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# **THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Community development in democratic South Africa has been institutionalized in the Department of Social Development through the White Paper for Social Welfare of 1997. By its nature, community development is cross-cutting and implementation is often challenged by a plethora of policies and programmes that are not coherent and integrated. The non-existence of an overall community development policy to guide implementation of community development and a strategy to link efforts across sectors, agencies and the full range of policies issues also impact on implementing sustainable, people-centred and integrated community development. Besides the lack of a common definition of what community development and its outcomes are, community development is not yet recognized as an occupation or a profession. This is as a result of the non-existence of an occupation framework that defines community development, its scope of practice and standards to ensure an understanding of community development principles by practitioners.

This article includes perspectives on community development; national and international instruments that guide community development; institutionalization, current status and challenges; processes initiated and intended towards the professionalization of community development. We conclude by emphasising that the professionalization of community development requires political will and ongoing support, the motivation and support of current development practitioners, higher education institutions, local communities and civil society organisations, amongst other stakeholders of community development.

**KEY WORDS:** status and institutionalization of community development; occupation and professionalization of community development

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Community development was institutionalised as part of social welfare in South Africa during apartheid in the early 1980s. However, this does not mean that community development did not take place prior to its institutionalization by the apartheid government. Community development as collective action was an integral component of the liberation struggle and implemented by non-government and community based organisations (Habib and Taylor 1999, 74-75).

South Africa's key community development challenge is to overcome the legacy of colonialism and apartheid which was characterized mainly by the racially segregated settlement patterns and distribution of resources. As a result, the struggle to reduce inequalities, poverty and unemployment despite the positive economic growth experienced between 1994 and 2010 is an ongoing one. The current recession, however, creates further challenges for the development of the majority communities in South Africa.

The Constitution of South Africa (South Africa 1996), in particular, the Bill of Rights, clearly articulates community development as a human right. Therefore, as part of its constitutional mandate, the national government, in partnership with the provincial and local governments have a responsibility to ensure the well-being of all communities in South Africa with specific focus on those who live in material poverty; hence the institutionalization of community development.

In response to this mandate and as part of the formalization process, policies and programmes such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), The Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and Local Government (1998), Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP) (2003a) and Urban Renewal Programme (URP) (2003b), Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), War-on-Poverty and the Community Development Worker Programme (CRDP) have been developed to guide community development in South Africa.

We should bear in mind that while these policies and programmes are intended to attend to the experience of material poverty of the majority, the function of community development is to attend to poverty in its multifaceted reality consisting of, inter alia, lack of power,

resources (including income) to make choices and take advantage of opportunities (Davids 2011, 37).

## **2 PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The above policies and programmes clearly articulate at least four community development perspectives which have been adopted by the democratic government of South Africa in its effort to improve the lives of its citizens. These are the income perspective; basic needs perspective; the social exclusion perspective; and the sustainable livelihood perspective (Davids 2011, 37-40).

- i) The income perspective is founded on the logic of income poverty, which clearly undermines the significance of non-income sources of support, such as that of the extended family. This perspective influenced approaches to community development and poverty alleviation which were operationalized through, amongst other policy instruments such as GEAR, ASGISA, EPWP, social assistance, income generation and job creation poverty relief projects.
- ii) The basic needs perspective concerns itself with assistance to the poor by promoting and supporting their access to sanitation, security, clean water, shelter, education, appropriate clothing, health, an adequate and balanced diet, and physical and emotional security. Even when other perspectives on poverty are highlighted, there is a strong emphasis on first satisfying the elements of deprivation as defined from a basic needs perspective. This perspective has been operationalized to some extent through programmes such as the RDP, the ISRDP/URP, the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) as well as the War-on-Poverty campaign.
- iii) The social exclusion perspective which includes but extends the basic needs definition of poverty. It seeks to reduce deprivation, vulnerability and inequality which continue to plague the majority of South Africans. The main advantage of this perspective is that it attempts to address wide-ranging political, social and economic issues that are responsible for poverty. The key policy instrument guiding this perspective is the Bill of Rights which is enshrined in the Republic of South Africa's Constitution (Act 108 of 1996).
- iv) The sustainable livelihoods perspective stresses that ordinary citizens and communities be assisted through the construction and strengthening of an

