O "reforço" desigual da Sociedade Civil, através da capacitação institucional financiada por doadores nas cidades sul africanas

Resumo

Neste artigo, a arquitetura das relações entre doadores e governo local e entre governos locais e organizações comunitárias de base são examinados em relação a maneira como as iniciativas de capacitação interveem em contextos políticos complexos em assim interagem seletivamente com diferentes actores do Estado e dos órgãos da sociedade civil. Estas questões são consideradas na sua relação com os debates conceituais sobre o Estado e o papel da sociedade civil no desenvolvimento. Em seguida, discute-se a interface município-comunidade sul-africana, atividades de doadores e o programa de Isilimela na Cidade do Cabo especificamente. Por fim, é analisado o processo de cooptação da elite incorporado nas atividades de capacitação institucional do programa.

O artigo mostra como a iniciativa foi limitada em seus efeitos, mas não por intenção ou por motivos maliciosos. Segundo os funcionários do município, o programa era parte de sua agenda para ser um município 'bom' e 'competitivo' 'instituição de ponta': capaz de aumentar a entrega, reduzir o conflito e assim assegurar a sua posição e influência no processo de reestruturação metropolitano. No entanto, o programa não colocou desafios ao sistema municipal, ao seu modo de gestão ou às prioridades do governo local porque reflectiu uma compreensão hegemónica e simplista de 'comunidades' e de organizações comunitárias de base.
**Palavra-chave:** Municipalidade, capacitação institucional, sociedade civil, África do Sul.

*(Do editor)*

**Introduction**

Developmental incapacity has been identified in municipalities and in economically impoverished communities and community-based organisations (CBOs) across the South African urban arena. Ironically, CBOs and communities in marginalized areas often have the capacity to organise themselves, in for instance civic street committees, policing forums and informal savings schemes (Xaba & Coovadia, 1994; Seekings, 2001). But resource and organisational constraints limit these capacities to neighbourhoods and localities. Incapacity surfaces instead in a shortage of external linkages, relationships crucial for gaining access to technical, financial and institutional resources in the state and elsewhere (Cloete, 2002; Oldfield, 2000). Moreover, in economically impoverished parts of South African cities, relationships with municipalities have tended to be confrontational and conflict-ridden due to the violent repression of the apartheid state and post-apartheid conflicts over, for instance, cost recovery policies for basic services and, in general, the slow delivery of infrastructure and development (McDonald and Pape, 2002; Beall et al., 2002; Xali, 2002; Oldfield, 2002; Chipkin, 2003).

Foreign donors have invested large sums in capacity building in local government and in CBOs in economically poor areas, often paying close attention to the relationships between municipal institutions and community organisations. Among the donors who have explicitly targeted capacity building at the local government-CBO level in South Africa are the European Union, the British Department for International Development (DFID), the World Bank, the Norwegian government, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, the Commonwealth, and the Swedish International Development Agency (World Bank, 1999: 55-
Whereas many donor agencies actively are involved in funding capacity building initiatives to address shortcomings in technical know-how and expertise, in this paper I focus on capacity building initiatives that address the social and political issues that structure the interface between state institutions, CBOs, and communities.

Although developmental problems generate in part from technical shortcomings, tension between municipalities and poor communities often build from a lack of trust, information, and access to human and capital resources. Because municipalities hold the keys to these resources, they define the interface between the state and marginal, economically impoverished communities. Inequity in power underpins the municipality-community interface and development at the local scale. An examination of a post-1994 capacity-building project, the Isilimela Program in Cape Town, highlights the intensification of linkages between certain CBOs and local government in the Cape Town context. In this case, the capacity-building project focused on building confidence and capacity for fuller participation in local development processes, particular integrated development planning. In effect, the capacity building attempted to promote and build stronger CBOs. In practice, however, the project co-opted an elite leadership through which municipal projects could be driven and legitimised. The capacity building process did not challenge imbalances in power between municipalities, councillors and CBOs and among CBOs in the targeted locality. The case study illustrates the importance of context, in particular the multi-scaled institutional, political and economic environments in which locally targeted programs occur. The analysis also reveals the difficulty in assessing the actual outcomes of capacity building programmes (Kaplan, 1997).

Although capacity building initiatives do provide resources and an entry point into developing better relationships, they tend not to disrupt or reshape

---

23 DFID funding to Southern African poverty alleviation projects will be cut significantly from 2004. Benn, the Minister responsible for DFID reported that 100 million pounds sterling from its work in 'middle-income' countries would go towards rebuilding Iraq in 2004 and 2005 (see 'SA stands to lose millions in British Aid,' *The Day*, 31 October 2003, p.1).
this balance. Development continues on ‘as normal’ so tangible, material benefits from capacity building programs tend to proceed according to state criteria. Through this case study, the architecture of the relationships between donors and local government and between local government and community-based organisations are examined in relation to the way in which capacity building initiatives intervene in complex political contexts and thus selectively engage with different actors in the state and organs of civil society. These issues are considered relative to conceptual debates on state and civil society roles in development. I then discuss the South African municipal-community interface, donor activities, and the Isilimela Program in Cape Town specifically. After examination of the Isilimela Program, I analyse the process of elite co-option embedded in the Program’s capacity building activities.

