Community Facilitation Programme
Community Development
Module 1— What is community development and what is the major constructs of community development?

1. Introduction

Aim of this module:

- An overview of major policy documents influence community development projects worldwide.
- An introduction to the concept of community development and its constructs.

2. A Point of Departure
- Community development is a subject that has led to major discussions in SA since 1994.
- But it is a subject with a much longer history.
- It was the topic for major changes in government policy since 1994.
- It is a subject that has a varied interpretation which has led to much confusion.
- It is a subject that, when correctly understood and applied, has the inherent ability to change whole communities.

2.1 The White Paper for Social Welfare

The White paper, released in 1997 was a turning point in social welfare policy formation. It provided for a rather abrubt departure from previous welfare policy that focused on providing welfare services that was critised as not being appropriate, not developmental by nature and that it was creating dependency. Services were individualistic and based on the medical model of diagnosis and treatment with the recipient being passive. In contrast the White Paper   commtted both Government and stakeholders to to the social development paradigm of welfare that supports a people –centred approach to social and economic development. This approach focuusses on on the maximization of human potential and on fostering self-reliance and participation I decision making, process and outcomes.

The Department of Social development render its services through three broad programmes of social security, social welfare services and community development. Social welfare services in turn consissts of a range of services and programmes that are directed at enhancing the capacities of people to address the causes and consequences of poverty and vulnerability through case work group work and community development. It's the latter approach that is of significance for this study. due to the direction it is providing for NGO's, NPO's, CBO's for the development of their policies and programmes. The Department follows an integrated model through a multi pronged approach aimed at addressing the social welfare of individuals and the developmental needs of communities. The integrated approach provides a basis upon which systems can be put in place to ensure that beneficiers are directed for immediate short and long-term material support. The aim is not for it to be an end in itself but for beneficiaries are actively engaged in the system that will enable them to function maximally within society. This approach is therefore able to promote the meeting of emergency needs and sumultounasly addressing the cause and affect of their vulnarebility, recognising their strengts and developing appropriate startegies forsustainable sociao-economic development.

What is the implications of the White Paper for non governmental organizations?
- It obligates NGO'S, CBO's, NPO's to realign their programme development, im-

plementation and outcomes. The White Paper is therefore indeed what it is , a document that impacts each and every role player.

- It requires all organizations to work with the government to provide services that is generic, specialized, in line with the purposes of the White paper and in line with good governance.
- It requires from community based organizations to identify local needs, to respond to that needs by involving individuals and the community in the problem solving process, to coordinate action at community level and to create an awareness with regard to the available solutions and to restore hope in communities.
- It influences funding criteria for organizations.
- Organizations that do not adhere to the White paper invcreasiigly find them sidelined. CBO's in particular are challenged by it and most of them are not known with it.
- Government

2.2 The Millennium Development Goals (MDG's)

Another document that increasingly impacts service delivery is the MDG's a programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It may do so in a lesser extent that the White Paper but its influence is increasingly being observed in policy decions. Very few organizations have ever heard about the Goals but it will be worthwile to take cognisanse of it.

- The UNDP sets the criteria for human development worldwide. It strategically influences development policies in its member countries as well as countless organizations around the globe.
- 8 goals exist that aims to impact and measure progress in the following areas: poverty and hunger, education, geder equality, child health, HIV/Aids, environmental stability an global partnerships. The UN aims for member countries to meet specifif outcomes in each of these areas by 2015.
- The progress in member countries are closely monitored and is well documented and for everyone to see.
- The Development Goals also hugely influences SA government policy. In there latest country outline for SA the UNDP recommitted themselves to working with the SA Government and seeks to align and harmonise its programmes with national development frameworks and to support the Government in its efforts to address key development challenges. In its assessment of their involvement in SA the UNDP states that programming should be strategically aligned with key national development priorities and harmonized with the initiatives of other development stakeholders. It further states that this is as a new strategic direction for the UNDP in SA.

2.3 The Theory and Practice of Community Work, a Social Work Intervention Method.

- Community Development is one of the methods of Community Work. Community Work in turn is one of the three methods of Social Work practise. The role of Community Work and Community Dvelopment by the social work profession is widely recognised by government.
- It gives a framework for developing, researching and applying community development concepts.
- Has its own theoretical framework.
- Is a methodology that has been developed and proven over many years.
- Will form the basic theoretical framework for these modules.

3. What is Community Development?

Community Development is an umbrella concept that refers to the conscious efforts of change agents that are aimed at realising objectives within the following spheres of human functioning and society:

- Economic
- Psychosocial
- Bio-Physiological
- Technological
- Spiritual-Cultural
- Political
- Environmental
- Educational

4. What are the Constructs of Community Development?

4.1 It is a Process
Community development is a process that is shaped by existing forces in a community and its environment which can either enhance its progress or lead to its retrogression.

One of the most important positive forces is man's inherent drive to improve his own and the community's standard of living and quality of life through individual and collective actions. This force is, to a great degree, present in all communities. The success of this force is largely determined by the extent to which subsystems of the community (individuals/families/groups of friends/professions/organizations/ business sector/industry/national government and local government) contribute towards improvement of the quality of life of the community.

A self developing community is one in which its various subsystems are able to collaborate effectively in:

- Identifying needs;
- Achieving a working consensus on goals and priorities;
- Concurring with ways and means of implementing the agreed-upon goals.

In an under-developed community the spheres are characterised by what can be described as vicious cycles in each of these spheres characterised by the following elements:

- Economic Cycle: lack of investment; limited or negative growth; low production levels; unemployment; low average wages.
- Psychosocial Cycle: a prevailing sense of hopelessness; low self-esteem; inability to adapt to change and challenges.
- Bio-Physiological Cycle: malnutrition; life threatening diseases; HIV/Aids
- Spiritual-Cultural Cycle: fatalistic worldview; animism; lack of desire and initiative to influence one's own destiny.
- Technological Cycle: lack of access to technology and resources; inability to diversify; lack of productivity.
- Environmental Cycle: population and economic pressure on the environment; over consumption of resources; environmental lack of sustainability and degradation.
- Educational Cycle: lack of education; illiteracy and ignorance; lack of entrepreneurship; low productivity.
- Political Cycle: lack of vision and political will; unrealistic expectations; poor service delivery; disillusionment; political tension and instability; poor law enforcement.

4.2 It is a form of Intervention

It involves some form of intervention by a developing- or change agent in which partnerships amongst community members and external systems are established in order to improve the quality of life.

4.3 It Requires Skilled and Passionate Intervention

- Communities do not change overnight because people do not change overnight
- If you don't love your community you can't change your community.
- If you don't love the people in your community you can't change the people of that community.
- A thorough knowledge of people, community structures and the techniques and principles of Community Development

5. Handouts for Self Study.

- Millennium Development Goals—Indicators
- Millennium Development Goals—2008 RSA Progress Report
- White Paper on Social Welfare

6. Conclusion