appropriate 'asset base' to pro-actively identify, define and practice particular strategies for coping with their conditions of poverty, vulnerability and hardships. This perspective is based on the assumption that people are not poor or vulnerable in the same way and that identifying local variations in poverty or deprivation is critical in shaping effective development strategies. The sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) is adopted as one approach to community development by the Department of Social Development. As an approach and based on its assumption the SLA is not guided by any specific policy instrument and as such may prove a challenge towards operationalization in diverse community contexts in South Africa.

The challenge for democratic South African has been two fold. The first is the capacity to consolidate these perspectives into a comprehensive community development approach that is inclusive, integrated and coherent into what is now referred to as the human development perspective. This perspective requires that development both theoretically and practically incorporate the tangible and intangible aspects of people's lives. And the second challenge which is closely linked to the first, is to take into consideration international instruments that have an impact on the institutionalization and operationalization of community development in South Africa. Such consideration clearly reveals the interconnectedness of the notion of community between the local, national, regional and international contexts.

### **3 INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS IMPACTING ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **i) Action through the United Nations**

The United Nations (UN) has been involved in the promotion of development since its inception in 1945. The definition of community development by the United Nations (UN) in 1956 which emphasised community participation and self help still holds sway in a number of countries, including South Africa (Lombard 1992, 116). It played a key role in financing community development projects in the 1950s and 1960s to developing and implementing strategies and programmes in community development. A number of principles related to

social and community development have been derived from the role played by the various structures of the UN in the development arena.

- Sustainable, people-centred, integrated development approach

The World Commission on Environment and Development Report (1987) showed that in their quest for development, people were slowly destroying the natural environment. It emphasised the development crisis of both the ‘developing’ and ‘developed’ world and people-centred development therefore included the protection of the natural environment. The World Commission on Environment and Development Report (1987) defined sustainable development as “development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” cited in (Davids 2011, 22).

Subsequently, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (1992) also ensures Governments’ commitment to the implementation of community development programmes without adversely affecting the natural environment. This is in alignment with the United Nations Agenda 21 (an Agenda for Sustainable Development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century) which also emphasizes the importance of meeting and protecting the needs of the poor in a sustainable manner by promoting the maintenance of equilibrium between economic progress and ecological, cultural, and social support systems (Davids 2011, 22).

In 1995 the United Nations convened the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark (Theron 2008, 135). As a result of the development problems experienced by people in Africa and other ‘developing’ countries, heads of State and government adopted the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development which was based on the premise that in developing countries, the “challenge is to establish a people-centred framework for social development and to respond to the immediate needs of those who are most affected by human distress” (United Nations, 1995) cited in Theron (2008, 135). The Summit recognised the role played by participation and community organisations in social development and sought the commitment of world leaders to take all the necessary action to achieve people-centred development in their different countries.

The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995) became the international guiding instrument for community development and put people at the centre of development.

The importance of integrating economic, cultural and social policies so that they become mutually supportive as well as the importance of human rights was emphasized during this summit as the core for social development. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development therefore commits Governments and States to undertake interventions that focus on poverty eradication, employment creation and social integration.

In theory, government policy in South Africa is in line with the above mentioned instruments of the United Nations. Following the first democratic election in April 1994, “integrated, people-centred development approach” is reflected, for example, in the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, 1994 (Davids 2011, 18). However, in practice, the challenge is to conceptualise development generally and community development in particular that is specific to the South African history and context.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000) is considered the most important item currently on the world ‘development agenda’ (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011, 13). The MDGs promote human development as the key to sustaining social and economic development and they are a focal point for mobilisation of global resources to tackle poverty and contribute towards sustainable community development. The aim was to half most of the identified indicators of poverty by 2015. The eight goals that were identified and translated into 21 quantifiable targets, measured by 60 indicators are presented below (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011, 13-14):

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty. The targets of this goal are to increase income, increase employment and reduce the number of people who suffer from hunger.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education. The target of this goal is to ensure that all children (boys and girls) complete a full course of primary schooling.