Civil Society and Development

In line with global initiatives, decentralized planning and service delivery and civil society participation and partnerships have been promoted across the developing world. A turn to the local scale through decentralization has been championed by the ‘new right,’ in particular donor agencies and global institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund through the conditions attached to structural adjustment programs (Teriba, 1996; Mohan and Stokke, 2000). In the ‘rolling back’ of the state and the reduction of its intervention in the economy and society an increasing emphasis has been placed on civil society as the critical site and tool for development. In understanding civil society, Robert Putnam (1993), for instance, has argued that ‘social capital’ – the relationships, associations and networks that tie individuals to each other – is the crucial component to successful development. In contrast to Putnam’s analysis, which portrays social capital as inimitable – either there or not, other theorists such as Evans (1996) and Harrison in the South African case (2002) have identified the ways in which social capital may be created through particular types of intervention.
In some instances, development work has focused therefore on ways to build and improve social capital by engaging and funding civil society organizations. In practice, conceptual ideas about social capital fall hand in hand with programs and practices of decentralized participatory development, particularly prevalent in the discourse of western donors (Mohan and Stokke, 2000). Many capacity building initiatives thus focus on ‘thickening’ – generating and enhancing – social capital in localities and regions (Amin and Thrift, 1995). The Cape Town –based Isilimela program illustrates this approach with its emphasis on building CBO capacity.

At the same time, the ‘new left,’ in particular post-structural theorists, have also promoted the local, arguing that at this local scale there is a space for radical democratic projects to reinvent and restructure the political and economic inequalities underpinning the status quo (Friedmann, 1998). Post-development theorists critique development as inherently a capitalist grand-narrative destructive to other ways of ‘non-western’ ways of knowing (Tucker, 1999). They also turn to the local as a site and source for alternative models of development. Critiquing development as modernist, these approaches emphasize the particular and the local as sources of indigenous and appropriate knowledge (Crush, 1995). Escobar, for instance, positions social movements in the third world as a potential way beyond the disciplining confines of western Euro-centric development (1995). In parallel, Fagen (1999) poses the cultural realm not only as an important arena for theory construction, but also as a site for cultural politics and action.

Yet, in this global turn to the local as the site for development, there are several dangers. In particular, there is a tendency to romanticize the local and to view it in isolation form broader economic and political structures (Mohan and Stokke, 2000). For instance, local, social movements, and associations – organs of civil society – do not operate in vacuums or in contexts and with power of their own choosing. Nor is ‘civil society’ by definition ‘civil’ or ‘virtuous’ (Chipkin, 2003; Hearn, 2001: Bayat, 1997; Kasfir, 1998; Markovitz, 1998). Moreover, “the current focus on the notion of ‘civil society’ tends to belittle or totally ignore
the vast arrays of often uninstitutionalised and hybrid social activities which have dominated urban politics in many developing countries" (Bayat, 1997: 55). Focused on the range of activities that poor citizens in developing contexts act on to secure tenure, housing, services and livelihoods, Bayat argues that these processes occur despite state programs, and act autonomously from development agenda. Hearn (2001) analyzes the critical issue of civil society autonomy – or lack thereof – in developing contexts. She illustrates how northern-donor funding emphasizes partnerships with particular types of civil society organizations, particularly, she argues, those that support and stabilize the status quo. Civil society cannot be assumed therefore as “locus sine qua non for progressive politics, the place where people organize to make their lives better, even a site of resistance” (2001: 43).

In the South African context, donors have targeted local government and impoverished communities as sites for financial and technical interventions that often take the form of capacity building projects. Yet, in these contexts there is a danger in simply analysing civil society, participation, and capacity without an analysis and understanding of power and inequality in communities and between communities and the state (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). The following discussion examines the political and economic contexts that frame sets of local and citywide linkages and networks enhanced through capacity-building projects at urban and neighbourhood scales.

*Municipalities, CBOs, and Capacity Building*

In the post-apartheid context, relationships between state and civil society have been reconstructed through policies that highlight, among other priorities, the need for participation. The question remains, however, as to how policy

24 Hearn draws on the South African post-1994 context to demonstrate that the non-governmental organizations (such as IDASA) that have received the largest proportion of northern donor funding have been organizations reshaping understandings of democracy in particular. Discourse on democracy has shifted, she argues, from an economic-based argument that democracy should bring material change to the promotion of liberal democracy that, in Hearn’s view, is “polyarchy… elite minority rule and socio-economic inequalities alongside formal political freedom and elections involving universal suffrage” (Robinson, 1998, quoted in Hearn, 2001: 48).
shifts translate into concrete changes in the way in which local governments work with CBOs and communities, especially in impoverished areas. Plummer argues in general that:

Despite the shift in their responsibilities, municipalities continue to approach their functions through the same conventional processes and structures. This is particularly noticeable with respect to planning process in South Africa. Despite the apparent inclusion of communities in planning approaches through public meetings, in practice many municipalities are still pursuing blueprint approaches to planning and development. They are constrained by the burden of precedent and by insufficient capacity for developing alternatives. (2000: 15)

These tendencies are mirrored in the South African context. Although restructured state institutions and policies involve a variety of players from donors to South African organs of civil society, development practices reflect state priorities and norms.

