Development Studies).

Johannesburg, 2005

Abstract

This paper analyses what has arguably become a salient feature of development on an international level, namely community participation. Specifically, it focuses on a case study of the removals of people from the Jukskei River as part of the Alexandra Renewal Project in order to obtain an understanding of the processes of participation on the ARP as a whole. The research makes use of interview and observation methods in order to uncover the perspectives of various stakeholders including the leadership of the ARP, community members of Alexandra and people actually displaced from the Jukskei River as part of the ARP. The central research question that the research addresses is: To what extent do participatory processes of the ARP either contribute to the further disempowerment of the already poor or hold the possibility of empowering them?

I have concluded that a weak form of participation, in this case consultation, has led to the legitimization of the interests of those in power, of the state. I have suggested that since the kind of participation on the ARP is simply a technical one meant to ensure project success, it therefore does not and will not lead to achieving greater social justice (particularly for those who are poor). I recommend that structures be put in place that would enable people, particularly the poor, to become critically aware of their political and social situation. It is in this way that participation and indeed social justice may occur in South Africa in a substantial way.

I declare that this dissertation/ thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Development Studies) in the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination in any other university.

(name of candidate)

15th day of February, 2005.

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Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction	7-23
1.1 Aims	7-10
1,2 Rational	10-14
1.3 Methodology	14-20
1.4 Limitations	20-22
1.5 Appendix	22-23
Chapter 2 – Understanding Participation	24-41
2.1 Introduction	24
2.2 Background/ history of participation	24-26
2.3 Participation: An Ambiguous Concept	27-31
2.4 Participation: The shift from end in itself to means to an end	31-35
2.5 Power relations at the project level	35-38
2.6 Empowerment	38-40
2.7 Conclusion	40-41
Chapter 3 – South African Policy Framework	42-50
3.1 Participation in the context of South Africa	42-47
3.2 Theoretical Framework	47-50
Chapter 4 – The Leadership Perspective of Participation on the ARP	51-68
4.1 The ambiguity of participation on the ARP	51-62
4.2 Participation in the context of the Jukskei removals	62-67
4.3 Conclusion	67=68
Chapter 5 – The People's Perspective	69-80
5.1 Introduction	69
5.2 On the ground: people's (lack of) participation	69-74
5.3 Broken promises	74-80
5.4 Conclusion	80

Chapter 6 – Conclusion 81-103
6.1 What kind of democracy on the ARP? 81-83
6.2 A rationalization of force and resistance by an ARP official 84-85
6.3 Citizenship and the Juskei removals 85-86
6.4 The way forward for participation on the ARP 86-95
6.5 For future study 95-96
6.6 References 96-103

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Aims

This study deals with the Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP), which was funded R1.3 billion by the South African government and is to be undertaken over a seven year period between 2001 and 2008 in order to uplift the Alexandra community socially, economically, and physically. A central goal of the ARP is for the people to participate in their own development. This paper analyses what has arguably become a salient feature of development on an international level, namely community participation. Specifically, I will focus on a case study of the removals of people from the Jukskei River as part of the ARP in order to obtain an understanding of the processes of participation on the ARP as a whole.[1] I have also included interviews of people who have been displaced from Alexandra in general to Diepsloot or Bramfischerville as an addition to the perspective of people displaced from the Jukskei specifically.

With the above given, my research seeks to answer the following central questions:

1.) To what extent do participatory processes of the ARP either contribute to the further disempowerment of the already poor or hold the possibility of empowering them?

2.) To what extent were those displaced consulted about these removals? In other words, to what extent did the ARP take their views into account when the decision to remove them was being made? Or, did the ARP make decisions about the process of the removals without taking into account the views of actual people who were being affected?

3.) To what extent does the Alexandra Development Forum (ADF), which is meant to facilitate participation of the people in Alexandra (including the decision to move people off the Jukskei), represent the views of the community as a whole?

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[1] As a result of the pollution of the river and the environmentally deteriorating conditions on the river, some 7000 people were relocated to other places within and outside of Alexandra.

Because people perceive participation to be something that is inherently good, they are often confused about the idea that participation might lead to disempowerment. Indeed, when development projects or government programmes such as the ARP make people's participation a central goal in the achievement of objectives on projects, there is little reason why anyone would object at face value. Except, when siding with participation, rarely does one actually look at the effect of participatory structures on people who are most vulnerable to the negative aspects of development intervention; the poor. The following question must then be raised: Why has participation not resulted in the empowerment of the poor, even though this is a key objective of participatory intervention? The above issues have led analysts such as Buhler to write that participatory approaches to community building "are being questioned and challenged, even by people who are committed to the principle that people should not be excluded from debates and decision making processes that have significant effects on their lives" (2002: 1).

While the ARP proposes to empower the poor, I hypothesize that participatory processes on the project in fact actually do the opposite; further marginalizing them. Often, participatory forums such as the ADF serve the interests of the elites in a community because they are the ones who can exert power and influence and dominate discussions, thus making decisions about project plans. Therefore, what is proposed to benefit the poor/ marginalized may actually make them worse off than they were before the participatory development intervention. This type of occurrence, where the supposed beneficiary becomes worse off because of this intervention, is familiar in development projects throughout the world. When the poor are not considered in the project framework itself, the class and power relations within a community actually occur just as they would with no intervention at all; the more powerful dominating the less powerful. This occurs because the agenda of community participation on the projects such as the ARP may fail to recognize that community and the sense of belonging can be, and usually are, very hierarchical in their construction. Indeed, participatory discourse often has little space for existing hierarchies.

If my hypothesis proves correct, answers to the above research questions are meant to address the question: exactly *how* did the good intentions of empowering the poorest (a goal of the ARP as I will explain later) become lost in the development process? It is rather an easy task to conclude that those removed from the Jukskei did not participate in any decision-making affecting their lives. But is this reason to then simply say that participation is bad or that it does not work? Woost discusses this issue as it relates to participatory development in the following:

> I outline some of the ways in which the notion of participation is brought into line with mainstream development interests. The questions I ask of participatory development in Sri Lanka are similar to those James Ferguson (1994) asked of development generally in his book, The Anti-politics Machine. Ferguson noted that development critics such as Lappe and Collins (1977), often take for granted the process through which development actually fails to do what it intends and instead ends up serving the interests of those in power. Instead of merely pointing out development's failure, Ferguson argues that we need to see how this occurs despite the good intentions of those involved. To simply say that development is the devil's handmaiden implies a megalomaniacal scheme to forward the interests of the capitalist global economy. As Ferguson points out, it is unfair to say that all people who work in development share such interests. Nor are they simply dupes of a monolithic dominant ideology. We need instead, to peer into the black box of development and find out what happened to all the good intentions that disappeared inside it (2002: 108).

By peering inside this 'black box' developers and practitioners may eventually understand why there were negative effects as a result of a given development intervention. Developers will thus be less likely to allow this same situation to happen again if they are aware that what they are doing actually (in perhaps some insidious way) goes completely against their own objectives. The research is therefore intended to address the following concern: If no special attempt is made to include the marginalized or poor, those in power within a given community will naturally dominate the development process. Therefore, to avoid further marginalization of the poor on development projects, developers must not only be *aware* of the above issue, but must also put structures and plans in place on the project that are meant to address the issue. The question thus becomes: How does one set up a structure that provides a substantial degree of participation from the poor?

It may be argued that the nature of the participatory process on the ARP makes it impossible for poor groups to be heard. Clearly, if technocrats, bureaucrats and other powerful people make decisions about what the character of the participatory mechanisms on the ARP will be, it is unlikely that these same mechanisms will hold the possibility of empowering and/or hearing the voices of the most disadvantaged in Alexandra. At least, the case must be that the power structures within the ARP, which established the ADF, hold certain limitations for those who are poor. These limitations are particularly evident through the protest action of shack dwellers during the ARP's decision to remove people from the Jukskei River. Therefore, I will be focusing on the developmental model that was used to make the decision to remove people off the Jukskei River. Was this model the best model of participation, or could another model have been used that would have more effectively ensured the participation of the poor in Alexandra?

1.2 Rationale

Internationally, participatory development has been in the forefront of development discourse over the last five decades. Through the late 1980's and 1990's, development practitioners and academics have stressed that people must be at the center of their own development. Until recently, participation was largely seen as a practice and ideal that could virtually do no wrong. Even today, development practitioners and academics fail to address structural constraints within a community that might make it impossible for participation to take place in the way that it is intended to.

In South Africa, the post-apartheid development policy framework has emphasized community participation. (This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 3.) However, the lack of literature on participatory development in South Africa shows that it has not been sufficiently investigated. Moreover, the government may assume that people are participating in their own development simply because they voted ANC, when in fact agendas on a policy and project level within the country are meant to facilitate much more citizen participation than simply taking part in elections and voting for a representative. Finally, whether or not development is occurring from the bottom-up is of particular significance in South Africa ten

years after the end of the apartheid regime's ultimate top-down rule in which the state was elected by a minority that attempted to make decisions on behalf of the majority.

This micro-case of the ARP was chosen for several reasons. First, studying participation on a project level is not only important to understand the processes that may occur on other similar projects. But also, by obtaining an in-depth and complete understanding of a micro-case, this may shed light on the trends of participation on a broader level; within a democratic country as a whole. Second, the ARP is one of the flagship urban renewal development projects in the country. It was chosen by the national government as one of eight communities in South Africa in the greatest need of R1.3 billion of development funding.

` `A brief history of Alexandra including it's relation to community participation is in order here. Alexandra is located in the northeast of central Johannesburg and covers an area of about 1.5 square miles. It was formerly established as a 'native township' in 1912, although people have been living there since 1904. In 1948, under the apartheid regime, Alexandra fell under the control of what was then called the Department of Native Affairs. Throughout it's history, Alexandra has experienced much underdevelopment, neglect and severe degradation, especially in the 1980's.

Alexandra has a strong history of community participation. It is known for it's local civic movement in place during the 1980's and 1990's that ran in opposition to the top-down and racist development that was imposed on Alexandra residents by the apartheid government. These organizations are noteworthy in relation to this report since they were an attempt by non-partisan community leaders to bring about development by the people of Alexandra. Moreover, supporters of the civic movement went on to argue that development was *not possible*, unless the people affected were included, in other words *participating,* in the process of development

Today, Alexandra is the home of approximately 350,000 people, the most densely populated township in South Africa. As a result, the township experiences severe

environmental degradation, over-populated schools, and general lack of access to basic services such as health care and police protection. According to Mayekiso,

> "Alex is unlike any city in the world. No South African Township is as densely populated, as well developed politically, as decimated by unemployment and economic despair, or as socially tense" (1996: 17).

The ARP is therefore an attempt by the new South African government to address these problems in Alexandra, using participation of the people as an integral part of implementing any given development project.

Thus, the third point is that, while participation is not always an explicit goal for development projects, participation is viewed as one of the major factors in the implementation of the Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP). The Alexandra Development Forum (ADF) is one main mechanism by which the ARP facilitates community involvement/ participation in order to ensure that the voices of the community members in Alexandra Township are heard. The ADF does not have full power over what the ARP can or must do. The ARP official website explains this matter by stating that "The Alexandra Renewal Project will not be bound by the decisions of the Alexandra Development Forum, but will take such decisions seriously and will make all efforts to meet such decisions." Any community, non-governmental organization or stakeholder operating within the greater Alexandra area can attend the ADF. The forum meets on a monthly basis (the executive committee meets weekly) as an oversight body designed to ensure that the people of Alexandra can decide which projects they want and do not want to implement. Paul Mashatile, the former MEC (Member of the Executive Committee) for Housing, discusses the importance of the forum in the following: "The community is represented in the ADF so that we don't do what we think is right for the community, but do what the community thinks is right for them" (Mashatile 2004: ARP video). He says further in an excerpt on the ARP official website regarding community involvement, "I and the project team are committed to ensuring that the project is implemented quickly and fairly, in a way in which all stakeholders are heard and accommodated where possible."

Fourth, addressing the needs of the poorest of the poor is clearly a goal of the ARP. Keith Khoza, the director of the ARP, stated when discussing funds that were allocated from the government to the ARP, "the government wanted to target the poorest of the poor which includes many of those living in urban townships."[2] However, as the above has alluded to, the case may be (perhaps partially) that the ARP addresses the wants and desires of the more powerful in Alexandra rather than the *needs* of the poorest. Is the ARP an example in which the intentions of participatory development, to empower those with the least, are undermined by intra-community power relationships? If so, how does further marginalization of the poor occur when the goal of the project is actually meant to empower them? Since the goal of the ARP and of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) are to empower the poorest there should be a model that is to be used (on Alexandra or other projects) to help ensure that the poor are included in the development process. If the poor in fact were not empowered, can one come up with a model to ensure their empowerment?

Exactly what was the development model that the ARP used in the implementation of the removals off the Jukskei? Was their specific model followed? Could another model or practice, perhaps one that involved greater participation, have reduced the risks caused by displacement and thus effected the displaced in a more positive manner? As Cernea points out, "for the most part… the risks of impoverishment are currently not addressed explicitly and systematically during the planning of very many projects that cause displacement" (2000: 45).

Last, my interest in participatory processes on development projects came about before I began researching the ARP and ADF. Previously, I have done fieldwork in the Eastern Cape on a small project for poverty alleviation called *Gwebindlala*. Unlike other development projects, the manager at *Gwebindlala* came from a similar background as the workers. This permitted a more egalitarian relationship between the "developers" and the "beneficiaries" giving the latter some say in what happens on the project. However, the people did not come up with the project on their own; the project is therefore not completely participatory (or democratic), but instead somewhere in between hierarchical and participatory. Thus, my work

[2] Interview with Keith Khoza: 2004

on this project has sparked a great interest for me to uncover some of the many variables that reflect levels of participation among other development projects in South Africa. Furthermore, it has left me with a desire to unmask the effect that a given level of participation has on the outcome of a development project.

1.3 Methodology

To further inform one sub- question (i.e., to what extent does the ADF represent the views of the people in Alexandra?), my research focuses on one specific aspect of the ARP: the removal of approximately 7000 people living in shacks on the Jukskei River in 2002. As discussed previously, since the removals of people from the Jukskei River to Bramfischerville and Diepsloot were part of the ARP; members of the community within the ADF should have been consulted about this possible decision. Since very little secondary information exists on the removals and participation on the ARP, I used observation and interview methodologies as the main sources of information for my research.[3]

Method 1: Interview.

I used the interview method to answer the following research questions: Were those displaced consulted about these removals? In other words, did the ARP take their views into account? Or, did the ARP make decisions about the process of the removals without the actual people who were being affected?

I was able to interview six leaders of the ARP, six people who have been displaced (from the Jukskei to Diepsloot, and four from Bramfischerville to Diepsloot, as well as four other Alexandra residents to see how each group views the removal of people from the Jukskei River. By obtaining interviews from leaders of the ADF and those displaced from the Jukskei, I established common patterns and themes of each group. Along with people

[3] The shacks were highly congested on the polluted Jukskei River and some of the shacks even had the river running directly over the floors of their homes. Although severely polluted, many still used the river for health and drinking water. In addition to the above reasons and in order for the river to be restored (cleaned), it was decided by the ARP to move these people to other locations away from the river.

involved in the ADF, I interviewed the people who made the actual decisions to remove the people from the Jukskei in order to determine considerations that were involved.

I heard, from the point of view of the leaders of the ARP and of those people removed, a *thick description* of exactly what the latter's participation was in the process of the removals. I interviewed Alexandra resident to help effectively test my hypothesis. Since I investigated whether or not the powerful in the community control and exclude the less powerful from the development process, I then had to have an idea of what the interests were of the more powerful groups within the society. As will be made clear in my theoretical framework, this research question is not simply about the relationship between developers and beneficiaries, but also about the power relationships within the community that is supposedly benefiting from the development intervention.

The above combination of stakeholders allowed me to create a historical narrative showing the extent to which this poor group participated in its own development. In this way, I was able to compare perspectives from both sides of the displacement in order to have a more complete understanding of what the issues were within the project and among those directly affected. By interviewing different groups of people about the same event, I saw that there were conflicting versions of what happened. I did this in an attempt to paint as full a picture as possible of the consultation process of the ARP, particularly of those who have been displaced from the Jukskei River. By comparing the interviews, I have attempted to answer how and why each of these perspectives differs. These different perspectives also were meant to give a historical narrative of what happened so that I could obtain a clear sense of the process of the removals. In analyzing such perspectives between powerful and powerless groups, the tendency of the social science researcher may be to side with the latter, perhaps since they are the ones whom such research is aimed at effecting. By having an awareness of this issue, I attempted to look more objectively at the situation of the removals from the Jukskei, thus taking the interests of the powerful into account as well.

I tape-recorded all interviews. Tape recording allowed me to pay more close attention to what the interviewee was saying while they were saying it so that I could ask other questions regarding their responses after they had finished speaking. Moreover, it enabled me to transcribe everything that they said during the interview, and to listen or read what they have said as many times as I would like in order to get new points that I may have missed had I not used a tape recorder. But, does the recorder affect the interviewee's responses? It may be that the tape recorder seemingly makes his or her discussion more official, and that he or she does not want to speak directly on the record.

Except when interviewees preferred otherwise, interviews were conducted in English so that I could best be able to participate in the interviewing process. In cases where I thought an interviewee might ask to be spoken to in *Zulu*, I made sure to have a translator help me conduct the interview. In so doing, I did not taint the empirical evidence that I obtained from those who have been displaced by using their willingness to speak English as an indicator of whether or not I would interview them. With that given, having a translator involved in the interview process made it virtually impossible to direct the interviewees to the kinds of issues that I wanted to know about. Moreover, I was aware that interpretation given by the translator may not have been completely accurate.

I informed the interviewees that they could remain anonymous if they would like, but that my research is for strictly academic purposes. Some of those displaced from the Jukskei asked to remain anonymous since the issues we were touching on during the interviews were politically sensitive at the time.