Goal 3: promote gender equality and empower women. The target of this goal is to eliminate gender disparity at school level.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality. The target of this goal is to reduce by two-thirds the child mortality rate among children under five.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health. The targets of this goal are to reduce by maternal mortality rate and to achieve by 2015 universal reproductive health.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The targets are to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, achieve by 2010 universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for those

who need it and finally, to halt and begin reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability. The targets are to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reserve the loss of environmental resources; reduce biodiversity loss; reduce by half the number of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; and to achieve significant improvements in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2010.

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development. The targets are to develop an open rule-based predictable and non-discriminatory trading and financial system; address the special needs of the least developed countries; address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states; and deal comprehensively with the debt problem of developing countries.

There is no doubt that the MDGs directs us to the urgent development issues that require focused attention, political will, policy development and an enabling practical environment. It is also clear that the MDGs are an ongoing challenge to the national government's social and community development programmes in South Africa.

## **ii) Action through the African Union**

- The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) adopted the "African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation" in 1990 in Arusha, Tanzania. It was "organised out of concern for the serious deterioration in human and economic conditions in Africa in the decade of the 1980s, the recognition of the lack of progress in achieving popular participation and lack of full appreciation of the role that popular participation plays in the process of recovery and development" (OAU, 1990) cited in (Theron 2008, 135). Non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, representatives of African governments, donors, multilateral organisations and regional organisations were participants of the conference.

The Charter sought "to emphasise the basic fact that the role of the people and their popular organisations is central to the realisation of popular participation" (Theron 2008, 135). It said

that it was essential that people should establish independent organisations, at different levels, which are genuinely grassroots, voluntary, democratically administered, self-reliant and rooted in the tradition and culture of the society. The role of governments was to facilitate broad-based participation to achieve self-sustaining, people-centred development.

- The Yaoundé Declaration

In 2005 the International Association for Community Development (IACD), an international non-government organisation which promotes the values, theory and practice of community development held its biannual conference in Yaoundé, Cameroon. The theme of the conference was “Building civil society through community development”. About 400 delegates, representing civil society organisations from Africa and beyond, adopted the “Yaoundé Declaration on the role of community development in building civil society in Africa”. The declaration was forwarded to the African Union and, through it, to governments and regional bodies concerned with the role of community development in Africa (Theron 2008, 136).

The conference agreed that, within the framework of community development, certain minimum conditions should be met (Theron 2008, 137):

- The provision of basic needs (portable water, food security, education, sanitation, electricity, health care, communications, shelter and infrastructure)
- Determined work towards the eradication of poverty
- The promotion of basic human rights and responsibilities within a framework of peace and social justice
- The celebration of nurturing of the “soul” of communities, and respect for local cultural contexts where these do not undermine basic human rights
- Support for processes that enable collective participatory decision making at all levels of society
- The building of the capacity of all relevant actors and stakeholders in the development process
- Respect for the integrity of the natural environment

The minimum conditions for community development outlined in the Yaundé Declaration could be considered as an instrument that closely reflects a starting point for community development in the South African context.

#### **4 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) is a negotiated policy framework and strategy, which charted a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development. The goal of developmental social welfare is a humane, peaceful, just and caring society which upholds welfare rights, facilitates the meeting of basic human needs, releases people's creative energies, and helps them to achieve their aspirations, build human capacity and self-reliance, and participate fully in all spheres of social, economic and political life (The White Paper for Social Welfare 1997, 7).

The White Paper clearly articulates community development as an approach, philosophy, process, method and strategy to address basic material, physical and psycho-social needs of the poor and vulnerable communities. It also makes provision for the employment of a range of social development workers to address different needs and problems and to increase human resource capacity, particularly in under-serviced communities and rural areas.