In Cape Town, a commission on civil society (Rose, 2000) reported:

Civil society [in Cape Town] is not disaffected, rather there is a huge amount of goodwill to want to engage and partner local government. There is in fact tremendous excitement about the possibility of a more meaningful partnership with local government. There is however a frighteningly high level of cynicism borne out of community's current experience with local government. There is also a real fear that there is little political will to implement proposals.... While we consulted with communities across the political and racial spectrum most of the views about and experiences with local government are essentially the same. This process demonstrated that civil society can produce consensus positions on various issues.... [And] there is certainly a call to move beyond sectorally confined approaches to development (Rose, 2000).

The commission thus recommended that the municipality attempt to move away from “its image as adversary to that of partner with communities” (ibid). As artefacts of racially divided institutional structures of the apartheid regime and products of conflicting and conciliatory post-apartheid social processes, municipal politics are contentious. In combining previously segregated African,
coloured, Indian and white communities into single political areas, the local state encompasses communities with divergent socio-economic conditions, histories, political affiliations, and cultural and lingual identities. Post-apartheid local state structures therefore are grounded simultaneously in apartheid's uneven social and spatial development, and in broader national restructuring processes that both limit and extend the power of municipalities (Parnell et al., 2002). Impoverished communities often receive the short end of the stick in this context.

Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are one mechanism through which local government has been required to reflect citizen and neighbourhood- and locality-based interests, legislated in the Municipal Systems Act, 2000. National government mandates that local government use the IDP to ensure that municipalities consult their constituencies and prioritise community participation in their policies and implementation strategies. But, groups at the local level – political parties, local state officials, non-governmental organizations, and community-based organisations – do not participate in the system equally. In practice, local governments in South Africa and organs of civil society have different capacities to participate and demand resources, services and infrastructure. It is these identified shortcomings that DFID-sponsored capacity building programmes at the local government-CBO interface attempt to address. In theory the IDP provides a political space at the local level for a diversity of community interests and a process within which to prioritise these interests.

**DFID and the Local Government and Sustainable Livelihoods Program**

DFID has identified poverty and inequality in South Africa as the biggest threat to sustainable, long-term development. They have targeted municipal-level partnerships because local government holds an increasingly pivotal position in the delivery of services to the poor through the decentralisation of functions such as housing, and water and sanitation delivery. At the same time, they have recognized the institutional, financial, and economic challenges that exist at the municipal scale (DFID, 1998). The donor therefore has targeted three areas:
growth and development, improved service delivery, and more efficient and effective public services. Through partnerships with government, civil society, and representatives of public interest (local councillors, for instance), capacity building has been prioritized (ibid: 6, Scotland et al., 1999: iv-vi, 14-15).

The Local Government and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (LOGOSUL) has worked with national departments (such as the Department of Provincial and Local Government and the Office of the Auditor-General), provincial departments and selected local government structures to create municipal partnership programs. Local government structures seeking to qualify for this programme have demonstrated a commitment to community participation and empowerment and establishing clear mechanisms for engagement with CBOs (DFID, 1999). Capacity building through this program has targeted integrated development planning in urban and rural municipalities in particular (DFID, 1998:9). Between 1998 and 2001, more than thirty-five million pounds was committed to this area (DFID, 1998:16). The Program intended to help municipalities to:

1. Effectively plan their strategies, activities and budgets in line with the vision of developmental local government;
2. Facilitate delivery systems that improve prospects for growth and address poverty alleviation; and
3. Stabilise municipalities' fiscal resources, and increasingly direct these and external resources to efficiently promote growth and poverty alleviation.” (DFID, 1999: A.10-11)

The analysis in this paper draws from research on a DFID municipal level

---

25 DFID spends approximately 40 million pounds sterling a year in Southern Africa directly, with an additional 7 million pounds sterling spent on Southern African Development Community projects and 30 million pounds on European Union-led initiatives (SA stands to lose millions in British Aid, This Day, October 3, 2003, p1-2).
partnership to build capacity with the Tygerberg Administration\textsuperscript{26} (at this time called the City of Tygerberg (COT)) in the City of Cape Town. In this case, capacity building has targeted civil society leaders and organisations in Khayelitsha, the most poverty-stricken region in the Tygerberg jurisdiction. The municipality perceived that its confrontational relationships with CBOs and residents in Khayelitsha reduced its effectiveness as a service deliver and its ability to attract economic investment to Khayelitsha. The Isilimela Programme thus focused on building capacity in Khayelitsha CBO leadership, including councillors working for the City of Tyerberg. DFID committed a total of R500 000 to the Isilimela Programme from 1999-2002 (ibid: 12). This program is the focus of the remainder of the paper.