It was likely that I, neither being from Alexandra nor from South Africa, would be met with much suspicion by people in Diepsloot if I just appeared at their door by myself. Fortunately, my research advisor and I have been in contact with an intern at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) from Alexandra who was willing to make arrangements for me with people from Diepsloot. His willingness to accompany me to where these people have been displaced was meant to make it much more likely that they would hear what I have had to say and cooperate with my interviews. (But see my limitations later in this section; in fact he did

not actually accompany me) Certainly, the person with whom I arrived at a new place to speak with an individual that I have never met tells volumes about who I am and what my motives are for the meeting with this new person.

I recognize other limitations or weaknesses to my approach as well. Because I have interviewed people about something that happened in the past the interviewees may not have remembered exactly what happened. Moreover, over time they may have subconsciously remembered only what they wanted to, or they may even choose to tell me what they think I might have wanted to hear.

Johnson explains the circumstances under which in-depth interviewing is necessary:

> If one is interested in questions of greater depth, where the knowledge sought is often taken for granted and not readily articulated by most members, where the research question involves highly conflicted emotions, where different individuals or groups involved in the same line of activity have complicated, multiple perspectives on some phenomenon, then in-depth interviewing is likely the best approach despite its known imperfections (2001: 105).

While I remained open to other topics of interest about which the interviewee chose to talk (that did not necessarily seem appropriate to my research at the time), I used the interview questions which can be found in the appendix of this chapter to guide the interview. Less structured questions however, were appropriate to discuss with the interviewee before any specific questions were raised.

Method 2: Observation

I will now discuss the method of observation, which was used as a backdrop for my interviews, to answer the following research question: To what extent does the ADF, which is meant to facilitate participation of the people in Alexandra, represent the views of the community as a whole? I have organized with my research advisor and an intern at Wits who also studies the ARP and lives in Alexandra, for me to obtain permission to attend the ADF

meetings. In the letter requesting my attendance at these meetings, it was made clear what my research intentions were, that I wanted to look at the ADF to help me understand the forum and how it impacts community involvement on the ARP. I attended ADF meetings to *observe* direct action as it actually happened.

I used theory from pre-existing studies to inform my research. To help conceptualize my findings in the field, I kept in mind my theme of community involvement (participation) and the theory that participatory processes (in this case within the ADF) *might* serve to further disempower already marginalized groups. In doing so, I was ready for information that challenges the above theory or the possible need for the theory to be reshaped to fit the kind of context within the ARP.

I attended three meetings to get as full a feel as possible of what was happening at the meetings in general. This was intended to decrease the chances that I would attend one meeting that happened to be an anomaly, e.g., in which the meeting runs smoothly but no one is listened to. By taking notes of what people said, *how* they said it, and the setting itself, I attempted to answer the following questions, which are meant to inform my central research question: Who attends these meetings? Who runs the meetings? How are the meetings run and do they allow all to speak? Does the ADF have room for change in its ideas for project implementation? Who dominates the discussion? Answers to these questions shed light on whose interests are being served and which groups are being excluded from the development process on the ARP. A combination of the interviews and observations were meant to paint as full a picture as possible of the consultation process of the ADF.

I was careful here. If it was made clear to the entire forum that there is a researcher present at their meeting intending to see the extent to which the ADF represents the views of the community, it is possible that my presence could change the way meetings were run. In order to make the ADF "look good" as a forum meant to facilitate the participation of groups in the community, they might have made a special effort to ensure that all voices are heard and taken into account. Fortunately, no one really acknowledged my presence as an outsider

and there was no evidence that any ADF meeting would have been conducted differently had I not been there.

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Another issue involved with my analysis is that it is very difficult, using observation, to generalize beyond the study. For example, another participatory forum may be completely different from the ADF even under similar circumstances. Moreover, observation made it difficult for me to tell *why*, for example, marginalized voices are left unheard in some forums and not others.

As has been alluded to throughout this paper, my research has attempted to show whether or not any arrangements were made to ensure that the poor/ marginalized were included in the decision-making processes of the ARP. If not, does a failure by the ARP to address power differences between groups of people within Alexandra lead to exclusion of the poorest groups within Alexandra? I have attempted to answer these questions by investigating whether or not the ARP mentions, in its documents regarding community involvement and the ADF, any statements that are meant to help ensure the involvement/ participation of the poor. Moreover, were or are there any practices that the ARP has initiated to help ensure the involvement/ participation of the poor?

It should be clear here that these questions are meant to enlighten the key question by use of a micro-case. If the people removed from the Jukskei were not consulted and/or their voices were not considered (in this case), how representative of the people in Alexandra is the ADF? Furthermore, if it can be concluded that all the people removed from the Jukskei River were amongst the poorest in Alexandra, does the ADF (which is meant to be a tool in the facilitation of participation) further disempower groups that are already poor?

I used observation and records of the ARP and ADF to answer the following sub-question: How was the ADF formed as part of the ARP? In answering this question, I attempted to trace the historical evolution of the relationship between the ARP and the ADF. I also looked at issues within the ADF at the present time. I have already discussed above that I used observation to do this. Answers to these questions therefore informed the sub-question

by clarifying *who* is represented in the ADF and *who* controls the meetings. This was meant to shed light on particular groups that may be included/ excluded in the ARP development process.

In order to place into context the level of community involvement facilitated by the ADF, I have discussed the civic organizations that were active in the late 1980s and early 1990s in Alexandra. These organizations were run within Alexandra and known for their high level of community involvement. They were meant to be a replacement for the top-down governing of the *apartheid* regime at the time. An understanding of this enabled me to better understand the following specific side question: Is the ADF a valid successor of those civic organizations that were in place during apartheid? I have used secondary resources and interviews to answer the question: How was the ADF formed as part of the ARP? By comparing texts, such as Mzwanele Mayekiso's Township Politics, with what interviews and articles show about the ADF, I was able to see how the ADF relates to or measures up with, the types of community involvement that were going on during apartheid. In other words, were there shifts in the character of community participation with the launch of the ARP?

1.4 Limitations

As a white foreigner (and a person unfamiliar with the places in which I was travelling), it was often difficult to get to places on my own. On my way back from visiting Alexandra by taxi-bus by myself for the first time, I was mugged by four young men (an experience not so different from that of many others walking in the city on a regular basis). Moreover, it is extremely difficult to head into a place with which one is unfamiliar with and make contacts with people from an entirely different cultural and class background than oneself. No one in Alexandra that I was in contact with was willing to take me to Diepsloot in order for me to meet and interview people who had been displaced from Alexandra. Since Alexandra is considered by many in Johannesburg to be a 'dangerous ghetto' by many (even black South Africans), it was surprising to me that the residents of Alexandra were uncomfortable taking me to Diepsloot. Some said that they were unfamiliar with the place and deemed it dangerous to walk around in there with me.

I wasted a good deal of time with people who made plans with me and then never followed through to meet with me and set me up with the contacts that I needed to carry out my research. After exhausting all of my options, I brought one of my friends named George Masiwa, who is more familiar with black South African areas than I, with me when I went to Bramfischerville and Diepsloot. The difficulties of having a regular or any meeting place or knowing where the people were that I wanted to interview, or even whether we would be able to find them, the most appropriate sampling method was *random*; we asked people whom we ran into where we could find the people who were displaced from Alexandra that I was looking for. Eventually, we found some of the people that I needed to speak with.

However, because of the problems mentioned above, I encountered difficulties in obtaining the number of interviews that I wanted. Upon my visit through Bramfischerville, I became aware of the fact that people had not only been displaced from the Jukskei in 2001 under the ARP, but that there had also been a series of at least two other removals of people from the Jukskei to Bramfischerville in 1999 and 2000. Those that I interviewed who were displaced at those times, however, were also beneficial to my study since I could show evidence beyond my case study of the displaced people's perspectives of the removals.

In Diepsloot, I faced a similar issue. It was difficult to find people who were displaced from the Jukskei and, other than two people, I ended up interviewing people who had been displaced from other parts of Alexandra (besides Jukskei) to Diepsloot. However, this also proves to be fruitful since I could use those people's information as evidence of other cases in Alexandra that supported my hypothesis.

In cases where the interviewee preferred to be interviewed in Zulu, George Masiwa acted as my interpreter since he is fluent in Zulu. This proved to be very beneficial since most people opted to speak Zulu rather than English and could express themselves better in their vernacular language. Although it was not ideal for translations, George would interpret my questions to the interviewee, and when the interviewee responded, George would interpret the responses into English which I recorded and then transcribed.

Throughout my research, interviewees would ask me how they would benefit from my research results. To me, this is a reasonable question since I am studying with the hope of achieving some change in people's social situation in the long run. When asked, I had to respond that I could not promise any changes in their lives but that my research was meant to improve the way the ARP and other organizations operated with people such as themselves with the hope that in the future, things might be different and that people might be better off as a result. At the time, I came to terms with the fact that I would benefit from studying them much more than they ever would. Most likely, it would turn out that I would earn a Master's degree and they would gain nothing.

1.5 Appendix

Interview guide for those displaced:

Were you moved from Jukskei in 2001?
How long had you lived in Alex?
Did you like it there?
Did you work?
Do you have any children? If so, were your children's schooling affected by the removal?
Was there anything good/bad about moving off the Jukskei?
Were you notified about how or when you were to be removed? If so how and when were you notified?
Did you attend any meetings?
What do you think caused the resistance of people when they were being removed from the Jukskei?
Were any other choices given?
Would you have liked to have stayed somewhere else besides Bramfischerville or Diepsloot?
Might you have been better or worse off if you could have been involved in the decision-making to remove you?

Interview guide for ARP leaders

What was your role within the ARP during the time of the Jukskei removals?
What does the ARP mean by community involvement?
What were the decision-making processes that the ARP went through in removing people from the Jukskei?
Did the ARP make any attempt to elicit the participation of the people removed from the Jukskei and why or why not?
In your view, what was the most successful part of the removals of people from the Jukskei?
Looking back, what do you think you have learned now that you have completed this part of the project?

Interview guide for community members

What do you think about the people who were removed from the Jukskei?
Were you informed by the ARP or another structure why these removals had to take place officially and what do you think about the reasons given?
We know that many people live in shacks in the Alex community, what do you think about that?
Do the shacks make a difference to your property?
Do you think the people who were removed from the Jukskei got a chance to speak out about what they wanted in terms of where they should be relocated or what should happen to them?

Chapter 2 – Understanding Participation

2.1 Introduction

Participation has become a widely used strategy by developers all over the world, often cited as one of the most difficult tasks in the implementation of any given development project. Participation is meant to empower individuals and groups to *own* their project (Crewe and Harrison 2000, Woost 2002, and Chambers 1997). However, top-down projects have persisted internationally despite the widespread ideal of participation. In the last twenty years participation has become a "buzzword" advocated on virtually every mainstream development project throughout the world. But a question that often goes unanswered is: exactly what does participation on a given development project mean and how does participation play out in the actual process of development? Overall, this chapter will problematize notions of participation, questioning the form that participation has taken.

2.2 Background/ History of participation

The words 'participate' and 'participatory' appeared for the first time in development discourse in the late 1950s when developers' expectations to make a difference in the lives of impoverished people were let down. They began to attribute many development projects' failures to the beneficiaries' non-participation in shaping development meant to impact their lives. According to Sachs, a number of major international aid organizations "found that, whenever people were locally involved, and actively participating, in the projects, much more was achieved with much less, even in sheer financial terms" (Sachs 1992: 117). Thus, "developers" began to advocate the end of top-down approaches to development.[1]

[1] Despite the fact that "developers" do not always develop, that "beneficiaries" do not always benefit from a given development project, and that "development" itself may have separate meanings to different groups of people, I have left the titles of beneficiaries, developers and development out of quotations through this essay. In this essay, "Beneficiary" means the stakeholders who are supposedly benefiting on the development project. "Developer," on the other hand, means the stakeholders who are supposedly facilitating the development of the beneficiaries on the development project. Finally, "development" will be discussed acknowledging that any idea of "development" draws on an assumption about what is good for society. Policy or practice is then meant to fall into place after that judgement is made.

Later, developers began to recognise that 1970s and early 1980s development, which relied on a top-down, technical, and outside experts approach, was not working because it failed to address the realities and needs of the beneficiaries. Robert Chambers played an influential role in trying to reverse these processes with his focus on rural participatory development. His most well known contribution dealt with participatory rural appraisal (PRA), which has had much impact on the ideas of participatory development in general. The basic point of PRA is that it should facilitate the involvement of beneficiaries in their own development. With PRA techniques, the researcher or developer is meant to 'hand over the stick' (Chambers: 1997) and listen to the beneficiaries view of the situation so that the latter's agenda comes across in the development plans. Chambers discusses a situation where the relationship between the developers and beneficiaries must be one that encompasses role reversals. Rather than going into an area thinking he/she knows what is best for the beneficiaries, the developer looks to the people in the area for answers (with the assumption that the local people know best). In this way, insider or local knowledge is to be put ahead of expert knowledge (thus humbling the researcher). Therefore, those who are considered to be first in the development process (i.e. the developers of a given project) must put themselves *last*. The above points are clear even in the title of one Chambers' books: Whose Reality Counts: Putting the First Last (Chambers: 1997).

However, there are clear difficulties in carrying out this role reversal between the developer and beneficiary in practice. Not only does the process depend on the developers humbling him or herself to the beneficiary, but also as Crewe and Harrison claim, that "their relationship with recipients cannot be a meeting of equals" (1998: 74). Furthermore, they point out that, "the exchange is inherently unequal and, at times, coercive" (1998: 74). Indeed, there is automatically a power relationship between the developer and beneficiary since one is giving aid (resources/money) and another is waiting, with the expectation that they may very well receive some of this aid. Therefore, in dealing with the developers, beneficiaries will be more likely to tell them what they (the developers) want to hear rather than what the beneficiaries actually think or want. Despite such difficulties in obtaining the actual viewpoint of the beneficiaries on a given development project, there was a wide-spread

understanding that putting people before technical issues could do no wrong on a development project.

This was part of a participation boom during the 1980s and through to the early 1990s when many were experimenting with this new method of PRA that led to a variety approaches to be implemented in development projects. The "participation imperative" (Kanji: 2002) in the 1990's saw participation as a must, to be advocated in almost every development organization that existed. As Kanji explains, **"**Emerging paradoxes towards the end of the 1990s with standardized approaches contradicting original aims for flexible and context-specific approaches, a more technical rather than empowerment-oriented use of methods with superficial knowledge of empowerment principles emerged" (Kanji 2002: 8). Today, rather than actually empowering people to take over their own development, participation has largely become less radical (in terms of its association with creating a change in power relations), using methods (i.e. PRA) and discourse (i.e. participation of those with the least) to cover up what otherwise would have been called top-down development.

Despite problems that have recently surrounded participation, many have and continue to take the view that participation is the solution for marginalized or poor groups. Much like the notion of 'sustainable development', the combination of 'participatory' and 'development' is also often left unopposed. Despite the actual outcome of a given participatory project, few are against one's participation in his/her own development and, participation is seen by many as something that is inherently good. Difficulties with giving participation any type of functional definition is the issue to which I now turn.

2.3 Participation: An ambiguous concept.

Exactly what *kind* of participation is necessary to overcome this top-down, technical and bureaucratic form of development aid is a question often left unanswered.[2] Part of the problem is that participation can take on many meanings. For example, an organisation might get away with saying, "yes the people are hoeing the fields like we asked them to, therefore they are participating in our development project." In one way or another, it may be justified as being a participatory project. Taking into account his field work in Sri Lanka, Woost shows how "participation came to be cast as the act of partaking in the objectives of the economy, and the societal arrangements related to it" (1997: 240 from Cornwall 2002: 32-33). He tells us further in regard to market generation projects, that "the programmes were said to be participatory because they obtained people's participation in the market-led development strategies" (1997: 243). On the other end of the spectrum, one might also regard participation as it is discussed in its relation to empowerment, by describing participation as the process of redistributing power from one group to another. In this way, participatory development has a tendency to take on more revolutionary meanings like those that the sociologist, Paulo Freire (who I will analyse later) discusses in his analysis of the oppressed in Brazil.

Arstein's ladder of participation (1970) gives further clarity to this multifaceted outlook that participation encompasses by separating the levels of citizen participation into the following three main categories: Non-participation, degrees of tokenism, and citizen power. Informing and consulting are two degrees of tokenism that I will focus on now, which often lead to control of the developers over the beneficiaries. Arnstein points out that,

> Informing citizens of their rights, responsibilities, and options can be the most important step toward legitimate participation…emphasis is placed on a one-way flow of information – from officials to citizens – with no channel provided for feedback and no power for negotiation. Under these conditions, particularly when information is provided at a late stage of planning, people have little opportunity to influence the program designed for their benefit (Arnstein 1970: 218)

[2] Perhaps this is largely because what is appropriate for a development organization or government depends on how it defines development and thus what it decides is the necessary means to achieve that particular development

While the next degree, consultation, is higher up on the ladder of participation, Arnstein points out that this degree of participation "offers no assurance that citizen participation and ideas will be taken into account" and that "what citizens achieve in all this activity is that they have 'participated in participation.' And what power holders achieve is the evidence that they have gone through the required motions of involving those people" (Arnstein 1970: 219).

Certainly, participation can be a means by which developers legitimise a given development project. Let's say participation is a goal on a given project and members of that community do not affect any of the decisions made (i.e.) about the processes to be undertaken in regards to the removals of people from their homes as part of a health concern. In this case, to what extent does the *idea* of achieving participation on the project exist to lend "credibility and legitimacy to decisions that have already been made" (Hildyard 2001: 59)? Hildyard informs us that,

> Not only does consultation tend to be desultory, but even where meetings are held, the voices of the people rarely appear to be listened to. Local people become a ghostly presence within the planning process – visible, heard even, but ultimately they are only there because their involvement lends credibility and legitimacy to decisions that have already been made (2001: 59)

Hildyard says further that participation may actually be a "means for top-down planning to be imposed from the bottom up" (2001:59). As Patricia Feeney of Oxfam reports, "although public meetings were held… to tell the community about the project and to listen nominally to their suggestions about planting, nurseries had already been raised and pits dug before any consultation occurred" (1998: 72). Participation, in these cases, may be doing more harm than good by facilitating the dominance of developers over the local people.