It is through the White Paper Social Welfare (1997) that community development has been institutionalized in the Department of Social Development and gives the department a mandate to provide sector-wide leadership in community development.

#### **5 THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Community development is practiced by community development practitioners, workers and community based organizations. The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), advocates that the focus of community development should be on the following:

- The facilitation of the community development process.

- The development of family-centred and community-based programmes.
- The facilitation of capacity-building and economic empowerment programmes.
- The promotion of developmental social relief and disaster relief programmes.
- The facilitation of food aid programmes in emergency situations as a temporary measure until individuals and households can be incorporated into other social development programmes.
- Encouraging and facilitating voluntary participation in social and community development programmes
- Facilitation of self-help groups and mutual aid support programmes where needed.
- Promotion of advocacy programmes.

However, due to the pressing challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment, the focus of the Department of Social Development has been mainly on income generating, food security and social relief projects. The fact that the focus has been on projects dominated by the income/economic perspective is an indication of the failure to empower communities as almost all projects were state-led and funded, operating as non-profit organizations. Consequently, most of these projects could not survive without continued state-funding and were unable to achieve the intended purpose of reducing poverty and unemployment.

This perspective also undermined the fact that community development is not just about growth but also the capability of communities to make choices, to increase their networks and to manage change. Erroneously, community development is perceived to be a tool for service delivery to meet the needs of the poor and vulnerable. While access to services has been improved, the need-based and service delivery approach to community development does not empower communities to re- think issues, improve their networks and their overall capacity to mobilize existing skills and put innovative ideas into action. While it has to be acknowledged that the majority of communities in South Africa require the assistance of government to achieve their development goals, these approaches, however, reinforce an unhealthy dependency on state support. They do not promote shifts in consciousness and power and erode the creative capacity of communities to shape their development paths with assistance from external sources as identified by the communities.

## **6 CHALLENGES FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Community development in South Africa has faced a variety of challenges and obstacles, some within its own practice and others in the external environment. These challenges include lack of a shared conceptualization understanding of community development; poor coordination across the sectors and alignment at national, provincial and local levels; lack of context specific knowledge both in theory and practice; incoherent and inappropriate education, training, support and development of practitioners and community based organizations for the occupation; lack of recognition of community development as an occupation and complex processes towards professionalization.

### **6.1 Attributes of the Occupation**

Failure to implement all key community development focus areas outlined in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) generally and, in particular, facilitation of the community development process and adoption of developmental and empowering approaches did not only create wrong assumptions about the meaning and scope of community development, but also impacted on appropriate resourcing of the community development programme and education of practitioners and community based organizations. The scope of community development practice i.e. the nature of work undertaken in this field has not been very clear in the Department of Social Development. This lack of clarity has impacted on the definition and the status of the community development occupation.

The other critical challenge has been the lack of evidence based community development practice. Working with patchy documentation of outcomes and undefined indicators has contributed to low levels of understanding and status of community development. While it is clear that community development happens when a community itself engages in a process aimed at improving its social, economic, cultural, political and environmental situation, what is happening currently in practice is not aligned to this understanding of community development. In practice a number of uncoordinated projects and initiatives are being set up, most of which are not sustainable and impacting negatively on the current standing of community development. The most pertinent question is: how can we ensure that community development is widely understood and used to maximum effect to build vibrant and sustainable communities in South Africa?

## **6.2 Recognition of Community Development as an Occupation and Profession**

Community development is an emerging discipline that is not as yet fully recognized either as an occupation or as profession. In order for community development to attain full recognition, it requires an occupation framework that clearly outlines its scope of practice, norms and standards and code of ethics as well as a recognized qualification.