\textbf{The Isilimela Programme in Khayelitsha}

Although the developmental challenges faced by Khayelitsha CBOs and leaders are not unique; poverty is highly concentrated in this southeast section of the Cape Metropolitan Area. A significant twenty percent of the Cape Metropolitan population, many residents persist without sufficient infrastructure and resources and high unemployment rates. In the Khayelitsha area, civil society structures are robust and varied, but involvement in and engagement with umbrella, community-wide structures – such as the Khayelitsha Development Forum – has been heavily politicized. Thirteen Reconstruction and Development Project Forums cover the entire area, including a range of community-based organizations. Political parties are active. All ward councillors in the area represent the African National Congress, but the Democratic Party has proportional representation through the False Bay Development Forum. The majority of community-based organizations have been organized under an-ANC aligned umbrella organization, the Khayelitsha Development Forum (KDF). This body has played a key role

\textsuperscript{26} When the project was implemented the Tygerberg Administration was an independent local council under the Cape Metropolitan Council. Since November 2000 all local councils have been integrated into the City of Cape Town jurisdiction that encompasses the entire urban area.
in engaging with the municipality and with external parties such as business and non-governmental organizations.\textsuperscript{27}

As the most impoverished area of the City of Tygerberg and the Metropolitan area as well, there has been an intensive focus on Khayelitsha since the amalgamation of local government structures and the election of a democratic council. The Khayelitsha area, the coastal subdivision of the City of Tygerberg, has been the recipient of the largest proportion of the City’s capital budget for new infrastructure and there has been a significant transfer of local government officials to this area. For the first time, Khayelitsha has dedicated planning, environment, and health departments, for instance, and a complement of officials (personal communication, S.S., 1999). Yet, at the same time, development has been problematic, plagued by misunderstanding, miscommunication and, often, confrontation. Moreover, relationships between the municipality and Khayelitsha community-based organizations and residents have been hostile. In many cases, development initiatives have been delayed or even cancelled due to these difficulties. Development in the Khayelitsha area reflects these often-negative patterns of governance. The Isilimela Program thus has been designed to build the capacity of Khayelitsha-based community leaders to participate effectively so as to address their area’s development needs and to work better with the municipality. The Isilimela Program has used integrated development plans and performance management systems to focus this process.

Targeted at the leadership level, the Isilimela Project was intended to address the following:

- To improve the knowledge of community leaders of the ways in which local government works;
- To create a coherent development vision for the Khayelitsha area;
- To create better partnerships between community leaders, between

\textsuperscript{27} During the period in which the Isilimela Project was implemented in 2000 the organization splintered into two factions. The complex politics that drove these factions led the municipality to stop working directly with the organization.
Officials of the City of Tygerberg and community leaders, and between councillors and community leaders;

- To prioritise development in the context of limited resources and the vast developmental needs of residents living in the Khayelitsha area;
- To generate meaningful and implementable participation of the Khayelitsha community in the City of Tygerberg’s Integrated Development Planning process; and,
- To develop key-performance indicators to assess and monitor the progress made in Khayelitsha.

These goals encompassed physical development through the targeted projects and organisational development, focusing on building capacity in community-based leaders in Khayelitsha. The management structures for the Isilimela Project and its objectives and Projects were created by the Planning and Economic Development Directorate of the City of Tygerberg in consultation with the Southern African offices of DFID. A Steering Committee included representation from the municipality, councillors, and community representation from two CBO coalitions, the Khayelitsha Development Forum and False Bay Development Forum. An official from the municipality was assigned to manage the Program. Two consultancies were contracted, one to run the capacity building and public participation and the second to develop indicators to monitor development in Khayelitsha stemming from the Isilimela Program.

**Implementing Isilimela**

The Isilimela Program consisted of a series of large and small meetings on development and on indicators to measure development in the area. The meetings included ‘capacity building’ sessions that provided information on municipal systems, such as budgets, integrated planning, how councillors and officials process development proposals, and the systems required for implementation of these proposals. At the same time, many of these meetings
were used to gather information from CBO leadership on development priorities. The capacity building itself was limited, focused on a transfer of information on the municipality rather than the development of skills (personal communication, Z.L. 2000).28

The Programme launched in Khayelitsha with a workshop which over two hundred CBO leaders attended, with City of Tygerberg directors and officials working in Khayelitsha. Consultants ran the capacity building component of the programme and facilitated the meeting. The workshop introduced the Isilimela Project to community leaders. Sector groups that focused on specific issues were formed during the workshop. Following the workshop, meetings were held in most sector groups to prioritise development projects. The consultants facilitated these meetings and, in consultation with municipal officials, determined which projects by sector were feasible and could be budgeted for and implemented within the 2000/2001 budget cycle. Through this process, City of Tygerberg officials were identified as project leaders and other key stakeholders, such as the Western Cape Province and the Cape Metropolitan Council, were identified. This information was then given to the various sector groups through a new round of meetings, in some cases, and through distribution of the Isilimela Newsletter and radio shows in the Khayelitsha area (see tables One).

Sector groups were not very successful (see table two). Two out of the eight Sector Groups met only once. Of the five that met twice, three had significantly lower numbers of participants during the second meeting. Two groups did generate better participation.