As a result of these types of setbacks to 'partial participation,' some (Sida: 1996) advocate 'full participation'[3] as the best pathway to success on a project. After all, shouldn't

[3] This concept will be distinguished from other types of participation later.

beneficiaries be in complete control of their own development? Those working along this end of the spectrum might predict that the project with a high level of beneficiary participation will be more successful in the short run and more sustainable in the long run, than a project would be with a low level of beneficiary participation on the project. This is the case since, as a result of a *lack* of participation from the beneficiaries on a given development project, two main problems arose. The first is that local cultural and ecological knowledge of the area is often overlooked leading to top-down projects that are useless since they don't match up with the community and environment in the area. For example, if the project did not consult with the people in the area, developers might find later that where they have chosen to build houses are in a ritual area. As a result of this, the people may be unwilling to move into the built houses. And second (and perhaps more importantly), when there is a lack of involvement and voice of the beneficiaries on a project, they are significantly less likely to be committed to the project and to stay with it after the developers have left. This is the case because beneficiaries will be unlikely to stay with the project or know how to maintain what has been developed if they have not taken control of the development process. Thus the project will not be sustainable.

However, a high level of participation may not be possible or desirable in terms of efficiency or efficacy. It can be said that more participatory approaches to development require more time for both beneficiaries and developers of the project. It is much easier, and takes significantly less time for developers to implement a program in which they come up with the plan and try to implement it than it does to engage the community. By coming up with plans in consultation or cooperation with the community (not to mention handing the project over to them completely), time might be lost not only for the developers, but also for the beneficiaries (who also spend time and energy when participation is implemented). The latter might make it impossible for the project to reach the goals in the original time allotted. For example, the project may be moving along at a slower pace because developers have to wait for the community to address the project plans in order to make sure that they are in agreement with them.

Cohen and Uphoff advocate perhaps a more complex view than the above in terms of what kind of participation is best by pointing out that developers should "seek clarity through specificity" (1980: 213). They argue that developers need to clarify *what* kind of participation is taking place, *who* is participating, and exactly *how* are they going about participating in the development process. They explain that developers must indicate whether the beneficiaries are to be participating in decision-making, implementation, benefits or evaluation. The following hypothetical situation shows how this point is critical. A given development project may have participation as an explicit goal, but if both the beneficiaries and the developers are unaware exactly what the former should be participating in, conflict may arise. Developers may expect that participation of the local people means that they will simply benefit from the project once it is complete. Whereas, on the other hand, the beneficiaries anticipate that they will be participating in the decision-making and implementation aspects of the development project. If participatory objectives are clear (which is not always the case) and those objectives are communicated effectively to all stakeholders involved, it only makes sense that developers and beneficiaries will be much more likely to collaborate in a manner that allows 'success' on that given project.

Second, the question of who is participating is also of central importance to a given development project. The *number* of people involved is often a key factor in determining what level of participation will exist on the project. Farrington and Bebbington (1993) inform us of the difference between depth and width of participation. 'Deep' participation is usually only able to include a small number of people since it attempts to involve people in all the processes of development on the project. On the other hand, 'shallow' participation covers a wider extent of people in a given population and is therefore only able to use informed or consultative methods. (Farrington and Bebbington: 1993 from Cornwall 2002: 54-55).

Cornwall elaborates on this issue in her discussion entitled, 'from full to optimal participation' (Cornwall 2002: 55). She says that:

> A 'deep' and 'wide' participatory process might be the ideal, in abstract, but in practice it can prove either virtually impossible to achieve, or so cumbersome and time-consuming that everyone begins to lose interest. In this regard, it makes more sense to think in terms

> of optimum participation. Clearly what might be optimum for one purpose would not be so for another. Contrast, for example, the depth and breadth of participation that might be desired for the development of local institutions and for HIV/AIDS prevention activities. Neither of these purposes can be expected to involve 'full participation.' But if the former sought to include everyone and the latter worked only with a small handful of people, they would fail in their own terms (Cornwall 2002: 55).

The final, and certainly not least important factor of what one must look at carefully in order to have a clear notion of participation on a given project, is *how* the beneficiaries participate. Cohen and Uphoff ask the question, "does the initiative come from the grass roots or from the national centre" (Cohen and Uphoff 1980: 224)? This question relates to the degree to which beneficiaries have power to make decisions on the project. For example, there may be one instance where all twenty beneficiaries are participating in virtually every aspect of the development process, from decision making, all the way to implementation and evaluation. But, if the initiatives keep coming from the developers, the beneficiaries may not actually have voice in the project to make decisions, and to implement the project in such a way that they will have taken control of their own development.

2.4 Participation: The Shift from End in Itself to Means to an End.

There are two other more broad ways of looking at participation. One is to consider participation as a means to achieve an end and the other is to regard participation as an end in itself. It is commonplace in recent participatory development literature for participation to be discussed as a means to achieve an end. In this view, participation is seen as something that is *practical* because it increases the effectiveness, and efficiency of the development project. By involving the people's local expertise in the project, it is more likely to be sustainable because the beneficiaries will have had some stake in the decision-making and outcomes on the project, thus making it more likely that they will maintain the project after the developers have left. As Francis points out, "In his 1998 annual meetings speech, the president of the World Bank informed the world that, 'Participation matters not only as a means of improving

development effectiveness – as we know from our recent studies – but as the key to long-term sustainability and leverage'" (Francis 2001: 72).

However, the roots of participation take on much more radical approach, one especially influenced by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian sociologist. Participation, Freire claimed in his well-known book, Pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire: 1972), was to occur through the education of oppressed people. By obtaining "*concientizaco"* (or the ability to look critically at the world), oppressed people would have the strength and desire to stand up to their oppressors and demand to be treated humanely. He comments about a newly educated man that the:

> World becomes radically transformed and he is no longer willing to be a mere object responding to changes occurring around him. He is more likely to take upon himself, with his fellow men, the struggle to change the structures of society that until now have served to oppress him (Freire 1972: back cover).

While these two views each require some degree of power transfer from one group to another, the latter view is seen as revolutionary and perhaps *threatening* to those who are in power. Hailey adds a key point to this issue. He argues that aid agencies began to experiment with participatory tools and technologies as a way of encouraging long-term sustainability and efficiency on projects. Where it gets interesting is in his discussion on how participation further benefited donors. He says that since the very idea of participation was 'nicely wrapped' (2001: 100) in the radical politics of Freire, conservatives may have had sinister reasons to take on participation. Hailey's point suggests the possibility that participatory technologies were adopted by the political right as a means to suppress the radical and perhaps threatening ideas of Freire by creating a middle-ground for "participation" to occur without actually challenging the status quo. This in turn, would satisfy leftists (such as freedom fighters and radical Marxists) that participation was actually taking place, without having "any radical engagement in social and political restructuring" (Hailey 2001: 100).

Similarly, Cooke and Kothari point out that "an emphasis on the micro level of intervention can obscure, and indeed sustain, broader macro level inequalities and injustice"

(2001: 14). According to this view, there may be problems with participatory development in itself. Even if the project is as efficient and effective as possible, it still may not be good enough since the development project has not changed the overarching economic and political structures that shape these people's lives in various ways. Cooke and Kothari add, in their book entitled Participation: The New Tyranny (2001), that it is insufficient to say that the problem of participation is with its methods or techniques. Rather, they argue, it is the more complex problem of the politics of the discourse that must be considered.

The question they then pose is: "Has the constant methodological revisionism to which some of us have contributed (e.g. Cook: 1998), obscured the more fundamental problems within the discourse, and whether internal critiques have served to legitimize the participatory project rather than present it with a real challenge" (Cooke and Kothari 2001: 7)? This outlook can be compared to the notion of giving away food at a soup kitchen. In this way, one could argue that donors are made to feel good about what they are doing because they have found at least a temporary solution to the people's hunger. But, one might ask, have the structures been changed so that these people will now have some livelihood by which they can afford to supply their own food for themselves, or do these people still remain powerless? As alluded to in to the above, the same *type* of question can be asked for a given development project. The underlying question then becomes: To what extent do development projects actually contribute to hiding the root causes of powerlessness and overall distribution? Cooke and Kothari go further to ask the question, "how many such concerns need to be raised before participatory development itself comes to be seen as the real problem" (2001: 7)?

However, these same theorists (Cooke and Kothari 2001) who are so critical of participation still remain quite optimistic. While they admit that participatory development projects may contribute to the masking of structural problems such as oppression and inequality, they also believe that there are positive points such as sharing of ideas and knowledge, democratic decision-making and policy change from the bottom up, which should not be ignored. Indeed, one of the possibilities is that public policies can be made better for groups of people through participatory methods and approaches. By attempting to come to an

understanding of what communities want, we can combine our ideas in solidarity with them to devise a solution that may impact people's lives in a positive way.[4]

A further issue about participation should also be noted here in relation to participation being seen as an end in itself. As has been discussed, despite the widespread acceptance that participation of the beneficiaries on a project is a good thing in general to promote on any given development project, participation does not actually always lead to positive results for those beneficiaries. Likewise, a lack of participation does not necessarily lead to a negative result. Some argue that regardless of positive or negative *results*, participation may be seen as being necessary as a human right for all in itself. Under a rights-based approach, Ferguson argues that participation provides "a means of strengthening the ability of vulnerable groups to claim social, political and economic resources to meet their needs" (1999: 7 in Cornwall 2000: 67). She claims that the political right to participate is as important as other civil and economic rights. She argues that people cannot realize other rights, such as the right to education, unless they have been involved in an integral part of the decision-making processes that brought about that education (Ferguson 1999 in Cornwall 2000: 67).

With this in mind, let us say that a given development project entailed no participation of the actual people who were supposedly benefiting from the project. And further, let us say that these people were moved forcibly out of their homes to other areas outside of their home community. When researchers came to investigate whether their situation had improved as a result of the development project, they found that they were better off now than they were before they moved by the project. Perhaps their move out of their homes enabled opportunities for a new livelihood and for their children to now attend a better school. Maybe they also have access to cleaner water and will live a longer life as a result. Given the above framework, that participation is a necessary human right for all, this situation may still prove to be a negative one because their human right to participate in a decision that directly affected their lives was clearly violated.

[4] Whether or not outsiders such as academics or professionals can develop communities is of particular significance when we look at post-development theory which points out that the only way for a community to develop is through its own ideas. Which ideas should we impose on or discuss with the community, if any? As discussed previously, there is also a problem of whether or not the community and developers can meet on equal grounds to discuss possible interventions since there is an inherent power difference between the two. Moreover, if the community can only develop on its own (with no outsider intervention), the question must be asked: Why *hasn't* the community developed on its own?

If we see participation as a necessary means to an end or end in itself (if we do not dismiss participation altogether) a more critical question regarding power relations becomes: Does a focus on techniques and methods of participation mask other fundamental power relations between beneficiaries and developers and also the more and less powerful within a community? I give attention to these issues next.

2.5 Power Relations at the Development Project Level

Many researchers (Chambers 1997, Woost 2002, Furgeson 1994) focus on the power relationship between the beneficiaries and the developers of a project. Woost recently examined the role of participation in a number of development projects in Sri Lanka. He pointed out that "the many different players in the Sri Lankan development game – NGO employees, governmental officials, villagers – clearly have different categorical interests" (Woost 2002:110). He states that because of these differences there are struggles among these various positions over the very definition of what participation means and hence what the project's goals are. He says further that since some of these positions have more power than others, the idea of a bottom-up or democratic approach is undermined along with the project itself. Woost seems to imply that the disjuncture of interests and understandings of what a given project's goals are among all groups of stakeholders in the development context is necessarily always the case.

Moreover, Chambers' use of dichotomies (1997) such as local/expert knowledge, insider/outsider, peripheral/central and his placement of moral value on *local* knowledge may lead some to the conclusion that what the community thinks is automatically good, and what the developer thinks is necessarily bad. However, by ignoring the fact that communities are heterogeneous, *intra-community* power relations may become masked (Kothari 2001). Kothari makes this point clear:

> The almost exclusive focus on the micro-level, on people who are considered powerless and marginal, has reproduced the simplistic notion that the sites of social power and control are to be found solely at the macro and central levels. These dichotomies further strengthen

> the assumption that people who wield power are located at institutional centres, while those who are subjugated and subjected to power are to be found at the local or regional level. Hence the valorization of 'local knowledge' and the continued belief in the empowerment of 'local' people through participation (Kothari 2001: 140).

Woost (2002) points out that developers *outside* of the community have different interests and more power than those beneficiaries *within* the community (thus undermining the goal of bottom-up approaches). Kothari discusses this same idea (that those in power will have their interests take over); however, the main difference is that she is analyzing power relations *within* the community rather than between developers and beneficiaries. She seems to imply that because there are groups within the community with separate interests and more power than others, the idea of empowering the poorest on a development project is essentially undermined. Specifically, Kothari argues:

> That participatory development can encourage a reassertion of control and power by dominant individuals and groups, that it can lead to the reification of social norms through self-surveillance and consensus building, and that it 'purifies' knowledge and the spaces of participation through the codification, classification, and control of information, and its analysis and (re)presentation (Kothari 2002: 142).

In this way, those who are already marginalized within a community may become further disempowered by a participatory development project. In a Participatory Learning and Analysis study done by Pottier and Orone in Eastern Uganda, they note the absence of very poor villagers in their participatory research. They state, "with hindsight, it seems the very poor had not been invited by the sub-chief through whom invitations had been sent, quite simply because their presence was not deemed necessary" (Pottier 1995: 4).

Even if the poor did *attend* a given development forum, as Hildyard points out, "many participatory projects rest on the dubious assumption that simply identifying different "stakeholders" and getting them around the table will result in a consensus being reached that is 'fair' to all. He goes on, "facilitating measures may be important in negotiations, but they are not enough to grant marginal groups the bargaining power they require to overcome the structural dominance enjoyed by more powerful groups." (2001: 69) Indeed, while it is not

always the case, if a poor individual chose to attend a development forum, he/she might lack the necessary education, articulation, or organizational skills that would permit his/her interests to be taken into consideration. It is probable, on the other hand, that those making decisions in a given community about what should happen on a development project would be representative of the most powerful, the wealthy and the articulate within the community.[5]

This issue of power relations within a given community in which a project is being implemented leads us to the problem of defining what a community is. Developers often overlook poor and less powerful people due to the fact that the latter may view the community being developed in a monolithic manner. The fact that some members of the community will be satisfied with what a given development has to offer and others will outright resist it raises the idea that what is justified as community participation by some may be regarded as marginalization by others. Therefore, what is counted as the "community" in the context of development must be reconsidered as researchers such as Guijt and Shah have in their book entitled The Myth of the Community (1998). They point out that,

> In many cases where participation has been pursued something is going wrong. Despite the stated intentions of social inclusion, it has become clear that many participatory development initiatives do not deal well with the complexity of community differences, including age, economic, religious, caste, ethnic and, in particular, gender. Looking back, it is apparent that 'community' has often been viewed naively, or in practice dealt with, as an harmonious and internally equitable collective. Too often there has been an inadequate understanding of the internal dynamics and differences, that are so crucial to positive outcomes. This mythical notion of community cohesion continues to permeate much participatory work, hiding a bias that favors the opinions and priorities of those with more power and the ability to voice themselves publicly (Guijt and Shah 1998: 1).

[5] As a side note, it should be pointed out here that some individuals and organizations *do* make an attempt to *explicitly* include the poor in the development process. For example, Nelson and Wright point out that "there needs to be communication channels, which facilitate participation enabling those with least access to decision-making to be heard. They may want and need to be targeted separately, as well as receive training in communication" (1995: 1999). Moreover, in a book published by the World Bank entitled Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us, they gather the voices of 40,000 poor people throughout 50 countries to help contribute to an understanding of what the poor value in their lives. "Using participatory and qualitative research methods, the study presents very directly, through poor people's own voices, the realities of their lives" (Narayan 2000 : ix). Despite valiant efforts, getting poor people's voices heard on the stage of the development project is, as alluded to above, an arduous task.

Developers often ascribe to the myth that a community is always looking out for the best interests of everyone within it. However, for developers to say that the community is homogenous, and to fail to address power relations and conflicting interests within the community, is to go against part of the basis of which participatory development is meant to facilitate, empowerment of the poorest. As Kothari points out, this leads to a tendency to focus on the power relationship between the developer and beneficiary thus masking the local power relations on a micro level within the community (Kothari: 2002 175-177).

Kothari adds that because local knowledge within a given community is thought of as an unambiguous knowledge (by developers), this leaves power relations within the community unquestioned and thus they remain unchallenged. She goes further to inform us that, "by not recognizing that knowledge is produced out of power relations in society and through practitioners' acceptance of 'local knowledge' as some kind of objective truth, participatory methodologies are in danger of reifying these inequalities and of affirming the agenda of elites and more powerful groups."(Kothari 2002: 146). Woodhouse even goes so far as to argue that, "the more participatory the inquiry, the more its outcome will mask the power structure of the community" (1998: 144).

2.6 Empowerment

The issue of empowerment (and its root *power*) within a community and between developers and beneficiaries is embodied in discussions regarding people's participation in a given development project. The word 'empowerment' is regarded in a similar way as participation in development discourse. Like participation, empowerment has often become another buzzword that sounds great to donors in project plans but rarely gets carried out in practice. Moreover, participation is often seen as a word that is synonymous with people's participation. However, especially due to the wide array of ways that participation is used, empowerment does not necessarily come about as a result of people participating in a given development project. Indeed, it would not make sense for one to conclude that people were

empowered on a development project simply because they *participated* in doing what project consultants told them to do.

Exactly what is meant by empowerment is a complicated question in itself and has often become simplified in development discourse and practice. Rather than having to do with the obtaining of power by a group or individual, Oakley points out that, "the term 'empowering' has come to be very loosely used to describe any development project, process or activities which might have some impact on people's abilities to relate to different political and administrative systems; to skills training, management techniques, organizational abilities and so on" (1995: 6 in Cornwall 2002: 32).