## **6.3 Resourcing Community Development**

Funding of the community development programme in the Department of Social Development is the lowest of all its programmes. This is partly due to the limited scope of community development as well as the limited capacity of community based organizations to implement effective community based programmes. There are numerous community based organisations that are engaged in voluntary or self-help work often with very weak institutional support and poor access to funds to carry out their work. The department must adopt an approach which combines capacity development of organisations with funding advice to increase the potential of community based organisations to become more self-managing and sustainable and capable of facilitating effective development in partnership with Department of Social Development.

## **6.4 Training, Support and Development of Community Development Practitioners and Community Based Organisations**

The lack of understanding of the function of community development in the Department of Social Development and the limited focus on projects and food distribution resulted in the recruitment and appointment of many practitioners/workers who were not appropriately trained and qualified in community development. These officials required a huge amount of support and training to improve their knowledge and understanding of community development theories for effective sustainable, people-centred and integrated practice. The challenge has been the non-availability of standardized community development qualifications that are specifically relevant to the South African context and in the essential values and depth of the subject matter.

Another aspect of capacity development in this field is the importance of networking and on-the-job training. Without proper support and systems to facilitate effective networking and learning, practitioners and community based organisations will not be able to improve their knowledge and skills. There is lack of organized support for practitioners and community based organizations to enhance quality practice and a platform to collectively ‘voice’ their issues.

## **6.5 Strategic Coordination and Alignment across the Sector**

By its nature, community development is cross-cutting and its implementation is often challenged by a plethora of policies and programmes that are not coherent and integrated. The Department of Social Development is in the process of finalizing the National Community Development Policy Framework which aims to guide implementation of community development and to link efforts across sectors including civil society and development agencies. Currently, community development efforts are still implemented in a fragmented and uncoordinated manner with poor alignment between national, provincial and the local spheres of government. This fragmented approach contributes to wastage of limited resources and it becomes all the more important to build a strategic collaborative approach at the local level that incorporates all stakeholders involved in community development.

## **7 CURRENT STATUS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **7.1 Role and Status of the Community Development as an Occupation and Profession**

The Department of Social Development has started a process to promote community development as a nationally recognized occupation and profession with clear values, methods and outcomes. For this process to be achieved, two important steps have been undertaken.

### **7.2 Development of an Occupational Framework**

The Department of Social Development has begun the process of developing the Occupational Framework for Community Development. The framework describes what a person needs to do, to know and understand in their job in order to carry out their role in a consistent, ethical and competent way. It outlines the standards for the occupation and also

informs 'good practice' by creating linkages between skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. The standards outlined in the Occupational Framework ensures that the values of community development be understood and reflected in the work of community development practitioners as facilitators of activities throughout the community development process. The Occupational Framework for Community Development will therefore provide a guiding framework for all community development practice across a wide range of roles, settings, levels of responsibility as well as for present and future challenges.

### **7.3 Professionalization of Community Development**

The first consultative workshop organised by the Department of Social Development in 2007 discussed and developed consensus regarding the need for professionalization of community development. At further consultative meetings with the most recent held in July 2012, a critical issue raised was whether the registration of persons involved in community development with the South African Council for Social Service Professions would be relevant and beneficial for community development in the current democratic context. Community development stakeholders appreciated and agreed that professionalization will have a positive impact on community development. However, this process is complex and long with distinct steps that must be achieved before its completion. Some of these steps have been achieved such as the generation of a recognized qualification at NQF Level 8 and the process of developing the Occupational Framework for community development. Other steps include the establishment of an association, followed by a professional board and ultimately a separate independent Council for the profession of community development.

### **7.4 Education and Training: Development of a standardized qualification at NQF Level 8**

A skills audit of all community development practitioners was commissioned by the Department of Social Development to assess the existing capacity of its personnel, which included qualifications, skills and talent with a view to design training programmes. The audit also evaluated the community development personnel's capacity to undertake major community development programmes as well as to integrate their activities with other departmental programmes through the referral system. Fundamental to the skills audit was

the desire to create a community development system that consists of knowledgeable and well-trained community development practitioners/professionals.