Table 1: Isilimela Project Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isilimela Program Activities</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>CBO leaders and municipal officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector Meetings</td>
<td>See table 2 for details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report-Back Meetings</td>
<td>To six RDP Forums</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 This finding mirrors Plummer’s analysis of capacity building in many developing contexts (2000).
On average, sector groups had nine participants plus a facilitator. Of the twelve sector meetings, nine included participation from a City of Tygerberg councillor or official, indicating a limited commitment by City of Tygerberg officials to the process. Table Two documents attendance records at the various sector meetings held under the banner of the Isilimela Project where generation of participation proved more difficult.

Table 2: Isilimela Program Sector Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th># of meetings</th>
<th>CBO attendance</th>
<th>Official attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Culture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting 2: 8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment and Tourism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting 2: 5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing, Infrastructure and Transport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting 2: 1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and Recreation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting 2: 11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Education and Training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting 2: 3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Welfare</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meeting 1: 12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Consultancy Sector Meeting Attendance Records
Perceptions of which groups worked better than others did not correspond, however, with these patterns of participation. The Health and Welfare Sector, for instance, was highlighted as a successful sector group despite it only having met once. Sector Groups that functioned well tended to exist in some form in the Khayelitsha area already, for instance the Safety and Security Sector Group paralleled the interests and concerns of the Khayelitsha Community Policing Forum and thus CBOs had already formed networks on these issues. The grounding of sector groups on existing networks appeared to produce more productive engagement.

Two aspects of the process stand out for this analysis. First, participation was variable, in part, because the sector groups overlay the range of CBO activities that already existed in Khayelitsha. There was no effort by the municipality or the consultants to understand the ways in which CBOs already worked on issues of housing and infrastructure or safety and security, for instance. Participation in Isilimela Program sector groups thus was an additional set of meetings and an additional set of contacts that did not necessarily work with the capacity that Khayelitsha CBOs had built up around these issues. Second, the consultants acted as the external links between CBOs and the municipality. In conjunction with the Steering Committee, they facilitated the discussions on developmental priorities and ensured that these priorities were reflected in municipal decisions, in particular in the budgets of whatever line departments were responsible for particular sectors. Because of the centrality of the consultants’ roles, the incapacity evident in a lack of external connections in Khayelitsha CBOs was not addressed in a systematic or enduring fashion.

Interestingly, the actual physical development impacts generated through the Isilimela Program in large part mirrored the projects that the municipality already had on its books (see table three). Some sectors had many projects approved. In the Arts and Culture Sector, the municipality funded a festival to highlight Khayelitsha art activities, while the Metropolitan Council audited skills on arts and craft manufacturing and Province funded training in this area.
In Environment and Tourism a number of projects were approved. A Tourism Information Centre was established in the multi-purpose Oliver Tambo Hall, as well as Khayelitsha tourism routes, and, most visibly, the Khayelitsha Look-Out Hill site. The Khayelitsha Tourism Bureau was active in the Isilimela Program, especially the director who was previously a councillor in the municipality with many links to officials. The Early Childhood Education and Training Sector also received attention, with the municipality actively drawing in the Provincial Education Department to work in Khayelitsha. Although a significant action, the education projects did not require budgeting by the municipality itself.

Others sectors had very few prioritized projects. The Economic Development Sector, central to addressing growing unemployment, for instance, did manage to lobby effectively for more staff in the business support centre. No actual projects were approved however. In the Safety and Security Sector many important issues were highlighted, but in this case, the municipality passed these issues onto parastatals and private sector interests responsible for transport safety, for instance. The costs and the organizational implications of taking community and CBO input into these sectors seriously were greater than in the Arts and Education arenas where the municipality has control and its own capacity to do certain jobs. In Economic Development, in comparison, the private sector clearly plays a central role. A community-municipality partnership without the private sector therefore would not be effective. In Safety and Security, a solid integration with CBOs and community residents was required, a set of relationships also not well developed through Isilimela.
### Table 3: Project Requests by Sector and Projects
Prioritised by the City of Tygerberg