However, if it is the case that empowerment takes on the meaning of an individual gaining power in his/her life, the question then becomes: can one person gain power without another *losing* power. In a journal article entitled "Empowerment: What is it?" Page and Czuba point out, "understanding power as zero-sum, as something that you get at my expense, cuts most of us off from power. A zero-sum conception of power means that power will remain in the hands of the powerful unless they give it up" (1999: 2). However, if the term is understood to describe the poor's ability to be empowered to make decisions that will effect their lives, this may not *necessarily* mean that their gain in power will result in another's disempowerment.

In both instances the question of whether or not anyone can be empowered by someone else, in this case "developers," becomes a critical issue. This brings us back to the critical function of participation on a development project. Page and Czuba discuss this idea, "while we cannot give people power and we cannot make them 'empowered,' we can provide the opportunities, resources and support that they need to become involved themselves" (1995: 5). In this way, the developers' role is to facilitate the empowerment of the beneficiaries by enabling them to participate in their own development.

But is it that easy? It sounds nice to simply say that we are facilitating those with the least to gain more power in their situation, but does this actually work out in practice even for those developers who have the best intentions? Henkel and Stirrat "suggest that what the new

orthodoxy boldly calls 'empowerment' might be in effect very similar to what Michael Foucault (1980) calls 'subjection." (2001: 178-9). Henkel and Stirrat go on to conclude that since participation and empowerment are ideas of those who are in power and 'modern,' they are "intimately part of the modernization process itself" (2001: 182). It is in this way that beneficiaries may be *subjugated* (as opposed to *empowered)* to the ideals of those in power.

2.7 Conclusion

As has been alluded to throughout various parts of this paper so far, participation is an extremely ambiguous concept. Thus, if someone simply points out to us that there is participation on a given development project, we are left with a multitude of questions, as discussed above, and in fact know very little (if anything) about the actual involvement of the beneficiaries on the project. We then looked at what the "best" kind of participation might be pointing out that full participation is not always feasible or desirable.

We have also discussed how the bottom up approach of participation attempts to make dents in the uneven relationship between beneficiaries and developers involved on a project. We then analyzed how a change in this relationship may be structurally impossible to achieve. Some (Woost 2002, Furgeson 1994) go so far as to imply that the interests of the beneficiaries will never be the ones that are addressed when the development process is actually taking place. Moreover, we have looked at how the power issues involved in participatory development can have a particular (often negative) effect on already marginalized groups such as those who are displaced from their homes as part of the development process. Perhaps, most importantly, we have seen that the very notion of participation in itself can be questioned.

If participation is to be used everywhere and for the development of everyone, it is thus to be seen as an end *in itself*. But one might then ask oneself, should this be the case if participation actually often ends up contributing to the inhibiting of progress, and at the same time fails to achieve its goal of empowering those with the least? Despite efforts to do the

opposite, elites end up exercising power while poor people become further marginalized in a spiral that leads to more secure positions to those who are in power. Should we emphasize the participation of (marginal) minorities if their development gets in the way of the majority? As pointed out in the section on the heterogeneous community, decisions have to be made that at least some in a given region will disagree with**.** I have also noted that participation can cost significantly more time and money, two critical factors on any development project.

Finally, if we see that a community is "participating" in development we no longer concern ourselves with issues that are overarching: structural powerlessness and poverty. Indeed, participation has lost its radical roots that it once had in the 1970's. In this way, participation is a Band-Aid, simply there to cover up a wound that will become reopened again and again. Might we thus drop the notion of participation altogether or can it be reformed so that it contributes to stitching the wounds that plague hundreds of millions of powerless people throughout the world? The question that begs an answer has become: When can we say that there has been enough participation?

Chapter 3 – South African Policy Framework

3.1 Participation in the context of South Africa

Under the apartheid regime, the needs of the majority were defined by the state. Without resistance to the state, the majority never would have won political representation. The apartheid government attempted to silence this resistance in a strategic way in order to maintain power and governance over the state. As Swilling points out, The Winning Hearts and Mind Strategy (WHAM) of the nationalist government during apartheid:

> Was premised on the assumption that the black majority was more interested in urban services than in democracy. It followed that the state needed to meet a range of urban demands for services, land, and housing if the political demands for a majoritarian state were to be deflected. In other words, urban citizenship was conceded on condition this was accepted by the black majority as a substitute for political citizenship. Significantly, this strategy was based on the assumption that the urban social movements were politically inspired and would disappear if urban demands were (partly) met and the liberation movements suppressed (1991: XI).

Swilling informs us further that the apartheid government's WHAM approach (discussed above) failed as a result of the masses demand for political citizenship (1991: XI). As will be explained, the black population never allowed the apartheid state to take complete control over the nation. Smith pointed out that,

> Poor people are making their own cities, not necessarily in conditions of their own choosing but increasingly defying the ability of the state to mould them to its own order…Urbanization, under apartheid, no matter how carefully the state continued to control it, has undermined apartheid itself, bringing South African society and its cities to the brink of significant, if still uncertain, change (1992: 8).

Drawing from his direct involvement and leadership in Alexandra, Mayekiso (1996) discusses his perspective and experience of the community involvement that was taking place during the 1980's and early 1990's. He declares that the most important part of the Alexandra

Action Committee (AAC), the central civic organization in Alexandra at the time, was the consultation with the people in Alexandra so that development could happen from the ground up. What they planned to do was,

> Seek out, through discipline, democracy and accountability, the alternatives to apartheid. This involved assessing how much power we had to challenge the very basis of the regime, and to build new organs of people's power such as the embryonic structures of the AAC, people's courts, economic and political development institutions (Mayekiso 50: 1996).

These structures were not meant to be temporary, they were meant to empower people in the long run so that eventually, the top-down mechanisms of *apartheid* would be replaced. Mayekiso and other supporters went on to argue that development was *not possible*, unless the people affected were included, in other words *participating,* in the process of development (Mayekiso: 1996).

Smith gives further evidence of people's opposition (and thus participation) *against* the apartheid state:

> Structure could be modified… But never made subservient. New spacial forms became the locus of struggle, as black people sought control over their immediate environment even if denied broader political participation. The informal process of settlement, with people explicitly denying their allotted space, contributed significantly to the erosion of the apartheid social order (1992: 9).

Bottom-up approaches within communities were therefore central to the struggle against apartheid. Perhaps the activities of civic organizations and people's movements, such as those above, are evidence that the state can never completely overtake a country, that their will always be action and organization from below that effects the state. It can be argued that any shift away from people-centered development would lie in contrast with the struggle for the liberation of the majority, meant to empower the masses to make developmental decisions of their own.

The above participatory culture embedded in the internal anti-apartheid struggle informed the broad agenda of post-apartheid South African policy. It places much emphasis on participation. For example, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was

the ANC's outline for the new development of South Africa. It emphasized the need for community participation in the development process stating that,

> Above all, the people affected must participate in decision-making. Democratization must begin to transform both the state and civil society. Democracy is not confined to periodic elections. It is, rather, an active process enabling everyone to contribute to reconstruction and development (1994: 7).

Furthermore, the RDP places specific stress on the empowerment of the poor. It states that:

> The central objective of our RDP is to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, and in particular the most poor and marginalized sections of our communities. This objective should be realized through a process of empowerment which gives the poor control over their lives and increases their ability to mobilize sufficient development resources, including from the democratic government where necessary (1994: 15).

With the above given, it should be clear that the introduction of the new democratic order in South Africa in 1994 brought much overall emphasis on the participation of those affected in the development process. However, a closer look at the RDP leads to the realization that while the RDP sounds like the perfect programme that continues to stress the bottom-up participation of the previously disadvantaged majority, it may actually be difficult or impossible to implement in practice.[1] Thus, the Growth, Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) policy papers were introduced in 1996 as a practical way of employing the RDP. While GEAR policy maintained a rhetorical commitment by officials to participation, in practice participation was no longer viewed as a priority. In fact, it is generally accepted that with the introduction of GEAR, there was a shift away from goals of participation in the country, despite the fact that bottom-up approaches including social movements were central to bringing apartheid to an end. Some argue (See Bond 2002) that GEAR's entrenchment in

[1] It should be pointed out here that analysts and policy-makers such as Bond argued that the RDP, given the circumstances of the country, was *not* unfeasible or unrealistic (Elite Transition 2001: 4). Moreover, I will argue later that people must participate in development decisions that effect their lives in a truly substantial way for poverty to be addressed in the new South Africa.

neoliberal policy meant profits (markets) over people (participation), thus emphasizing overall growth of the economy and especially of big businesses, over the basic needs of individuals.

As Bond notes, "especially since Mbeki's African National Congress (ANC) took state power in May 1994, prospect for reconciling wealth and poverty here in Johannesburg, and across the African continent, had faded" (Bond 2002: 3-4). He claims that this is a result of privatization and the turn to neo-liberal policies. Bond informs us further that as long as Johannesburg continues to support a neo-liberal outlook for the city's development, it will continue to be unsustainable and only benefit the minority, in ways that are similar to how it did during apartheid. Except, he argues, the difference is that instead of well-being being divided along racial lines, it will be divided along class lines, or as he terms it, 'class apartheid' (Bond 2002).[2]

Since GEAR is designed around neo-liberal policy and neo-liberalism's first priority is economic growth, then in accordance with the RDP, the question the South African government should have dealt with is: Will GEAR inhibit democracy in the country from taking place in a way that the RDP describes as "an active process enabling everyone to contribute to reconstruction and development" (ANC 1994: 7)? Under a neo-liberal framework, economic growth is seen as a developmental end in itself. Therefore, other developmental goals are undermined. Under this framework, the means to achieve this end (economic growth) is not seen as important. Therefore, development is reduced from involving people in coming up with what they believe to be development, to numbers on a chart that represent growth in per capita income. This economic view is a narrow one that does not account for the needs and aspirations of the people and therefore does not allow for substantial participation. It should thus be clear that under neo-liberal policy, development practitioners hold the answers to what development is rather than the South African people themselves. Moreover, democracy and participation of the people are limited since the people cannot, under this framework, vote against markets or against the supposed necessity of

[2] Commenting on the neo-liberal policy of GEAR, Lodge contrasts with that viewpoint by saying that "Privatization measures might promote efficiency, affirmative action, and in general 'empower the historically oppressed'" (Lodge 2002: 55).

achieving economic growth. Clearly then, the shift to GEAR (neo-liberal) policy runs contrary to a South African government that emphasizes participatory development.

While the above social movements appear to show that participation is necessary for development to take place, a state-centric viewpoint might say that 'locals' need only to be *represented*, that too much participation might actually end up slowing down development. Mugyeni points out that underdeveloped countries should "adopt a minimalist democratic stance and put the greater emphasis on development" (1988: 10). This is seen to be preferable since it is virtually impossible to have full participation to begin with. Moreover, for a country to move forward developmentally, the above author argues that its policies must be headed in one direction, leaving less room for full participation or maximum democracy to take place. The question that becomes critical thus becomes: Is people's (local) knowledge necessary and can participation actually retard development? Given the historical context of South Africa, the answer to that question might not be significant, as discussed above, since people's participation was necessary for the overthrow of the apartheid state.

But, has the difficulty in defining a target after the demise of apartheid and into the rise of a new and democratic South Africa created a situation in which the masses, who continue to be exploited in often the same way as they had been previously during apartheid, have become tamed? If the people are *not* tamed, and the state is unjust to the majority, then will they not continue to fight against the state in the same way that they did during apartheid? During apartheid, the target was clear: Overcome apartheid's white minority rule so that the masses could lead the country. Currently however, it may be unclear as to just who or what the target has become in South Africa[3] (Mayekiso: 2003). With an ANC ideology that supposedly seeks to 'create jobs and fight poverty', what is there for the masses to fight against in South Africa today? Critics of the centrality of markets such as Bond and social movements such as COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Union) and APF (Anti-

[3] "As Castells (1983) argues, social movements develop to address specific social issues, and then find it difficult to sustain themselves once the issues are no longer relevant or have been addressed… Civic organizations must, in effect, identify new issues around which to organize, and must frequently analyze their relevance and objectively scrutinize organizational programmes that may no longer be useful to sustain" (In mayekiso 2003: 70). In line with this framework, it is necessary for the new social movements in South Africa to define a clear and worthwhile target that can be addressed in a sustainable way, if social movements are not to disappear.

Privatization Forum), identify the neo-liberal economy as the target that must be shot at if problems are to be overcome. If the current government is not based on the will of the people, "will these conditions lead to the kinds of dramatic breakthroughs that were last witnessed a decade earlier, when urban social movements were instrumental in dislodging municipal-scale and indeed national scale apartheid" (Bond 2003: 24)?

In 1996, Mayekiso pointed out that we had no guarantee that the new democratic regime would be any more participatory than the apartheid regime. This makes the role of the social movement ever more critical. If the people effected by development are not consulted in the current South African democracy, then it is extremely important that the social movement is able to challenge and, if necessary, change decisions made by the state. Therefore they help to ensure that the state is governing through the will of the people. Mayekiso makes it clear that, "since social movement organizations were central in the destruction of the apartheid system, it goes without saying that they are and should be central to developing the new democratic city" (2003: 58). The question that becomes significant in the context of South Africa is: What possibility does the majority in South Africa have of participating, of having their voices make an impact on development decisions that effect their lives? Moreover, in line with the RDP's policy focus that is meant to empower the historically oppressed, my case study is meant to test: To what extent are poor people further disempowered through participatory processes on the project? The following section will make use of international literature in order to explain how the key theory that I am testing relates to my case study of the people displaced from the Jukskei by the ARP.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The ADF is the main participatory mechanism of the ARP. The ADF is representative of community organizations in Alexandra. According to the ARP website, "the objective of the Alexandra Development Forum is to ensure that the Alexandra Renewal Project is implemented in a manner that is acceptable to and takes account of the needs of the residents of Alexandra." This is *meant* to enable those community organizations involved to have some

say in what happens with the ARP, or at least, to be aware of the projects that are to be implemented by the ARP. However, the ARP is responsible to the provincial government who runs the projects. Since ARP consultants are employed by the government to implement projects and the government has it's own agenda outside of the ARP and ADF, it is arguable that consultants must implement projects that the government has advised. It may be debated that this is despite what the Alexandra community or ADF thinks. Therefore, the ADF has little decision-making power over the decision to implement a given development project. In turn, rather than the Alexandra community informing what development should be for them, outsider consultants (despite their unfamiliarity with the community) are employed to make sure that *government* programmes are implemented.

In relation to my research, the ADF may or may not be a means by which the powerful in the community control and exclude the less powerful from the development process. If it is, the project may be empowering the already powerful to be making decisions that further exclude those whom the project is actually meant to help, the poor and powerless. Hildyard argues, "a participation that fails to engage with the distributions and operations of power within local communities and the wider society in which they live is likely to offer little to marginalized groups" (2001: 68-9).

This case study is *testing* Kothari's above theory which basically says that because there are groups within the community with separate interests and more power than others, the idea of empowering or securing participation of the poorest on a development project is essentially undermined. Kothari adds that because local knowledge within a given community is thought of as an unambiguous knowledge (by developers), this leaves power relations within the community unquestioned and thus unchallenged. She goes further to inform us that, "by not recognizing that knowledge is produced out of power relations in society and through practitioners' acceptance of 'local knowledge' as some kind of objective truth, participatory methodologies are in danger of reifying these inequalities and of affirming the agenda of elites and more powerful groups."(Kothari 2001: 146). Does the same theory apply to the ARP? If so, it makes sense that we look at how this happened despite interests to empower the poor.

It is important to point out here that there is no situation in which the powerful will *automatically* dominate and undermine any participation by less powerful groups. This is evident not only in the liberation struggle of the majority against the minority during apartheid in South Africa(discussed above), but also in the people's resistance along the Jukskei as a form of participation. Therefore, when power relations are left *unquestioned* by developers, consultants, and members of the community, this does not mean that they remain *unchallenged*. Under certain forms of participation, however, the *outcome* usually ends up being that which the more powerful had in mind. This occurs despite struggles brought about by the less powerful. The key point of this research is to try to explain *why* the poor were disempowered or empowered by participatory processes on the ARP.

Cleaver points out a discontent with the current base of knowledge on this topic by stating that "further empirical evidence and analysis is needed of whether and how the structure of participatory projects include/protect/secure the interests of poor people" (2001: 54). If it is the case that the marginalized become further disempowered by the participatory processes of the project, we must look at *how* the good intentions of empowering the poorest were lost in the development process. If the case is the opposite, practitioners and academics can look at *how* the ARP was able to achieve participation and empowerment from the poorest despite the above difficulties with including them in the development process.

Michael Cernea points out that one of the main reasons why there is an under-treatment of impoverishment risks for displaced persons (and thus an increase of actual impoverishment among effected groups) is "the absence of genuine consultation and involvement of the affected populations" (Cernea 2000: 45). Since there initially was great resistance by many of those being displaced from their homes and relocated to Diepsloot and Bramfischerville, this might lead one to conclude that the process of removing these people out of their homes was one that entailed little community involvement. Cernea discusses this issue in the following:

> Breakdowns in information and communication tend to result in 'reverse participation,' that is, in active opposition movements against development programs. The ill-advised position taken by some agencies, which maintain an information embargo about likely displacements and resettlers' entitlements, virtually guarantees such opposition. Withholding information, instead of participation and transparency, is often "justified" by

> officials to prevent panic and stress. In fact, however, this is deceptive and self-defeating. It preempts the early mobilization of resettlers in the reconstruction of their own livelihoods. Their energy is an exceptionally important factor, which even the resettlement literature has seldom highlighted (2000: 52).

Some of the resettlers claimed that they were not consulted at all. One of them claimed, "they are forcing us to move. They did not even give us any notice and the new place they are taking us to does not have water or toilets" (Sapa 2001: 3). Moreover, there was some confusion as to where the resettlers would be moved. Many agreed to move not realizing that meant leaving Alexandra entirely. In relation to these issues, Cernea comments, "Resettlers must receive information in a timely and transparent manner, understand well the impending displacement, and overcome disbelief or the tendency to denial" (Cernea 2000: 52).