The findings of the skills audit revealed different issues relating to the status of skills for practitioners and managers throughout the nine provinces. Amongst other issues, the lack of uniformity across the nine provinces in terms of implementing community development, qualifications for community development practitioners, salary grading, training, norms and standards and policy guidelines that shape community development were prominent. These findings have assisted in creating an understanding of the nature of community development practice capacity that currently exists and what should be done to strengthen and improve the capabilities of practitioners and managers to function optimally. A skills plan has been developed and is in the process of implementation to address the identified gaps.

The Department of Social Development and SAQA entered into a joint implementation plan in 2008 to develop standardized qualifications for community development. Through this arrangement, three qualifications were developed and registered: Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) at Level 4; National Certificate at NQF Level 5 and a 4 year Bachelor of Community Development Degree (NQF Level 8). This qualification has been informed by the scope of practice for community development practitioners. It is a professional qualification intended in the main to educate community development professionals to facilitate collective processes in a community to effect psycho, social and economic development.

Community development professionals require theoretical knowledge and practical skills to facilitate activities that enable households and communities to manage their own sustainable development. Community development professionals need to be accountable, responsible and ethical. A consultative process with higher education institutions is being undertaken to offer community development and adopt the newly registered degree as a standardized national qualification.

## **8 WHERE TO FROM HERE**

Much has been done and achieved towards the professionalization of community development. What we need as community development activists, is to organize ourselves in

a manner that will assist us to map a route to create an effective, valued, strategic, recognized and sustainable community development sector. The summit organised by the Department of Social Development in October 2011 to create awareness on the need to professionalise community development and attended by community development practitioners, non-government organisations and higher education representatives received overwhelming support towards professionalizing community development. There was equally strong support for the establishment of a Community Development Association as a first step of the professionalization process.

### **8.1 The Purpose of the Association**

The purpose of the Association will be to establish and promote community development as a unique and distinct multidisciplinary and multisectoral human centred profession and facilitate processes towards the establishment of a statutory professional board and a national council for community development in democratic South Africa.

### **8.2 Primary Objective of the Association**

The primary objective is to serve as a community development network which, amongst others, will be able to:

- Improve access to and sharing of information to unify the sector;
- Enable better understanding, promotion and influence of the core community development values;
- Facilitate development of community development infrastructure and support;
- Act as a policy-practice-development loop;
- Maximize funding streams to better support community development work;
- Promote local level training to contribute to the building of enhanced skills and expertise of community based organisations empowering them to challenge, participate in and facilitate change in local communities.
- Act as a “clearing house” where matters of practice, theory and professional training can be scrutinized

### **8.3 The Role of the Association**

Amongst others, the role of the Association will be to:

- Bring together practitioners and activists of community development to foster recognition of the profession
- Represent the interest of community development practitioners
- Contribute to and influence national policies on community development
- Promote ethical community development practice based on sound community development principles
- Protect the public against community development malpractice by its members
- Provide strategic direction towards professionalization of community development
- Explore innovative ideas in community development practice, encourage and exercise creativity and achieve results.
- Contribute to the development of knowledge, theory and practice in community development
- Promote scholarship on community development in the South African context
- Challenge assumptions that may negatively impact on community development in South Africa.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

Assessed against national and international instruments of ‘sustainable, people-centred, integrated’ development, the Department of Social Development is aware that much intensive work still needs to be done to make community development effective in contemporary South Africa. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that with the efforts made towards the appropriate education and training of community development practitioners; developing an occupational framework for and moving towards the professionalization of community development augurs well for community well being in South Africa. What is critical though for the continuation of this progress is political will and ongoing support, the motivation and support of current development practitioners, higher education institutions, local communities and civil society organisations, amongst other stakeholders of community development.

We are in no doubt that the road ahead will be a difficult and challenging one, especially since we do not have an existing frame of reference for ‘sustainable, people-centred and integrated’ community development. But given the overwhelming support at the summit, we are firm in our conviction to continue to promote the recognition of community development as a unique and distinct occupation and profession in democratic South Africa.

## NOTES

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