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Project Requests</th>
<th>Projects Budgeted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arts and Culture</strong></td>
<td>• Local skills audit on art and culture manufacturing</td>
<td>• CMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training on arts and culture development and marketing</td>
<td>• Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct one major arts and culture festival in Khayelitsha</td>
<td>• CoT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Development of arts and culture centre</td>
<td>(R200000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify open space for performance art and cultural activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Development</strong></td>
<td>• Increase staff complement in business support centre</td>
<td>• CoT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Funding of public amenities to promote tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Marketing of investment sites in Khayelitsha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify site for international stadium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentations to target and attract investors into Khayelitsha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment and Tourism</strong></td>
<td>• Establishment of Khayelitsha tourist routes</td>
<td>• CoT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establishment of Tourism Information Centre</td>
<td>• TTB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Accreditation of B&amp; Bs in Khayelitsha</td>
<td>• Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Production of Khayelitsha Tourism Information Brochure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify open spaces in Khayelitsha for flea market activities</td>
<td>• CoT, DEAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify sites for recycling depot and points for waste management</td>
<td>• TTB/CoT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identification and preservation of wetland areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identification of sites for community gardens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Initiate greening and tree-planting projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Safety and Security | • Initiate Neighbourhood Watch Projects  
• Search points at schools to combat crime and weapon misuse  
• Hotlines to doctors and police to combat domestic violence  
• Installation of closed circuit TV at railway stations and in trains  
• Locate panic buttons at strategic points at railway stations and in trains  
• Audit lighting of certain areas, install proper lighting where insufficient  
• Conduct educational projects on safety with public transport sectors |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multiple stakeholders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Housing, Infrastructure and Transport | • Create and distribute information packages on developable land  
• Draw up development criteria for particular land types  
• Release land for affordable rental stock to be run by housing company  
• Develop allocated sites for housing stock (rental and ownership)  
• Provision of infrastructure for Khayelitsha nodal development  
• Development of roads and regulation of public transport  
• Fast track development of transport interchange |
|                      | • CoT, WCPA  
• CoT, CMC |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports and Recreation</th>
<th>Sports and Recreation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Upgrade Mandela Parks Sports Field into stadium</td>
<td>• Develop and improve existing sports facilities so disable accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish ablution facilities for existing sports stadiums</td>
<td>• Complete Site C Sports Field and renovation of Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop and improve existing sports facilities so disable accessible</td>
<td>• Develop civic centres-Ilitha Park, Section C, Harare, Graceland, Town 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formation of good relationship between Khayelitsha Sports Council and the CoT Sports and Recreation Officials</td>
<td>• Identify sites for recreational facilities and find sponsors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify sites for recreational facilities and find sponsors</td>
<td>• Promote sport in schools and re-introduce Khayelitsha inter-school matches and trophies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Childhood Education and Training</th>
<th>Early Childhood Education and Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identify school sites</td>
<td>• CoT (&amp; WCPA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop 3 primary and 2 high schools that integrate disabled students</td>
<td>• WCPA, Dept. Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Negotiate with schools to make their facilities available for ABET Training Centres (electricity costs especially)</td>
<td>• WCPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve public school facilities for computers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health and Welfare</th>
<th>Health and Welfare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Refuse removal system</td>
<td>• Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sorting of refuse by type</td>
<td>• Audit of youth clinics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of 24 hour health service centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop privately managed old age home and service centre for elderly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Audit level of disability access in existing institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve library access for disabled residents immediately</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The prioritization of projects with the municipality highlights that the municipality is not the only state player in the locality; the Metropolitan Council, Provincial Departments, and the private sector are also central to development in Khayelitsha.

The politics and economics of ‘thickening’ civil society in Khayelitsha

Many meetings, workshops and R500 000 later, how has the Isilimela Programme addressed the adversarial relationships between CBOs and the municipality? And, which CBO have built their capacities and with what effect? Has civil society ‘thickened’ and with what consequence?

Out of the various elements of Isilimela, the Steering Committee has been an enduring successful part of the program. The following section analyses this committee and the various roles and experiences of councillors, officials, and CBO leaders on it. The Steering Committee consisted of a Chair, a Tygerberg community liaison official, the project manager, a senior and junior official from the Planning and Economic Development Directorate. Three councillors were nominated to the committee, two aligned to the ANC and one representing the Democratic Alliance (and National Party). The Khayelitsha Development Forum and the False Bay Development Forum each had one representative. Through a long period of frequent meetings and a significant amount of power to direct the Isilimela Program, relationships have been built between these various role players in particular ways. The following analysis highlights each group and ways in which their participating increased their networks and linkages to the state and the community.

The CBO beneficiaries

The CBO leaders and organizations that benefited most directly from the capacity building were those organizations represented on the Steering Committee.
Steering Committee CBO leaders argued that officials better understand community leaders and the development challenges and depth of poverty that residents face in Khayelitsha (X.M. and W.K., personal communication, 24/10/2000). They also claimed to understand the systems and complexities of development better, arguing that it cannot be done overnight and the slow process of development is not due to official obstruction (ibid).

Khayelitsha Development Forum and councillors representing the African National Congress and leaders and councillors from the Democratic Alliance and the False Bay Development Forum on the Steering Committee agreed that their relationships have improved through a unified focus on the Isilimela Process. This type of joint activity proved very difficult prior to this Project. A steering committee member highlighted the significance of the Program in this regard:

What is important is the process of bringing people together from different political backgrounds, different community-based organisations and bringing them together to meet and decide about what do they want for their community and how do they get there. You put aside your political affiliations. You have to think. It's not easy for one organisation to invite others so you need somebody to facilitate such a process. (X.M. 10/23/2000)

The CBO leadership that has benefited most from the Isilimela Program had strong networks in Khayelitsha and existing networks to the municipality already. The program did not capacitare those leaders outside of these networks, those leaders and CBOs most marginalized. Rather, it capacitated those that had some economic and political basis to work from. Through the Programme's ad hoc engagement with Khayelitsha civil society – its open calls for participation and its limited direction of the sector groups – it played into particular sectors of Khayelitsha civil society: those organizations and individuals that had good linkages to the Council and elsewhere, for instance, steering committee members, Councillors, members of the Khayelitsha Development Forum and False Bay Development Forum.