Chapter 4 – The leadership perspective of participation on the ARP

4.1 The Ambiguity of Participation on the ARP

While participation is not always an explicit goal for development projects, participation is viewed as one of the major goals in the implementation of the Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP). Paul Mashatile, the former MEC for housing says, in an excerpt on the ARP official website regarding community involvement, "I and the project team are committed to ensuring that the project is implemented quickly and fairly, in a way in which all stakeholders are heard and accommodated where possible." But rather than tell us exactly how the community should be participating, the above quote and the ARP website as a whole makes no attempt to communicate the kind of participation that is meant to occur on the ARP.

While the official or leadership perspectives are not in full agreement as to what kind of participation should occur when making development decisions in Alexandra, consultation or informing are most commonly referred to as the level of participation that must and is taking place in Alexandra. Keith Khoza, who was responsible for communication within the department of housing which is responsible for the ARP, describes the position of the ARP:

> All development projects in Alexandra must be based on the consent of the community because it is the community that is going to benefit from the development. So the structures, in terms of how they were put together were designed in such a way that there is constant consultation within the community to make sure that there is approval to what will be presented as development projects… We have learned that it is important to consult at each phase of development so that people should consciously commit to abide by decisions brought about by the need for development. [1]

One critical issue in regards to the above quote is whether consent or constant consultation is the type of participation that is to occur on the ARP. While the two may overlap at times, it is clear that these two types involve a different level of participation from the people.

[1] Interview with Keith Khoza: 2004

Given the two different perspectives held by this one leader, it appears that this is an example of a contradiction and tension held within his own mind. What then can we say about participation as a result of this? If leaders are the ones who largely determine the level of participation of the people, this contradiction may have an effect on people's participation in general. I argue that participation on the ARP is usually at a minimum, in the form of informing and that consultation (also a weak form of participation) does not take place in any substantial way.

In fact, according to Khoza, it is development that appears to be "deciding" what programmes in Alexandra should be. This depersonalizes the decision-making processes making it appear that it is neither the wider "community" that is making the decisions, nor the leaders of the ARP. In this case, the question then becomes: Who is it that decides what *development* is? In other words, who formulates the plans? It is the leaders, within this perspective, that determine what development is, and it is therefore the leaders who decide what projects should and should not exist on the ARP. However we wish to describe 'them' – leaders, decisions-makers, developers – are *considered* by the leaders to be the patrons and the broader community is *supposedly* the clients.

Within this framework there is hardly any participation that is taking place by the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries are expected to be informed about the development that has been decided upon without them, and accept it as legitimate and good for them. Rather than development being brought about by the needs of the people, the state or the experts view of development is *imposed*.[2] In this way development has become what 'we' (the development experts) can do for 'them' (the beneficiaries).

[2] Despite the fact that "developers" do not always develop, that "beneficiaries" do not always benefit from a given development project, and that "development" itself may have separate meanings to different groups of people, I have left the titles of beneficiaries, developers and development out of quotations through this essay. In this essay, "Beneficiary" means the stakeholders who are supposedly benefiting on the development project. "Developer," on the other hand, means the stakeholders who are supposedly facilitating the development of the beneficiaries on the development project. Finally, "development" will be discussed acknowledging that any idea of "development" draws on an assumption about what is good for society. Policy or practice then falls in place after that judgement is made.

Sizakele Nkosi, member of the Metro Council and chairperson of housing for the ARP during the time of the Jukskei removals, verifies that simply informing citizens of the development intervention that is affecting them is an acceptable and sufficient degree of participation on the ARP. When asked about whether the people removed from the Jukskei participated properly in the removal process, she commented that since "people were actually *informed* of where they were going to be relocated to"[3] then participation was complete. She said further about participatory meetings of the ARP that:

> The most important ones that we had were public meetings where we informed communities that they were going to be relocated or that they were going to be affected by the ARP. We also organized debates at the Alex fm on a weekly basis. I also got involved with radio interviews at Alex FM just to inform people of how they were actually going to be effected. We also distributed pamphlets informing people that they were going to be effected or relocated because of the ARP.

With what can be described as a weak form of participation, the leaders planned to inform the people of the development intervention that was taking place. Arnstein comments about how consultation, as a form of participation, can play out in practice. Consultation

> offers no assurance that citizen participation and ideas will be taken into account… What citizens achieve in all this activity is that they have 'participated in participation.' And what power holders achieve is the evidence that they have gone through the required motions of involving those people (Arnstein 1970: 219).

The Alexandra Development Forum (ADF) is the best example that can be used to elaborate on the kind of consultation taking place on the ARP. The ADF is the main mechanism by which the ARP facilitates community involvement/ participation in order to ensure that the voices of the community members in Alexandra Township are heard. Any community, non-governmental organization or stakeholder operating within the greater Alexandra area can attend the ADF. According to Thabo Mopasi, NGO's, CBO's and members of political organizations that attend ADF meetings regularly, anyone is allowed to

[3] Interview with Sizakele Nkosi: 2004, my emphasis

speak out and communicate to the ADF leaders what they wish at a given meeting.[4] The forum meets on a monthly basis (The executive committee meets weekly.) as an oversight body designed to ensure that the people of Alexandra can decide which projects they want and do not want to implement. Paul Mashatile of the MEC for Housing discusses the importance of the forum in the following: "The community is represented in the ADF so that we don't do what we think is right for the community, but do what the community thinks is right for them" (Mashatile 2004: ARP video). The ADF does not have full power over what the ARP can or must do. The ARP official website explains this matter by stating that "The Alexandra Renewal Project will not be bound by the decisions of the Alexandra Development Forum, but will take such decisions seriously and will make all efforts to meet such decisions."

This last point is particularly significant. After all, what is the point of having a development forum that is meant to represent the interests of the community, if it does not have any real decision-making power? I raised this very issue to two key leaders of the ADF. The first is Benito Lekalakala, head of the ADF and also a key leader in the ANC. The ARP's relationship with the ANC appears to hinder the stronger forms of participation that leaders such as Lekalakala advocate. While he says, "broader community participation and involvement in these projects is central and critical" and that "for any development to take place it has to have the community buy in", he seems to recognize an apparent glitch in the current system.[5] He states that, "at the end of the day, government implements its programmes."[6] With this statement, he appears to be admitting that the power of the state can and does exert onto the community despite efforts of participation (including through the ADF) outside of the state.

[4] Interview with Thabo Mopasi: 2005

[5] Post-development theory seems at first to match with the kind of points Lekalakala is making. Much like Post-development theorists, Lekalakala acknowledges that development must be locally defined and expressed through popular participation. Indeed, he seems to imply that development can only take place in terms of what the people being developed consider to be development. He seems to have pointed out that if we, as outside experts, impose our own development onto locals, it may not acquiesce with the development of the latter. However, his latter statements such as, "for any development to take place it has to have the community buy in" (interview: 2004), lead us to believe that it is the developers who decide what development is going to take place, while the beneficiaries must simply agree with that development for it to come into being. In other words, the beneficiaries do not come up with development themselves.

[6] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004

Certainly, participation can be a means by which developers legitimise any development project. With the above framework of the ADF, to what extent does consultation on the project exist to lend "credibility and legitimacy to decisions that have already been made" (Hildyard 2001: 59)? Hildyard informs us that,

> Not only does consultation tend to be desultory, but even where meetings are held, the voices of the people rarely appear to be listened to. Local people become a ghostly presence within the planning process – visible, heard even, but ultimately they are only there because there involvement lends credibility and legitimacy to decisions that have already been made (2001: 59)

Hildyard says further that participation may actually be a "means for top-down planning to be imposed from the bottom up" (2001: 59) If this is the case, development may be decided on at the top (by the officials), but legitimated by the people without their actual representation. As Patricia Feeney of Oxfam reports, "although public meetings were held… to tell the community about the project and to listen nominally to their suggestions about planting, nurseries has already been raised and pits dug before any consultation occurred" (1998: 72). Participation, in these cases, may be doing more harm than good, in terms of enabling people to become involved in decision-making that will affect their lives, by allowing developers to dominate local people in a secretive way. It can be described as secretive because people may get the illusion that they are participating, when in fact, they actually have *no* decision-making power. Again, the idea that participation is seen as something that is "benign and liberal" (Kothari 2001: 143) leads one to the conclusion that a participatory intervention should not be challenged despite whether it is legitimate or not. Further studies can be done on the ARP to see whether or not the ADF has ever actually rejected a project decided on by the ARP.

I do not mean to conclude that it is necessarily the case that the ADF has no effect over decisions made by the ARP. One active community member in Alex, Thabo Mopasi, believes that the ADF is able to reject projects initiated by the ARP. He says that,

> The ADF cannot make the ARP implement its position on the spot. It can only advise and coordinate residents of Alex to hear the plans. If they don't want the plans they can reject

> them… Since The ARP Reviewal Summit, the ARP accounts more to the community. This year it is beginning to account to the people, all these years it was not."

This is evidence that the ADF has changed since it's inception. More research needs to be done to show the type of participation that was occurring prior to this summit, as compared to the kind that is occurring presently. Is the ADF more accountable today that it was in the past?

With an extremely pessimistic view of participation, Themba Maluleke, the overall project manager at the time of the Jukskei removals**,** discusses how participation does not and cannot work if development is to take place [7]:

> Some will say, 'get the community to make those decisions', but maybe you guys are still studying… In the real world, it doesn't work. It only worked… When was it? 14AD in the Greek City states because we were only having less than 200 people making a decision on behalf of the city. In today's world, you never get community involvement and it works and it makes decisions and things move… Those are the practical realities.[8]

It can be said that more participatory approaches to development require more time for both beneficiaries and developers of the project. It is much easier, and takes significantly less time, for developers to implement a program in which they come up with the plan and try to implement it than it does to engage the community by coming up with plans in consultation or cooperation with the community (disregarding the notion of handing the project over to them completely). The latter might make it impossible for the project to reach the goals in the original time allotted. For example, the project may be moving along at a slower pace because they have to wait for the community to address the project plans in order to make sure that they are in agreement with them.

In line with this, Maluleke comments that,

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[7] Clearly there is an implicit assumption about development that is made here. Rather than enshrining a primacy of local knowledge and of putting people first as the only way to overcome the outsider or expert bias, and to achieve the development of "locals," Maluleke aligns himself with modernization theory. While modernization theory argues that development can only take place if we rid underdeveloped countries/ communities of their traditions, Maluleke is also suggesting that, if we want development to take place, it is impossible to embrace traditional/ local knowledge through the participation of locals themselves.

[8] Interview with Themba Maluleke: 2004

> For me, you consult as far as it suits your objectives, if it doesn't suit you, why do you do it? You must look at me, I am a private practitioner, I am there to satisfy the needs of my clients, ok? But then when you look at me as a private development practitioner, the issues are very different. Information or knowledge is power. Now, I have yet to see a politician who does not manipulate information. That is because that's a source of power… We use that, anybody uses information to manipulate the general public. You can go up to the US and look at George Bush, he uses Al Qaeda, an entity which is non-existent as it is alive and say Al Qaeda will come and bomb us, people get scared. And they vote for him. But the truth is whether there is an animal called Bin Laden or not… But he uses that, they will vote for him , and he's using that, and he's using it well and he will get re-elected on that basis. Now it's not different from development projects, you use that information, you manipulate it to suit you. The agent is government and the agent is myself who is acting on behalf of government, I do the same thing.[9]

Is participation used as a way to manipulate the public, as Maluleke suggests above? It is a worthwhile point to question whether the ARP, under the veneer of participation, actually silences the public further than they would if no participatory features existed. Kothari suggests,

> That programmes designed to bring the excluded in often result in forms of control that are more difficult to challenge, as they reduce spaces of conflict and are relatively benign and liberal (2001: 143).

Despite these negative viewpoints, participation of the people is viewed as a positive thing on most development projects, including on the ARP. Benito Lekalakala, head of the ADF and a seemingly passionate advocate for community participation in Alexandra, informed me of two different views as to how participation is meant to work within the ARP. Regarding community participation, he said that,

> It would appear that there is a different understanding of what that means between the ADF and the ARP… What the ARP does is that community participation for them is the community reporting back. They (the ARP) will take decisions and then come back and

[9] Ibid

> report having implemented a programme. But for us, community participation and involvement is involvement at the beginning, from conception of a programme to implementation and joint monitoring with the community through community structures.[10]

These two types of participation, although they occur within the same organizational structures and meant to accomplish the same objectives, are completely different.

Lekalakala informed us, in the above, that community participation for the ARP is the ARP reporting back to the community what kind of development they have decided to implement, as discussed by Khoza at the beginning of this section. The ADF's view that Lekalakala discusses, on the other hand, is that the community must participate *fully*, in all aspects of decision-making of a given development programme. The Secretary's report for the ADF by Linda Memela shows a parallel outlook:

> We hope that all of us will re-commit ourselves to ensure *maximum* participation of our community in development, we will do all this by making sure that information that we receive goes back to our constituencies because knowledge is power; if our people our well-informed about development there will be no room for opportunists to mislead them for their own personal gains. (2004: 1, my emphasis)

But what exactly is meant by "full" or "maximum" participation? While the ADF advocates "full" or "maximum" participation, it at the same time uses a similar discourse of consultation as the ARP uses to describe participation on the ARP. For example, Lekalakala says that "what is central as I said is *consultation*"[11] Moreover, Mamela, also comments that the "approach of the ARP is to make sure that whatever they (the ARP) have prioritized, they (the ARP) have *consulted* the community and it is in agreement with the community that this is what we want as a priority"[12]

It is interesting that, two people coming from such different perspectives about the need for community participation can give such similar responses that relate to the idea of

[10] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004
[11] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004, my emphasis.
[12] Interview with Linda Mamela: 2004, my emphasis

consultation on the ARP. For example when Lekalakala pointed out that, "for any development to take place the community has to *buy in.*"[13] In this way it appears that the programmes have already been decided by an official in a way that makes the "beneficiaries" token recipients. Similarly, Maluleke, comments that, "The government, when we talk about community involvement is looking at information sharing so the people *buy in*, in terms of the programmes."[14]

Community participation or consultation, in each of these forms above, is perhaps there only so that the people feel informed as to the development that is taking place in their communities. Along with this interpretation of participation on the ARP is that the people must *approve* the decisions that are made by leaders. Therefore, even the "full" participation advocated by the Lekalakala and Mamela of the ADF may simply be about achieving approval of the community at different phases of a given project.

With the ADF viewpoint lined in the mask of full participation and the acknowledgement that the ADF holds no formal decision-making power over the ARP, the question thus becomes: Is the view of the ADF really any different in practice than what ARP officials such as Khoza and Maluleke have suggested? In the above, I have attempted to show that despite key leaders (such as Mamela and Lekalakala) ways of talking about community participation as something that is substantial, in practice the type of community participation actually occurring on the ARP ends up being one that involves little participation of the intended beneficiaries. In all cases it is the leaders who decide what the development intervention will be, while the greatest input that the community can have is simply whether they will accept the intervention or not.[15] This is the case because participation, even under the most firm advocates and believers in community participation (such as Lekalakala), never goes beyond being discussed or used as a means to an end as opposed to an end in itself.

[13] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004, my emphasis
[14] interview with Themba Maluleke: 2004, my emphasis

[15] As discussed previously in the discussion of the lack of powers of the ADF, the beneficiaries of the ARP may not even be able to determine which projects they want or do not want.

In this view, participation is seen as something that is *practical* because it increases effectiveness, and efficiency of the development intervention. Lekalakala aligns himself with this description when he points out the following:

> Without consultation with the people there would be problems. In the past they were building, developing a park there and there was insufficient consultation with the people, and consequently, there were problems. We had to come in as the ADF in order to intervene so that the program can go ahead. So without community participation, if they insist that they can implement, that development can be stalled. So to avoid that, there has to be meaningful participation.[17]

Mamela reflected a similar view about why community participation is necessary. He comments that without participation,

> Maybe you can find that there is a resistance from people because they will be feeling like they are undermined and all those things. So for every development to go smooth you must have participation from the ground.[18]

In both quotes, participation is simply there to avoid resistance by the people effected by the development intervention. Under the veneer of participation, the entire ADF structure may facilitate the exclusion of people from participating in making decisions that will effect their lives. It appears that people may simply be satisfied that they are participating (although it appears that it is an empty participation since they have little say over decision-making), and the ARP leaders may be using that as a way to keep the beneficiaries calm. The beneficiaries have been convinced that they are participating in their own development, when in fact it is necessarily the case that they officially have little or no decision-making power, as my analysis of the ADF has alluded.

In other words, participation is a means to achieve the development that leaders have imposed on the community. Martinussen points out the consequences of this way of viewing participation:

[17] Interview with Benito Lekalakala
[18] Interview with Linda Mamela

> With a notion of people's participation as primarily a means to development, there is a tendency that strategies are formulated by central decision-makers on behalf of the poor, who are merely drawn into the process afterwards to support the implementation of them. This also implies that the basic needs of the poor are defined by others than themselves (1997: 42).

Beyond seeing participation as a facilitating strategy (as a means to an end), others view participation as having a value on its own (as an end in itself). Some point out that regardless of positive or negative *results*, participation may be seen as being necessary as a human right for all in itself. Under a rights-based approach, Ferguson argues that participation provides "a means of strengthening the ability of vulnerable groups to claim social, political and economic resources to meet their needs" (1999: 7 in Cornwall 2000: 67). She claims that the political right to participate is as important as other civil and economic rights. She argues that people cannot realize other rights, such as the right to education, unless they have been involved in an integral part of the decision-making processes that brought about that education (Ferguson 1999 in Cornwall 2000: 67).

Sen (1999) supports this viewpoint by arguing that individual freedom must be seen as the central focus of development. What kind of freedom does a person have who has no means to put food in his stomach, to heat his house on a cold winter night, or to seek medical attention that will cure his tuberculosis? Without basic necessities, one cannot be free, as Sen puts it (1999), to live the life that one has reason to value. It is those with the least that development must focus on. This freedom, he argues, would enable the individual to participate in making decisions that will effect his or her life. In other words, by participating substantively in making decisions that will effect ones' life, development is achieved. This definition of development and way of using participation clearly puts pressure on the existing status quo, if some individuals are poor and therefore unable to exercise their freedoms. On the other hand, if participation is simply seen as a technical fix (such as on the ARP) it will fail to challenge existing power structures, leaving the poor to get poorer and the rich to get richer. When participation is viewed as a development objective in itself, existing power structures or the status quo may be challenged.