29 To protect interviewee's anonymity initials rather than names are used to reference interview materials.
Councillors

Councillors participating in the Steering Committee found the process useful at a community and political levels and in terms of the development of better relationships with officials. They reported finding their roles as councillors difficult and, at times, ambiguous. In particular, councillors found it difficult to balance community activism, through which they accessed their leadership roles, with their positions as representatives of the municipality. A senior municipal official commented on his perceptions of these tensions:

Councillors became councillors because they were strong activists. And having become councillors [it] was very difficult to then be councillors and not activists because there is such a mental confliction. Many councillors found they couldn't reconcile these two roles and that was intensified by the fact that becoming effective councillors involved an immense amount of understanding and knowledge and politics in a very hostile conflictual environment.... Councillors found themselves in immense contradictions in their roles.
(S.S., 10/08/2000)

Councillors also faced the power of caucus and party leadership and their regulation of voting and Khayelitsha interests (personal communication, C.S., 2000). In other instances, councillors lack of capacity, sometimes their illiteracy (personal communication W.K., 10/25/00), forced them to rely on party structures and leadership to interpret council processes and decision. This tension appears in the dominant parties, the ANC, NP, and DA, in the City of Tygerberg.

CBO leadership not on the Steering Committee and Khayelitsha residents' interpretations of these tensions were often highly critical. One NGO director dismissed Councillors as co-opted sell-outs to the municipality. He contended that:

Once councillors become part of the governing structures, community views on those who represent them changes. Now, councillors are paid workers of the City of Tygerberg, they are government agents rather than community agents. At the community level, the reality is that procedures and structures are not accountable, agendas are not circulated,
and there is limited communication. There is no clear feedback or a consultation process. Councillors are not representative. They tend to be self-interested and they seek their own self-enhancement. (S.P., 10/24/2000)

Many people articulated this sentiment, arguing that councillors ceased to represent their constituencies. Instead, they were considered part of the problem, even the ‘enemy’ like the municipality. Councillors that had particular existing connections to the municipality and specific CBO structures in the Khayelitsha area tended to engage with Isilimela more than others without these contacts. Issues of participation also reflected the restructuring of local government and the impending fight for a reduced number of councillor positions at the end of 2000 (RSA, 2000). Councillors were consequently in the process of competing through their political party structures for their positions in the now-formed unicity structures. A councillor position is a well-paid, prestigious job, a route to political upward mobility, and in straightforward terms, a livelihood. Moreover alternative formal employment was not obvious for many township politicians working in this context (W.K. 10/25/00).

Officials

On one level, the acquisition and sharing of information between Khayelitsha community-based leadership and municipal officials generated positive spin-offs for officials. Many officials commented that through Isilimela they met in person other officials with whom they worked regularly. Due to the Isilimela Program, officials had individual commitments and attachments that facilitated how they worked with each other. Some officials even felt that: “there has been a change, a collaborative approach… people can see the invisible walls they have built that made service delivery ineffective.” (personal communication, S.N., 11/2/2000)

Moreover, officials found the project helpful in identifying stable and consistent leadership in Khayelitsha. The municipal planner for Khayelitsha stated that:
We know that there are a lot of ‘generals’, but who are the ‘workers’? That’s what we needed to tease out and that is what the process has contributed to... It has teased out leadership that’s effective, that work, rather than those who are there because they hold the position. (M.S., 9/10/2000)

The relationships that evolved between some CBO leaders and officials improved the social and organisational infrastructure in the area. In consequence, the Isilimela Project led to some reduction in tensions between certain councillors and officials, and specific CBO leaders on the Program Steering Committee.

The architecture of these relationships organised around the Planning and Economic Development Directorate and, not surprisingly, those officials working in the Khayelitsha (coastal) are of the Tygerberg Administration. This dimension grew from the pivotal role played by the Director of the Planning and Economic Development Directorate in creating the Program and negotiating its funding with DFID (personal communications S.S. 10/08/2000 and M.M. 10/2/2000).

**Conclusion: The Uneven ‘Thickening’ of Civil Society**

The municipality and the donor, DFID, designed the Isilimela Programme to facilitate the municipality’s work in a politically contentious and poverty-stricken area of the city. The Program was designed to alleviate the ‘development problem’ as perceived by the municipality. The initiative was limited in its effects, but not by intent or for malicious reasons. In the municipality’s eyes, the Program was part of their agenda for being a ‘good municipality’ and a ‘competitive,’ ‘cutting-edge’ institution: able to increase delivery, reduce conflict, and thus secure position and influence in the forthcoming metropolitan restructuring process. In effect, however, the Program did not challenge the municipal system, its managerial style, or the priorities of local government because it reflected a hegemonic and simplistic understanding of ‘communities’ and CBOs (Chipkin, 2003).

The capacity building parts of the program and the type of participation facilitated in the Isilimela Program were conservative by nature (Plummer
2000: 52-53). Although the Program's rhetoric implied a focus on co-operative governance and community mobilisation, outside of the Steering Committee, the Program transferred information and introduced limited once-off forums for consultation in practice. In large part, its conservative nature stemmed from the underlying assumption that the program could build capacity through targeting CBO leadership. No analysis of CBOs and the ways in which leaders and structures connected to residents and constituents was undertaken. An assumption was made that leaders represented residents and could be held accountable for development in the area.

A senior municipal official, not fully supportive of the Program, argued that the municipality's dominance and control of the Program reflected in the broader marginalisation of poorer communities in the contemporary period. He questioned:

How can we partner with the community when we don't know what exists there? In other words, how can we make use of those processes and those strengths [in communities] to achieve common objectives? We come with our ways of doing things. We teach them how to do our thing only. (M. M., 10/2/2000)

In practice, the Isilimela Program reinforced the political status quo in Khayelitsha. Elite networks that existed between certain CBOs, councillors, and political parties were enhanced and further entrenched. Because programs were synchronised to the municipality, they only partially and selectively capitalised on the strengths existing in Khayelitsha. Likewise linkages between CBO leaders, councillors and officials were not uniform but reflected the dominance of and commitment from the Planning and Economic Development Directorate to this Program. Possibilities for more self-directed, community-driven initiatives or for linkages with other parts of the municipality that might have challenged the dominance of the municipality in directing and shaping urban development were not direct products of the Program.
The political and economic context in specific localities and across cities renders still more complex the relationship between state and civil society, and within civil society itself – relationships in which capacity building initiatives are immersed. Although donors and municipalities recognize the relative capacity and incapacity in local government itself, they have had an uncritical approach to the uneven power that structures relationships between local government and CBOs in impoverished areas. Capacity building in South Africa has been affected by the enduring legacies of authoritarianism and by the racial and class inequalities that remain deeply ingrained in South African society.

Understanding capacity building initiatives as a process of ‘thickening’ civil society thus is empirically and conceptually problematic. As with ‘building’ social capital or promoting participation and ‘good governance,’ ‘thickening’ does not occur in a vacuum. Instead, building relationships with organs of civil society is structured by an unequal political and economic context. ‘Thickening’ occurs in particular places and relative to specific spatial distributions of resources and power. Institutional linkages matter but so do their place-based and spatial contexts. The building of capacity mediates political, social, even linguistic boundaries. By building particular networks through selected leaders, organizations or state institutions thickening may generate greater impenetrability not only between the state and civil society but between various organs of civil society as well. The different logics, scales and contexts in which civil society organs develop and operate have great implications for the nature of the networks which construct their linkages to external institutions such as the state and to resources and to particular places. The complexity of civil society and its heterogeneous character holds consequences for local politics and development processes.

Capacity-building projects such as the Isilimela Programme define the nature of interaction between community leadership and residents and the municipality. They create particular types of linkages that institutionalize ways of communicating and working. Elite relationships build on sources of ‘capacity’ embedded in different types of power. Personal relationships, neighborhood
dynamics and resource bases, affiliations with political parties, alignment with new and old groupings, for instance, substantiate the race, class and spatial axes of the post-apartheid city. At the same time, the parameters and norms for that development are set by the state, legitimated by co-option of particular types of community leaders.

At a normative level, the state's project has focused on 'modernizing' political and social engagement (Chipkin, 2003). In other words, the state is intent on 'normalizing' political practice. The municipality perceived Khayelitsha as a developmental problem, as a place containing overwhelming physical, political, economic and social problems, as a settlement in need of modernization, and 'normalization.' Irritating switches of leadership, complicated problems of representation, an 'un-cooperative community' prevented the state from unilaterally upgrading, providing infrastructure, and from implementing a technically driven, modernist vision of development. Because, the state 'owned' the developmental process, it determined and defined who played the game, how the game was played, and what the end products of the game would be (Escobar 1997: 87). Although in some instances, the state has withdrawn from acting as 'developer' and service deliverer, the state continues to control the terms of the debate despite rhetoric prioritizing community participation and the centrality of civil society. Capacity building initiatives interface with these complex dynamics in contexts that reflect the uneven power and access to resources that characterize relationships between state institutions, officials, and community leadership.

**Acknowledgements**

This research was funded by a project, Donors in Transitional Southern Africa: The Contested Terrain of Development Aid, at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Natal-Durban.
References


City of Tygerberg documents:

(2000). Isilimela Capacity Building Project Reports
(2000). Isilimela Capacity Building Project Progress Reports


THIS DAY, SA stands to lose millions in British Aid, 31 October 2003, p.1-2.


WORLD BANK, 1999. South Africa: Country Assistance Strategy. (Full cite?).


The uneven 'thickening' of civil society through donor-funded capacity building in South African cities

Interviews:
G. H.r, September 27, 2000.
M. M., October 2, 2000.
S. S., October 8, 2000.
M. S., October 9, 2000.
C. S., October 18, 2000.