The following section is meant, by use of a case study of people removed from the Jukskei river in Alexandra, to give an in-depth example of how participation on the ARP plays out for a poor group. This is of particular significance since my research focuses on whether this group has become disempowered despite so-called participatory intervention of the ARP. If so, the objectives of the RDP as well as the ARP, to empower the poor and for the historically disadvantaged to participation in making decisions that affect their lives, have been undermined.

4.2 Participation in the Context of the Jukskei removals

The following literature is meant to put issues of displacement into context before introducing the leadership perspective of the Jukskei removals. I will now discuss how the failure to include an already marginalized group in the process of their own development relates specifically to those who are forcibly removed to other areas outside of their community. Indeed, it can be concluded that those who are dislocated to other areas as part of a development project are usually among the poorest in a given community and thus may lack power to influence the development process. Many authors in the development realm (Chambers 1997, Rahnema 1992, Woost 2002) point out that the overall purpose of participation is to increase poor people's ability to make decisions that will effect their lives. But if people are not properly consulted and then forcefully removed out of their homes as part of a development project (to the point where there is resistance by them), it would only make sense to conclude that those people's ability to make decisions are actually being *decreased.* Cernea (2000) points out, "it is correctly argued that participation through consultation with potentially affected people is indispensable for 'resettlement in development mode' " (Bartolome, de Wet, Mander: 1999). Indeed, "As Mairal and Bergua (1996) have convincingly demonstrated, the risk perception of would-be resettlers differs considerably from what technical experts and agencies tend to think about risks resulting from displacement (in Cernea 2000: 51). Resettlers ideas about what they value (in terms of livelihood, community, ect.) will less likely be lost if they are heard by the developers. Many times, it is the case that the displaced strictly lose out and are forced to re-articulate themselves socially into another community as a result of a development decision that they, as a marginalized

group, may not have taken part in at all. As a result, those who are displaced as part of a given development project often end up resisting their removals. Certainly, their resistance may be justified by the fact that they will receive none of the benefits that the development project is meant to offer. Any resistance by these people being removed might lead one to the conclusion that the process of removing these people out of their homes was one that entailed little community involvement.

Not only is taking into account the views of those being displaced an important factor in the participatory nature of a particular group within the development project, but it is also important in regard to the efficiency on the project, because the people may resist if they have not participated in planning. Moreover, if those who are being displaced as part of the development project did not participate in the decision made to remove them, they are likely to be effected in a negative way.

Mike Morkel, a housing coordinator and consultant for the ARP, commented about the removals of people from the Jukskei that,

> I guess people don't always appreciate the necessity of the relocation. They don't appreciate the necessity that the local party is obligated to ensure that the flood plain is not separated. People sometimes don't appreciate that they in fact are endangered at all… I think once the people there appreciated the authority that was sitting in and the provincial authority and so forth, they say look, this is going to happen, and they would just accept what's happened.[19]

Zodwa Tiale, a resident of Alexandra at the time of the Jukskei removals and secretary for the ANC gives further evidence that this type of intervention is occurring on the ARP. She says that,

> The reasons were genuine and I think the reasons were correct that people should be removed. Because the conditions there were definitely not good for human beings to be living there. I mean sometimes when it rained there would be floods and kids and the

[19] Interview with Mike Morkel: 2004

> furniture and everything would be taken by the water. So I think they were done a good favor, a very big one as well. [20]

It is difficult to make any argument that these people should not have been relocated from the Jukskei river due to the conditions that they were living in as a result of both the environmentally degrading conditions of the river, and the flooding that was occurring into people's homes there**.** Both Tiale and Morkel, therefore say that the people effected by the development of the ARP should (in Morkel's words) *appreciate* what they are doing for them. And (in Tiale's words) they "were done a good favor, a very big one as well." This is further evidence of a supposed patron/client relationship between the ARP and the state. Disregarding any viewpoints of those effected by the removals, both Tiale and Morkel seem to be asking: How could they (those displaced) not support the development that has been given to them by the ARP? While Tiale, is secretary of the ANC, Morkel comes for a conservative background as a previous member of the Urban Foundation. They seem to be asking the same question, having similar approaches to development, despite the fact that they come from these very different backgrounds.

The other problem becomes when the leaders making decisions assume that just because the developmental intervention should take place (i.e. the people should be moved off the Jukskei), that those people being effected should not participate in the decision-making processes that will affect their lives. The fact that they were going to be removed did not necessarily mean that they could not take part in deciding how, when, and where they would be moved. For example, Tiale commented about whether the people who were removed from the Jukskei got a chance to speak out about what they wanted in terms of where they should be removed or what should happen to them. She said:

> Even if they had a choice to say whatever… Because I mean the conditions where they were in at the time compelled the government or the ARP to remove them from those conditions because they were not humane.[21]

[20] Interview with Zodwa Tiale: 2004
[21] Interview with Zodwa Tiale

This comment gives the impression that it was not necessary and would not make a difference if the people were to participate since the government or the ARP had already made the decision to go ahead with the removals. Morkel backs up this line of thinking when asked about whether the ARP made any attempt to elicit the participation of the people removed from the Jukskei. He stated that:

> We certainly didn't perform the relocation of people by calling everyone together and say on Monday morning we're going to relocate to a new location, how do you feel about it? I mean there was a court order, notices were given that it would be performed on such and such a day, and they would be relocated to an area with housing.[22]

Morkel went on further to focus on the claim that the process of the removals was out of the hands of the development professionals, and instead done through a court order. He commented that, "once the judge gives/grants a court order, basically what happens is that the Sheriff becomes the agent of the court and the Sheriff would then put the relocation under his management." Thus, by law, the people had to be removed from their homes.

Morkel seemed to go to all lengths to avoid the issue that those removed were not properly consulted, and thus were unable to participate in decision-making. After Morkel commented about the resistance of people who were being removed from the Jukskei that "there were gun shots, there were some unpleasantness, there was one person who was shot and killed," he remarked further that,

> What happened, is that we found that once we resolved the relocation and once it had become clear, that this would continue, the people were actually complacent, they would pack up their belongings, in fact get everything ready, put it outside their shacks and literally wait, and when the trucks came along they would assist with the loading of stuff. We certainly didn't encounter any problem where you had massive resistance, where the people just were uncooperative… I mean there were pockets of that but I think it was more sort of criminality, where we would stumble across a tuck shop or a number of shacks which were being used for clear criminal purposes. Because the vast majority of people

[22] Interview with Mike Morkel: 2004

> there were very cooperative and assisted tremendously, I mean that certainly sped up things.[23]

As mentioned earlier, Morkel believes that those displaced must *appreciate* the favor of development that the ARP has done for them. In this way, it would make sense that he would be unlikely to conclude that there could be any possible resistance to the intervention. This appears to be the reason why he concludes that the incidents of people protesting and gunshots going off must have been a form of criminality rather than of resistance. However, Lekalakala pointed out that they would not have had the Red Ants, a security company hired by the ARP, coming in to remove people forcibly if there was efficient consultation. Accordingly, this interpretation shows that there was resistance by at least some of the people, otherwise force would not have been necessary.[24]

Commenting about the participation that took place when people were being relocated from the Jukskei, Lekalakala said:

> Consultation will involve: how will we be moved, where will we be moved to and what will happen to us once we are there. But that was not done. As I say people feel that they were just removed with their building materials and just dumped there. And they were then expected to build their own shacks there. They were given a piece of land to build on. But as to whether there would be sufficient schools, health care systems, all those things, they were not taken into account so people were just moved and then just put there. Actually, what would happen to them once they were there was not thoroughly discussed. And there was no proper planning (about what would happen) once they were there.[25]

If it is the case that the majority of Alexandra residents were in favor of the removals, as leaders of the ARP suggest, is that enough to say that the removals should have taken place? And further, as discussed above, should leaders then say that the people should not participate in the decisions that will effect their lives? Most, if not all, of those people living along the Jukskei can be said to be poor by just about any standard. They were staying in shacks since they could not afford to build a house. Moreover, they were staying in the atrocious conditions along the Jukskei because they could not afford to buy any land. Because

[23] Ibid.
[24] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004

they are poor, they have little assets to fall back on and would therefore clearly be the most adversely effected by any developmental decision.

4.3 Conclusion

In a discussion on the current state of democracy in South Africa, Friedman (2004) points out a vicious circle that poor people are faced with when they are unable to participate in policy, programme, or project decisions that will effect their lives. While poor people are likely to lack the resources, time, and education to participate, their lack of participation in decision-making that could positively effect their lives holds them in their poor position. As Friedman writes, "two-fifths of our society or more lack the means to participate. And it is primarily for this reason that poverty is a largely unmet challenge" (2004: 18). With that given, shouldn't these people who were displaced have been at the focal point of the participatory processes on the ARP?

Addressing the needs of the poorest of the poor is unmistakably a goal of the ARP. Keith Khoza, the director of the ARP stated when discussing funds that were allocated from the government to the ARP, "the government wanted to target the poorest of the poor which includes many of those living in urban townships."[26] However, as the above has alluded to, the case may be (perhaps partially) that the ARP addresses the wants and desires of the more powerful in Alexandra rather than the *needs* of the poorest. Is the ARP an example in which the intentions of participatory development, to empower those with the least, are undermined by intra-community power relationships? If so, how does further marginalization of the poor occur when the goal of the project is actually meant to empower them? Since the goal of the ARP and of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) are to empower the poorest there should be a model that is to be used (on Alexandra or other projects) to help ensure that the marginalized are included in the development process. If the poor in fact were not empowered, can we come up with a model to ensure the empowerment of the poorest? These issues will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter based on the perspectives of the poor.

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[25] Ibid
[26] Interview with Keith Khoza: 2004

Chapter 5– The People's Perspective

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, regarding the leadership perspective of those removed from the Jukskei, I have concluded that a weak form of participation, in this case consultation, has led to the legitimization of the interests of those in power, of the state. In turn, power differences are left unchallenged, and the poor may actually be disempowered and thus remain poor. Perhaps leaders do not see the potential for participation to be disempowering when it is used in this way. Moreover, they cannot seem to fathom a type of participation where the community, and particularly its poorest members, decide what development should be for them.

It should be made clear that the kind of participation (in this case one this based largely on consultation and informing) will have a direct impact on the degree to which the community will be likely to participate. If it is the case that all members of the community have little voice as to what type of development interventions should take place, power relations are left unchallenged. Thus, I argue that the status quo is left largely unchallenged despite the rhetoric of participation and empowerment put forth by the ARP. Moreover, the study of a poor group's participation or lack of participation within the community is of particular significance since a poor group, due to their limited amount of assets to fall back on in the case of a crisis, is most adversely effected by any given development intervention. My study of the people's perspectives of those removed from the Jukskei suggests that people were given no alternative when they were removed. In line with the above, this chapter utilizes the perspective of the people on the ground in an attempt to come to a further understanding of the degree to which participatory processes might further disempower poor groups.

5.2 On the Ground: People's (lack of) Participation

From my limited study, I was not able to see whether the poor were disempowered by participatory processes on the ARP. However, my research suggests that those living along

the Jukskei were disempowered through participatory processes on the ARP. This is the case since, despite project intentions, none of the people I interviewed were involved in deciding whether or not they should be displaced, nor what should happen to them once they were moved. In this way, the ARP (under the auspices of the state) took complete control over people's lives, removing power from the people directly affected by the development. Moreover, none of the displaced people that I interviewed attended any meetings relating to their removals. Worse, many of the people were not informed about the removals at all. For example, a young man, displaced from the Jukskei in 2000 claimed that when the red ants came to remove them, "we were not given any prior notice, we did not know anything."[1] Additionally, a middle-aged man removed from the Jukskei in 2001, said that. "They don't listen, we have no choice, there is nothing like participation, they just tell you what they are going to do."[2]

Further evidence supporting the view that leaders of the ARP allow for little or no participation in Alexandra is given by a leader in Diepsloot, who was displaced from Alexandra in 1996. He was not displaced from the Jukskei River, but has experienced similar lack of participation. Although promised a house after three months when he was displaced, he still does not have one. When commenting about his attempts to meet with the Councilor and discuss where and how they should be removed, he said:

> I told the leaders that we will be far from jobs but they don't listen… We went to the counselors, write to them, speak to them, but we get no response. We made a march to Ranburg to meet the leaders, but we get no response from the premier/ counselors… The problem is at the local level, they are not communicating with the people… They just do whatever they think is right at their own time. They just do whatever they want now, no communication with us. They just avoid us. It seems the counselors are confused.[3]

The lack of participation of those displaced from the Jukskei had immediate negative effects on the lives of the displaced. Many people were not informed of their removal from Jukskei. Some only discovered that they were going to be removed when trucks came to load

[1] Interview with Eric Thomu: 2004
[2] Interview with Wane: 2004 (last name anonymous)
[3] Interview with Fenius Letswalo: 2004

their belongings. When people resisted, force was used against them. A middle-aged man displaced in 2001 commented that, "The red ants were very physical, they were knocking down the houses and when you refused to go, they would just carry you and lift you and they would just throw you in."[4] Finally, an older man displaced from the Jukskei to Bramfischerville in 2001 said:

> I was told about the removals but not moved properly. They came in and grabbed people roughly when we were being moved. Some of the metal sheets for our houses were lost/destroyed. We saw that there was no possibility of staying in Alex.[5]

It only makes sense that when the force of the state is needed to remove people, there has actually been little or no participation of the people affected by the removals. Moreover, the fact that there was resistance by some of the people being removed reflects that the people did not participate or that they were not even *informed* that they were going to be removed from the Jukskei. One of the people displaced from the Jukskei to Bramfischerville explained why the resistance of people along the Jukskei took place:

> These people came and they told us we were moving and we had no problem. But we asked them, 'are you going to give us proper accommodation because we already have homes here?' And they told us, 'yes we have good rooms waiting for you.' And then we heard from other people, that it was not true, we were being deceived, there is no way that we were going to be given better accommodation than we had already. This is what caused the resistance.[6]

Resistance against forced evictions is especially likely in the context of the Jukskei removals. This is the case since people had been displaced approximately one year prior to the ARP removals by methods of force that including placing people into trucks with their belongings, firing bullets and exerting tear gas. Eric Thomu, displaced in 2000 stated that,

[4] Interview with Wane: 2004 (last name unknown)
[5] Interview: 2004 (name unknown)
[6] Interview with Wane: 2004 (last name unknown)

> We were forcefully removed from Alex so that development could take place. We did not want to move but they threw teargas on us. We weren't warned, we were just kicked out. When people refused, the police came with rubber bullets.[7]

Many of those not displaced until 2001 would have witnessed this previous removal and thus been more likely to react in a manner that was uncooperative with the officials.

Why would there be such resistance and full force be necessary if the people were in agreement with the move, if they participated effectively in both the decision to move them and what should be done to them once they were moved? Lekalakala, an ANC member and chair of the ADF, informed me that, "we would not have had the red ants coming in to remove people forcibly if there was sufficient consultation."[8] If people are not properly consulted and information is unclear in relation to the intervention (as I will discuss later), Cernea points out that this can lead to reverse participation. He writes,

> Breakdowns in information and communication tend to result in 'reverse participation,' that is, in active opposition movements against development programs. The ill-advised position taken by some agencies, which maintain an information embargo about likely displacements and resettlers' entitlements, virtually guarantees such opposition. Withholding information, instead of participation and transparency, is often "justified" by officials to prevent panic and stress. In fact, however, this is deceptive and self-defeating. It preempts the early mobilization of resettlers in the reconstruction of their own livelihoods. Their energy is an exceptionally important factor, which even the resettlement literature has seldom highlighted (Cernea 2000: 52).

People along the Jukskei also resisted for other reasons besides not being consulted or communicated with properly. Most people were not against being removed from Jukskei to Bramfischerville (where houses would be promised). They were, however, against being displaced to Dieploot since they would not be provided with proper houses. This is the case since they would be left in a situation that may worsen as a result of the social disarticulation involved with moving from one place that they were familiar with, to another place that they

[7] Interview with Eric Thomu: 2004
[8] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004

were not. Moreover, I will discuss later how, once they arrived in Diepsloot they were left with virtually no alternatives in terms of improving their livelihoods.

It should be pointed out here that a relative lack of participation by those displaced might actually make sense given the context of the people living along the Jukskei. According to the Legal Resources Centre (2001), "An urgent application for eviction and relocation had been granted by the High Court in March 2001" (in Huchzermeyer 2003: 90). Since the river was considered to be environmentally unsound, due to it's possible unsafe concentration of cholera and dangerous flood-line, there was not necessarily time for the people to participate in a way that involved 'full' participation. Cornwall comments that "a 'deep' and 'wide' participatory process might be the ideal, in abstract, but in practice it can prove either virtually impossible to achieve, or so cumbersome and time-consuming that everyone begins to lose interest" (2002: 55). Indeed, according to the ARP leadership, if the ARP took the time to allow for the extensive participation of those to be displaced form the Jukskei, those living along the Jukskei would have spent more time suffering from the effects of the river including cholera and flooding.

If it were the case that those living along the Jukskei were indeed suffering, it would make sense to move them in a quick manner. However, it is clear that at least some of the people living along the Jukskei were relatively happy with their living conditions at the time and would have preferred to stay there if given the option. By not communicating with the people effected by this development intervention, the ARP leaders had no way of knowing exactly what the conditions of the people were on the ground. Moreover, the significance of this lack of knowledge of the situation on the ground is evident in questions that were raised about the dangers of the flood-line and Cholera. According to the Legal Resources Centre, "the 'urgent' eviction was only carried out…in the middle of winter, when flooding risks are lowest. Residents received only one day's notice of the pending removals and demolition" (2001 in Huchzermeyer 2003: 90). Moreover, "it was never confirmed that the Jukskei River was contaminated with cholera" (Scheepers: 2001 in Huchzermeyer 2003: 90).

In addition, with approximately 7000 households being effected by the possible decision to remove people from the Jukskei River, it would have been virtually impossible to involve all of them in any substantial way when making the decision to remove them.[9] Indeed, the number of people involved is often a key factor in determining what level of participation that will exist on a given project. Farrington and Bebbington (1993) inform us of the difference between depth and width of participation. 'Deep' participation is usually only able to include a small number of people since it attempts to involve people in all the processes of development on the project. On the other hand, 'shallow' participation covers a wider extent of people in a given population and it therefore only able to use informed or consultative methods (Farrington and Bebbington: 1993 from Cornwall 2002: 54-55). Therefore, it can be said that the ARP's dominant view of the degree of participation from the people (consultation and informing) matches the above view of how participation can most effectively be put to use in practice. However, the reader should also be reminded of the evidence here which tells us that some of the people removed from the Jukskei were not even informed of the development intervention until they were met with force by the state. Moreover, it t was solely the leaders who decided where and when they should be removed to as well as what should happen to them once they were moved. This is despite the dominant form of participation (informing and consulting) advocated by the leaders of the ARP. In regards to those displaced from the Jukskei before the ARP was put into place in 2001, I obtained no evidence that they were able to make any impact on the decision to remove them.

5.3 Broken Promises

"Withholding information, instead of participation and transparency, is often "justified" by officials to prevent panic and stress" (Cernea 2000: 52).

[9] There is no correct percentage or number of people to involve in decisions that effect people's lives. Instead, one has to think in terms of what is optimum participation. For example, it would not be feasible or realistic to involve *all* people within a given community in a possible decision to change the education system for the youth.

If the state was willing to use the force of rubber bullets, tear gas, and bulldozers to bring about compliance (or to meet their own objectives) of the people along the Jukskei, what would stop them from misleading them in terms of what would happen to them once they were moved? The people I interviewed who have been removed from the Jukskei pointed out that although there were good intentions to move people from the Jukskei and give them houses, the intentions did not materialize into positive outcomes. Indeed, all the people I interviewed who were removed from Diepsloot commented that they had been promised houses after three months. According to an ANC youth league leader in Diepsloot, all those removed from the Jukskei to Diepsloot were told that: "When you get to Diepsloot, you are going to get houses. Don't even put down the cement or shacks. After three months you will get houses."[10]

All four people I interviewed who were displaced from Alexandra and moved to Diepsloot, informed me that they were promised housing, despite the government's claim that these people were to be removed to Diepsloot and never given housing. Indeed, three years later, they are still without houses. Two older men in Diepsloot told me that corrupt officials had been trying to sell houses that they were supposed to give away to them, that they had been promised. When they reported this to SANCO, who they claim is supposed to be their representative, no action was taken. In turn, they decided to invade those houses that had not been sold yet as a protest to the corruption since they were rightfully their houses to begin with. Each of the two men now live in a house, although it has no electricity and no running water. For the time being, they assert, they have solved their own problems.

A lack of accountability by the officials is also evident in relation to R500 food vouchers that were supposed to be given to all those displaced from the Jukskei River, regardless of where the people were removed to. As part of the strategy to reduce the trauma of those displaced from the Jukskei, the Alexandra official website has a section on the ARP Project Progress Report for mid-2002 which says that "a once-off food voucher (R500) is

[10] Interview with Abraham Mabuke: 2004

provided." However, a community leader in Diepsloot informed me that no one from Diepsloot has been given R500 food vouchers.[11]

The final evidence I obtained of a lack of accountability of the officials is given by a middle-aged man displaced to Bramfischerville in 2001. He said that,

> We were supposed to be given R4500 per household, taking into consideration that we weren't working. R1500 per month. Later, people were given R500 food vouchers to get the people not to revolt, not to resist too much. Many promises were made for the unemployed that have not been given.[12]

This appears to be another example in which the ARP promised the people something that they would not actually deliver. This man suggests that much of what was being promised to those being displaced was done to get the people to move off the Jukskei without resistance. If development does indeed offer a better place to live, few will resist it. When the people removed to Diepsloot were told that they were going to be given houses within three months, they would be likely to comply with the ARP's decision to remove them off the Jukskei. Further accountability mechanisms need to be put in place if officials are to be held responsible for the promises that they have made.

A young man, displaced from the shack he lived in on the Jukskei in 2000 to a house in Bramfischerville said that he was happy staying in Alex:

> The house here is alright, but the living conditions are worse**…** I was working in Rivonia, so I lived near my workplace. The most important thing to us is the proximity of jobs. We would have rather stayed near Alex… A lot of people are not happy with the move because of work. Many people (who were displaced) are hiding in Alexandra because that's where the jobs are.[13]

Bramfischerville is empty of infrastructure and a thirty-minute taxi bus ride to town. Therefore, it is virtually impossible for anyone without any money to find a job in town.

[11] Interview with Fenius Letswalo: 2004
[12] Interview: 2004 (name unknown)
[13] Interview with Eric Thomu: 2004

What good does obtaining a house do if you have no livelihood, and virtually no opportunity to gain one? It costs ten rand to get to town and back once. Searching for a job becomes expensive for one with little or no money to start with. Sen explains how this type of deprivation is overlooked,

> Democracy has been especially successful in preventing those disasters that are easy to understand and where sympathy can take a particularly immediate form. Many other problems are not quite so accessible. For example, India's success in eradicating famines is not matched by that in eliminating regular under nutrition, or curing persistent illiteracy, or inequalities, or inequalities in gender relations. While the plight of famine victims is easy to politicize, these other deprivations call for deeper analysis and more effective use of communication and political participation – in short, fuller practice of democracy (1999: 154).

To account for unemployment, people must be able to voice what it is that they need to have a possibility of finding job. Without ten rand a day to get to and from a place where one *might* be able to find work, the ARP has made it virtually impossible for those now living in Bramfischerville to create a dignified livelihood for themselves. While some have no houses and little work, others are stuck in houses without any real possibility of improving their lives further.

Referring to the people removed from the Jukskei to Bramfischerville and given houses to live in, Sizakele Nkosi explained to me, "I am happy with the people that were qualified and they are now today in proper houses, and I believe their lives have actually improved for the better."[15] Her line of thinking is that: if people are moved out of the bad conditions of the Jukskei *and* given a house to live in they must be pleased with their new living situation. One of the men, in this same situation, did not actually feel that he benefited from the removal. He noted that his children are unable to live with him now that he has been moved to Bramfischerville. Moreover, the house he lives in today is of a lower standard than the house he was living in along the Jukskei. In contrast with the viewpoint of the official above, he claims he was better off before he was removed. He said,

[15] Interview with Sizakele Nkosi: 2004

> My children were affected. Because I could not take them with me, I had to move and identify a place for them to stay with somebody so that they might be able to continue going to school in Alex. These RDP houses where I stay are not proper places, are not good because they use one bag of cement per house. So the quality of the house is not good, and it is even dangerous for my children to move with me into the house…The intentions were good because they removed us from Jukskei river and gave us houses. But then what good are those houses because they were built poorly? If it rains what good are those houses, because it goes through and then it rains on you?
>
> The house is in bad shape, dilapidated, poorly done. So I have spent about R6000 on repairs. If I take my kids there, they get sick, so I have spent so much money, and they have bulldozed my house at Jukskei so that I can't go back. So I am stuck in Bramfischerville."[16]

We cannot simply say that having a house improves one's living condition. Here, the situation is actually that this displaced person is staying in a worse house than the one he lived in prior to the removal. The relocation strategy of the ARP states that: "No obligation is recognized to provide the relocating family or families with equivalent accommodation from which they are being removed" (Overall Physical Development Strategy 2001: 6). Thus, they are admitting in their project plans beforehand that it is *acceptable* for living conditions to worsen as a result of removals taking place. Perhaps even more disappointing than this, it can be said that the house the above man is staying in is not suitable for any human being to stay in regardless of previous living conditions. This is not to say that this type of house would not be an improvement for some. But undoubtedly, if the house leaks when it rains, to the point where sickness is likely to occur for one's children as a result, the house has not helped one reach a humane living condition.

It must be pointed out here that the houses people were living in along the Jukskei were illegal. Therefore, according to the law, these people had no right to be living along the Jukskei, nor to build a house there. However, does this mean that these people should not have been able to participate in deciding what steps should be taken in regard to how to move them off the property? While I do not believe it is the case that the people along the Jukskei

[16] Interview with Wane: 2004 (last name anonymous)

should not have been displaced, it is the process by which the displacement occurred that I am arguing against. Clearly historical circumstances brought people to live and build a house on the Jukskei. We cannot, therefore, criminalize the poor and not take into account social/historical circumstances, thus saying they are no longer citizens; they are no longer to be part of the community. What good does it do to displace people and not improve their living situation?

As a result of the people being removed off the Jukskei, the area was clean enough for a park to be built along the Jukskei. Many Alexandra community members will benefit from this. Moreover, removing people from the over-populated Alexandra is necessary because this creates additional room for the people that will continue to stay there. As a community member and ANC secretary in Alexandra points out about over-densification:

> We don't have land in Alex. As much as people want to stay in Alex, it's a small piece of land. As much as people want to stay and even if the government wants people to stay here, but there is no more space. We don't even have conventional facilities. Kids play in the streets after school because people don't have space. It's a small piece of land that can only accommodate a certain number of people.[17]

What is considered to be development for some, may not be development for others. Furthermore, it is virtually impossible to have full agreement of any given development project that involves a community of over 300,000 people. Therefore, in order for a given development to take place in Alexandra, it can be argued that some will benefit, while others will be forced to lose out. The fact that some members of the community will be satisfied with what a given development has to offer and others will outright resist it raises the idea that what is justified as community participation by some may be regarded as marginalization by others. The removal of people from the Jukskei River has enabled groups of children to stop playing in the streets and to gain access to a park instead. On the other hand, some of those displaced from the Jukskei have suffered from marginalization as a result of this same intervention.

[17] interview with Zodwa Tlatla: 2004

However, is this latter case cause enough to exclude from those benefits thousands of people along the Jukskei? The government planned that those displaced would benefit, and many of them have (at least to some degree) due to their moving into RDP houses and off of the flood-line along the Jukskei. For those that did not benefit, however, it should be pointed out that they are amongst the most vulnerable, and are therefore likely to have fewer assets (social and economic) to fall back on if a development project is imposed on them in a way that negatively effects their lives. Despite the above problem that some may have to lose out as a result of a development intervention for others to benefit, Cernea's point remains strong:

> The conclusion is inescapable: Because government agencies use the weight of the state and the force of the law to impose expropriation and displacement, it is incumbent upon governments to enable those displaced to get back on their feet and share the benefits made possible by their displacement (2000: 51).

5.4 Conclusion

In the case of the Jukskei removals, how can we say that the ARP is bringing about development if people are left in a situation where they have virtually no opportunity to improve their lives? People displaced from the Jukskei were not provided with proper houses or the possibility to improve their livelihoods. If the people *were* involved in the decision-making processes to be removed, they would not have agreed to move unless they were going to be taken to proper houses. Rather than look at the effect that the ARP has on development in South Africans (or people) in general, The ARP has taken on a narrow view of development, one that is only for residents that *remain in* Alexandra. The broader community might be better off as a result of displacing people from the Jukskei, but that certainly does not mean (as discussed above) that the ARP should simply forget about those who were displaced from the Jukskei simply because they are no longer part of the problem (of over densification) in Alexandra.

CHAPTER 6 – Conclusion

6.1 What kind of democratic practice exists on the ARP?

Since the ANC is viewed as the central organization that brought about the liberation of the majority from the domination of the white minority, at present it holds a popular reputation as revolutionary and still enjoys popular support. The ANC believes that its development agenda is correct and that it has a sufficient mandate. It also perceives the opposition as being opposed to progress. This stance is not against participation *per se*, but against any participation that is outside of the ANC's plans. As elected officials, the ANC believes it has a mandate to represent the people. When Lekalakala and Maluleke say that the community must 'buy into' the development plan of the ARP, they seem to be supporting a state-centric and representative type of democracy (similar to that held by most democracies around the world). Moreover, when Lekalakala comments that, "at the end of the day, government implements its programmes,"[1] this also shows evidence that the democracy in South Africa is primarily a representative one. Finally, Metro Councilor Sizakele Nkosi said, "my understanding of my mandate is to raise issues that I think my community wanted to see happening."[2] Rather than people choosing for themselves what a given development intervention should be, officials have been elected to represent the people, to make decisions *for* them.

Thus, it appears that the ANC leaders believe that participation of the people is not necessary beyond taking part in elections every five years. Indeed, despite the lack of participation of the people removed from the Jukskei evident in the people's lack of information, knowledge about the removals and the resistance against them, as well as the force used by the state to remove them, Metro Councilor Sizakele Nkosi still comments that:

> I think people were properly consulted. Um, the Sunday before the Tuesday that they were relocated there was a public meeting that had plus or minus 2000 people attending, you

[1] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004

[2] Interview with Sizakele Nkosi: 2004

> know? And that's where people were informed that look, on Tuesday definitely you are going to be relocated. Because it was one of the last meetings and people were aware that they were going to be relocated and at that meeting there was never a riot. Some people of course, there were two or three people that were attending but the majority of the people at that meeting in particular were actually happy that they were going to be relocated. And that they knew where they were going to because we made it very clear that those who qualify will go and those who don't qualify will go somewhere else. So people were actually informed of where they were going to be relocated to.[3]

While in the previous chapter I discussed how views differ from one leader of the ARP to the next, the dominant view of the officials on the ARP hold that beneficiaries need only have an awareness of the development that is going to be imposed on them for satisfactory participation to take place. In the context of South Africa, it can be argued that participation has been cast as partaking in the objectives of the state. The ARP is therefore said to be participatory because it obtained people's participation in state-led development strategies.

This stance contrasts starkly with the goals of the Reconstruction and Development Programme which states that,

> Above all, the people affected must participate in decision-making. Democratization must begin to transform both the state and civil society. Democracy is not confined to periodic elections. It is, rather, an active process enabling everyone to contribute to reconstruction and development (1994: 7).

The above view of the ANC and the ARP leaders, of how people should participate in decisions affecting their lives, is further contradicted by the goals of the ARP. This contradiction is particularly evident in the ARP's relation to the ADF. While the leaders that I interviewed claim that participation should only occur as a way in which officials are representative of the people and decide what they need, Paul Mashatile the former MEC for Housing discusses the importance of the ADF in the following: "The community is represented in the ADF so that we

[3] Interview with Sizakele Nkosi: 2004

don't do what we think is right for the community, but do what the community thinks is right for them" (Mashatile 2004: ARP video).

The above is an example of an ideological difference in the way participation is viewed by the ANC. Mashatile has a left wing view of the kind of participation that should be implemented. Rarely, (and as we have seen on the ARP) are participatory objectives clear and in agreement amongst all stakeholders within a given project (or country for that matter). Many of the leaders of the ARP are not in favor of participation the form of participation advocated by the RDP and leaders such as Mashatile. Instead, they are in favor of consultation. The discourse and ambiguous nature of the word participation allows leaders to continue to implement projects despite the fact that the type of participation practiced goes against the objective of the type of participation which is meant to occur according to ARP plans.

While there is a verbal commitment to participation, in practice it is actually understood as a mandate given to the ANC upon elections. Indeed, there is certainly some legitimacy in this since the ANC does receive a majority of votes on election day. The basic idea that runs through my discussions with leaders of the ARP is that the people have voted ANC, the ANC has a mandate to represent the people. Therefore more participation is actually unnecessary. In line with the view of Maluleke (project manager of the ARP at the time of the Jukskei removals), "Schumpeter and others have contended that democracy cannot expect more from the electoral decision on the composition of the government. They have argued in effect that the passive citizen is inevitable in a complex or large-scale society" (in Prior 1995: 87).

On the other hand, while other forms of participation are difficult to implement in practice, I have argued throughout that consent is not a progressive form of community participation. Indeed, Hirst writes that "representative democracy has predominantly functioned as a means of legitimating governmental power, rather than of making government effectively accountable and open to public influence" (1990: 3).

6.2 A rationalization of force and resistance by an ARP official

Contrasting the stand point of someone displaced by the ARP, with an ARP official raises key points about outsider consultants who may come to develop a community without actually knowing the situation of the people on the ground. One of the people displaced from the Jukskei to Bramfischerville explained why the resistance of people along the Jukskei took place:

> These people came and they told us we were moving and we had no problem. But we asked them, 'are you going to give us proper accommodation because we already have homes here?' And they told us, 'yes we have good rooms waiting for you.' And then we heard from other people, that it was not true, we were being deceived, there is no way that we were going to be given better accommodation than we had already. This is what caused the resistance.[4]

On the other hand, Morkel's (a leading consultant of the ARP) criminalization of the resistance does not match the above. When asked about the resistance of the people during the time of the 2001 Jukskei removals, Morkel commented that,

> We certainly didn't encounter any problem where you had massive resistance, where the people were just uncooperative… I mean there were pockets of that but I think it was more sort of criminality, where we would stumble across a tuck shop or a number of shacks which were being used for clear criminal purposes.[5]

If, according to Morkel, the resistance occurred only by a minority, was largely criminal, and there was adequate participation, why was it necessary to employ the red ants to *forcibly* remove people? As discussed in chapter four, Morkel believes that those displaced must *appreciate* the favor of development that the ARP has done for them. In this way, it would make sense that he would be unlikely to conclude that there could be any possible resistance to the intervention.

[4] Interview with Wane: 2004 (last name anonymous)
[5] Interview with Mike Morkel: 2004

This appears to be the reason why he concludes that the incidents of people protesting and gunshots going off must have been a form of criminality rather than of resistance.

Chambers makes it clear that the reality imposed upon "lowers" (intended beneficiaries) by "uppers" (developers) through development schemes is, all too often, one that does not relate to the reality that the former lives in. He says that the powerful (or the development practitioners in this case) "are not easily contradicted or corrected: 'Their word goes.' It becomes easy and tempting for them… to impose their realities and deny those of others" (Chambers 1997: 76). When Morkel explains his point of view in terms that do not match the view of those effected by the development intervention, he is effectively imposing his reality onto those living along the Jukskei. Indeed, he does not seem to have taken into account why those along the Jukskei might have resisted the development intervention. Despite his lack of awareness of what the people effected by the development intervention might perceive, he is still claims that there was sufficient community participation. He assumes that the people *appreciate* the development that the ARP is bringing to them. In regards to this, Rahman writes that,

> "professional knowledge can be useful only in a dialogue with people's knowledge on an equal footing through which both can be enriched, and not in the arrogance of assumed superior wisdom" (1989: 324)

6.3 Citizenship and the Jukskei removals

Participation has been viewed, in large part, to increase the efficiency of development projects in a given community. "Increasingly, however, the concept of participation is being related to rights of citizenship and to democratic governance" (Gaventa 2002: 29). How a citizen is defined or viewed by the state will have a direct impact on the type of participation that we expect them to have under a democracy. It makes sense that a state-centered programme in which officials make decisions on behalf of its citizenry, with little or no

participation of people affected by those decisions, would see citizens as passive recipients of development intervention.

This case study of those people removed from the Jukskei has attempted to show the effects of the type of participation on the ARP on those people; a poor group. How these people were viewed, in terms of citizenship, may have negative impacts on the extent to which they participated in the ARP. For example, Keith Khoza comments about the people who were living along the Jukskei that, "it wasn't an area allocated to them, for residents, they just invaded a piece of land and started occupying."[6] This depicts those living along the Jukskei as non-citizens.

As a result, the low degree of participation of these people may be justified by their status as citizens. If they are viewed as invaders and as criminals, why would leaders of the ARP (such as Khoza) then deem it necessary for them to participate in the development of Alexandra? Clearly, it is the powerful who decide who is viewed as a citizen and who is not, and this can end up further disempowering those who are already poor. In an article entitled, "Criminalizing the Poor Will Not Solve the Land Question," a press release issued by the National Land Committee (2001), they point out that it is the historical circumstances of apartheid that led people to move onto land that was not designated to them, and that it is the current government's neglect of these people that perpetuates their impoverished situation. In this way, negating the citizenship of those who were displaced serves to further enshrine the position of the leaders of the ARP that those along the Jukskei did not need to participate.

6.4 The way forward for participation on the ARP

The leaders of the ARP are clearly not a homogeneous group – they have different and often contending views as to what participation is and should be – but in the end they acted in a way that led to little, if any, participation by the intended beneficiaries. This is despite the explicit goals of the RDP and the ARP to include people in decision-making processes that will affect their lives. However, it should be pointed out that the intentions of some leaders, in

[6] Interview with Keith Khoza: 2004

terms of participation, are good if one rests on the assumption that people should be involved in decisions that affect their lives. While Lekalakala proclaims that he believes that the people should be involved in deciding what the project is as well as in putting the project into practice, he admits that the ARP (which has power over the ADF), has a different perception of participation.

Given the relationship between the provincial government, the ARP and the ADF, it can be argued that even if valiant efforts (in terms of promoting community participation) are put forth by those involved in the ADF, participation will remain weak on the ARP. The ARP is a government-funded programme accountable to the community for its success or lack of success in implementing projects. The provincial government therefore has power over the ARP and project decisions are made primarily by the provincial government. Moreover, since the government employs consultants for the ARP, consultants have to follow government plans if they want to keep their jobs. This leaves little, if any, room for community participation that goes beyond informing the community of project plans designed by the state. In this way, the structures of the ARP function to maintain a weak form of participation despite the stronger views of participation that actors such as Lekalakala take. This situation is evident when Lekalakala goes on to discuss the importance of community participation (at all levels) but then still notes that, "in the end, the government implements its programmes."[7]

Since participation is ambiguous, it can therefore be used as a means to empower, as well as a means to manipulate, and as we have seen on the ARP, a means to legitimate state control. Crewe and Harrison comment about participation that, "part of the attractiveness of the term lies in its slipperiness" (1998: 73). If participatory objectives are not clear, as I have been arguing to be the case on the ARP, or those objectives are not communicated effectively to all stakeholders involved, it only makes sense that developers and beneficiaries will be much less likely to collaborate in a manner that allows for the inclusion of beneficiaries on a given project.

[7] Interview with Benito Lekalakala: 2004

Without asking what the people displaced from the Jukskei wanted, or allowing them to participate in any meaningful way, the ARP effectively took control away from the people who can be considered to be the most vulnerable. In other words, those displaced had their freedom taken away by the state. According to Sen's definition of development, taking freedom from people's lives is actually the *opposite* of development. Sen argues that development should be seen as having freedom to choose to live the way that each of us has reason to value. Moreover, he writes,

> To counter the problems that we face, we have to see individual freedom as a social commitment… Expansion of freedom is viewed, in this approach, both as the primary end and principal means of development. Development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency. The removal of substantial unfreedoms, it is argued here, is *constitutive* of development (1999: xii)

To be clear, one cannot be free if he/she cannot participate in making decisions that will effect his/her life. In order for people to participate in decision making effectively, they must first understand that they have the right to participate. And further, they must have an understanding of how they might participate once they have realized that right. Without this, how can an organization like the ARP say that all stakeholders will participate? Moreover, how can the RDP claim that development must be bottom-up and people-centered? People and the poor in particular, must be taught how to participate and what participation means if the poor are to benefit. The situation cannot be such that a given organization such as the ARP says they will have participation and then go on to set up participatory mechanisms without first educating people about their rights. Moya and Way make this point clear in the following,

> Giving the community responsibility without training or consciousness raising is very dangerous. The government has an idea of participation, but most programmes limit this to the formation of committees. They give money to a community, but only to do what the government already had in mind. They don't really listen to the community, though they call it participation (Cited in Cornwall 2002: 4).

This, as I have argued in my previous chapter, is a weak form of participation and allows for those in power to use participation to manipulate the community. It is under this weak form of participation (consultation and informing) of the ARP that participation then leads to the *further disempowerment* of poor groups. As long as power relations are not addressed, the status quo is likely to remain the same, leaving the more powerful (well off) to become better off and the less powerful (poor) to become worse off.

Indeed, the power-neutral process of participation can enable forums such as the ADF to be used as a way to legitimate the interests of the already well off, thus undermining the interests of the poor. I have not come across any papers, nor have any of the leaders of the ARP ever mentioned specific attempts to include the poor in decision-making on the ARP. They always talk about the community, broader community participation, surely knowing that there are different interests within Alexandra, but not making any explicit attempt to include the most disadvantaged; the poor. According to Guijt and Shah,

> This mythical notion of community cohesion continues to permeate much participatory work, hiding a bias that favors the opinions and priorities of those with more power and the ability to voice themselves publicly (1998: 1).

Moreover, while disadvantaged groups are given the chance to participate in the ADF on a monthly basis, Hildyard points out that, "facilitating measures may be important in negotiations, but they are not enough to grant marginal groups the bargaining power they require to overcome the structural dominance enjoyed by more powerful groups." (2002: 69).

Finally, the ADF may work for those groups of people that are organized and hold a formal position in the ADF. In this way, the ARP does more than many development projects which have no institutionalized participatory mechanism for the people to have their voices heard. However, for those groups who are not organized and do not participate in the ADF, it may lead to their further disempowerment since they are still seen as being part of the Alexandra community that is represented under this participatory structure. This occurs despite the fact that those groups may actually have no one representing them and thus no

voice. This situation is particularly likely to occur among groups of people who are poor and therefore less likely to have an organized voice to speak on their behalf.

As this paper argues, the kind of participation on the ARP is simply a technical one meant to ensure project success, and it therefore does not and will not lead to achieving greater social justice. One question thus becomes significant, as touched on earlier: Has the ARP, (knowingly or unknowingly) created a middle-ground for "participation" to occur without actually challenging the status quo? This point is of particular significance in the context of South Africa. Just ten years after the introduction of a democracy it remains one of the most unequal countries in the world, and there is little evidence that the number of poor people living here has decreased. Therefore, while the point of the ARP and the RDP is to, first and foremost empower the poor, a weak and technical participatory approach will leave the poor behind in similar powerless situations that they found themselves under the apartheid regime. It hardly makes any sense for a government to introduce a participatory programme "unless it is simultaneously prepared to rethink the way power structures operate in the country" (Blackburn and Holland 1998: 2).

This paper has discussed some of the effects that utilizing community participation as merely consultation, rather than empowerment and community driven solutions has had on the ARP and especially poor and vulnerable people in Alexandra such as those living on the Jukskei. Participation must go hand in hand with consciousness raising of the oppressed if participation is to address power differences and thus be effective in reducing poverty. A weak participation, such as that which is occurring within the ARP, will only be used as an instrument to maintain the status quo. As Friedman points out, "Poverty and shallow participation reinforce each other, ensuring that effective rights are unequally spread among citizens and reducing the quality of democracy" (2004: 18-19). I contend that until it becomes a first priority (of the leaders or of the poor themselves) to enable the poor to participate in decision-making in a way that views participation of the people as critical in itself, poverty will continue to persist in South Africa despite the supposed intentions of the RDP and ARP. The key issue here is that:

> Getting the poor to participate has no meaning unless it simultaneously addresses the power structures that appear to perpetuate poverty… The heart of Paulo Freire's and others' interpretation of 'participation'- as a way of pressing and achieving greater social justice – remains pertinent (Blackburn and Holland 1998: 2).

If the South African government is serious about people's participation, as it states in the RDP, then it must take on the responsibility of capacity building that would enable people to participate substantially in decision that affect their lives. This leaves no room for the cop-out response that poor people do not want to participate in political affairs. In regards to this, Sen writes,

> Are the citizens of third world countries indifferent to political and democratic rights? This claim, which is often made, is again based on too little empirical evidence… It is not clear at all how this proposition can be checked when the ordinary citizens are given little political opportunity to express their views on this and even less to dispute the claims made by the authorities in office (1999: 151).

While the ARP may allow some participation, what chance do uneducated members of society have to participate if they cannot read and write, if they are unaware that they are citizens who have the right to participate? To avoid this, the people affected by this type of development intervention, especially the poor must be educated by gaining critical consciousness about the world in which we live. This action is particularly vital since it can be done without the leaders of the South African government, just as it was done with the oppressed majority's overthrow of the apartheid state. Oppressed people thus become aware of their social situation in order to have their voice heard and to create a world that is no longer defined by their oppressors. According to Coutinhow, it is not "difficult to see why a method based on such a philosophy would be received with caution, if not alarm, by the holders of political or academic power" (in Freire 1970: 10). The poor can struggle to have their interests heard as individuals and through collective action, rather than waiting and hoping that the powerful will one day share power with them in order to bring about development that is in the interests of the poor. Thus the people, through organized forms of struggle, can put their views across against the dominant state views, therefore controlling the participatory process for themselves. In this way participation is used as an end in itself rather

than as a means to achieve developmental objectives (and in this case ARP, state objectives). It is only by gaining critical consciousness about the world in which one lives, that power relations can be challenged in any meaningful way, thus leading to a situation in which participatory processes can lead to the *empowerment* of the poor.

On the other hand, if development becomes something that can simply be decided by leaders, when are those affected by the development able to say they have a different perception about what development means to them? Under the apartheid regime, as horrible as the system was, the leaders argued that development was taking place best through the top-down rule that was imposed. While it was indeed a way that undermined the majority of the population, it can be argued that economic development of the minority was achieved only through the necessary exploitation of the majority. Therefore it is of particular relevance in the context of South Africa that the majority actively decides what development should be for themselves, so that development is not imposed on them in a way that leads to their exploitation.

As discussed previously in this chapter, the leaders of the ARP do not claim that the people must be at the center of development; that development must come from the people affected if it is to take place. Instead, leaders of the ARP admit that participation is used as a means to achieve state objectives. This lies in contrast to the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed majority. For example, the civic movement in Alexandra during the 1980's and early 1990's were meant to support the idea that development was *not* possible, unless the people affected were included, in other words participating, in the process of development (Mayekiso: 1995). This was done in order to achieve social justice since the state was clearly not providing them with any form of it.

Consciousness raising was also effectively put in place during the beginning stages of people's courts in Alexandra during apartheid. In opposition to the apartheid state, people's courts were meant to help create an awareness of the current social situation that may have contributed to a given person's criminal offense (rather than to simply punish a criminal). According to Mayekiso,

> The emphasis on communities meant that instead of going to prison, people were educated about the causes of social problems. They were therefore politicized about the nature of apartheid oppression, the economic imbalances that accompanied apartheid, and the relationship of these to individual acts of crime in the black communities (1996: 82).

The above is an example of the use of consciousness raising as an attempt to deal with society's structural problems. Ignoring such problems serves to maintain the status quo, leaving historical injustices unaccounted for. This is of particular significance in the context of South Africa in which the previously exploited population remains poor presently, under a system that arguably maintains the status quo and thus serves the well-off. [1]

As discussed previously (especially in chapter two), any discussion relating to Freire's idea of the consciousness raising of oppressed groups tends to view participation as being an end in itself. If participation is to be viewed as an end in itself, then what would happen if those along the Jukskei all participated and came to the conclusion that they were not going to move off the Jukskei? Clearly there were environmental and health reasons that the state had for moving them. Metro Councilor Sizakele Nkosi, in charge of housing at the time of the Jukskei removals, commented about the dangers to the people who were living along the Jukskei:

> There is no longer a health risk not only for the Alexandra community but also for the Johannesburg community because, as I am sure you know, there have been a lot of problems with Jukskei River in terms of everything. In terms of Cholera, etc. But the other issue. For the last two years I have not been called to assist with emergency services. I have not been called to come and assist people. So we haven't lost any lives or property in the last two years because people have been removed from Jukskei.[7]

Under any governmental body that would allow for participation to be used as an end in itself, the following question would thus need to be raised: When does one draw the line between the state's overall development plans and the needs and aspirations of actual

[1] It should be added here that this consciousness raising of people's courts was not the most popular form of them. Later forms of people's courts in Alexandra did indeed punish offenders to the point where the community was scared of being presented to them.
[7] Interview with Sizakele Nkosi: 2004

individuals affected by a given development intervention? More specifically, should people's participation over-ride health and ecological concerns? These questions are critical since there were some people along the Jukskei who would have decided not to move off the river had they been given the chance. From their perspective, had they not been moved, their lives would be better now. As I have pointed out previously however, I don't think it makes sense to say that the state should have allowed people to stay along the Jukskei given the conditions. Participation as an end in itself is thus not possible or desirable to achieve when implementing *any* development project. Again, maximum participation is also not always necessary, efficient or beneficial. Rather, consciousness raising is something that can be used to achieve greater and more substantial participation in the long run so that decisions will not have to be made solely by the leaders or the elites in a community. If those displaced had a greater consciousness of their social situation, perhaps they could have bargained in a more effective way with the government so that development was not completely imposed without any of their input.

It is in this way that citizens will feel less helpless and perhaps gain knowledge of how to work with authorities so that other alternatives to a given project might become possible. According to Rahman, "Only with a liberated mind which is free to enquire and then conceive and plan what is to be created, can structural change release the creative potential of the people" (in Rahnema 1997: 324). When I asked an older woman how she felt about being displaced from the Jukskei, she commented, "I am far away from my work but there is nothing I can do about it."[8] It appears that this woman has gave up a along time ago, that she believes there was never any possibility of engaging with the structures that were and are directly affecting her life. The fact that she has given up is in line with the ANC stance discussed previously in this chapter. Questioning whether the ANC is indeed working to serve the interests of South Africans who are the most vulnerable is therefore critical to those who are oppressed or in solidarity with the oppressed. If critics are right, that the ANC government will only do for South Africans what it has to in order to get elected every 5

[8] Anonymous interview: 2004

years,[9] then action outside and against the state is necessary. Education for critical consciousness is one way that people can begin to resist a state that does not necessarily back up in practice what it promises in ideology. With an ANC ideology that states it is 'a people's contract to create work and fight poverty,' it is difficult for one to see what he or she must fight against to achieve true liberation.

6.5 For future study

It would be interesting to see the extent to which each class group within Alexandra participates in political decision-making processes. If the well off are able to participate in decisions that will affect their township's development, and the poor are not, it follows then that the poor will be disempowered at the hands of elites. This may occur while the elites continue to make decisions in their own interests, further stratifying power relations within the area. Moreover, what is the perception of each class group of the local government and of participation?

More research needs to be done to whether the ADF has ever actually rejected a decision made by the ARP. If it is the case that the ARF has rejected a project, then it is the case that participation in the ADF does lead to some direct form of participation: participation in which beneficiaries can decide whether or not they would like to implement a given development project decided on by the state. If the ADF has never actually rejected a given development project, this would appear to be evidence that the ADF holds no power over what the ARP decides to do.

More research needs to be done to show the type of participation that was occurring prior to this summit as well as the kind that is occurring presently. One community leader suggests that the ADF may be more accountable to the people today than it was in the past.

[9] As Havel points out about post-totalitarian states, "this system serves people only to the extent necessary to ensure that people will serve it. Anything beyond this, that is to say, anything which leads people to overstep their predetermined roles is regarded by the system as an attack upon itself" (1997: 338)

It is difficult to generalize the South African situation in terms of participation through one case study of the ARP. Further research would enable the researcher to investigate other urban renewal projects, which would allow me to draw comparisons between them, thus drawing conclusions about the South African reality. For example, the researched would then be able to see if the stance that the ARP leadership holds in which they view themselves as being representative of the people and therefore having a mandate to make decisions on their behalf, is common among other leaders throughout SA. Finally, a case study of one project of the ARP is not enough to show whether or not poor groups affected by the ARP are further disempowered through participatory processes on the ARP. Additional case studies of specific projects of the ARP would thus allow the researcher to make more conclusive remarks.

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In Bramfischerville on November 8th 2004

Eric Thomu
Wane (last name anonymous)
Anonymous (female)
Anonymous (male)

In Diepsloot on December 5

Michael Tlali
Fenius Letswalo
Abraham Mabuke
Anonymous (male)
Anonymous (male)