



University of Cape Town

Department of Social Development

Research Topic: Experiences and Perceptions of Women involved in Food Garden Projects in Khayelitsha

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Declaration

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- Last but definitely not least, I would like to take this opportunity to convey my deepest appreciation to my family, friends and relatives for always believing in me. To you all I say “*ALUTA CONTINUA*”.

Dedication

This minor dissertation is dedicated to my father, Mr Crispin Capson Ndlovu. It is his desire to see his children get education in the midst of lack and deprivation, which inspired and enabled me to come this far with my studies. May God richly bless you.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of women involved in food garden projects. This was evaluated against the Community Driven Development approach which is a development initiative to empower community groups by giving them control over resources and decision making in their efforts to improve their living conditions. The context in which the seventeen women who participated in the study live is one of poverty. Many women in the study mentioned lack of employment as their motivation for joining food gardens, which they saw as a way of escaping poverty and providing food for their households.

An exploratory and descriptive study was conducted to obtain information from the women involved in food gardens as it allowed the researcher to gain data in an open, flexible and inductive manner. This research design was appropriate for the study as research participants were best understood within their natural setting. Seventeen face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted. The participants' ages ranged from twenty-eight to sixty years old. The majority of the women interviewed were in their fifties. A semi-structured interview schedule was used as a guideline and was however, not followed rigidly. Data was collected through an audio recorder and consent forms were signed by the participants. Transcription was done using Tesch's (1990) method of analysis.

The findings indicated that food gardens provide an opportunity to the women to take action to sustain their livelihoods, providing a form of self employment, food and a means to generate some income. The food gardens also created social networks for these women which resulted in them being included in the community's activities as they had developed networks which acted as sources of support. However, the women repeatedly iterated that lack of funds and inconsistent support from role players such as government and other agencies hindered the success of their activities. Their main comments on recommendations for assistance and support were directed to the government and other organisations working with people in the grassroots level. Support for these local initiatives may contribute to their success.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.Statement of the Problem

This study sought to explore experiences and perceptions of women involved in food garden projects in Khayelitsha, a township in the Western Cape. These experiences and perceptions were evaluated against the Community Driven Development (CDD) approach. CDD is defined as an initiative of development that is meant to empower community groups by giving them control over resources and decision making in their efforts to improve their living conditions. The approach emerged in the early 1990s promoted by the World Bank in an effort to allow communities to have direct control over key decisions in their local projects and management of investment funds (World Bank, 2004). It is against this background that the World Bank sought to foster CDD to further include people in the development process and put ownership and power for decision making in their hands (Dongier, Van Domelen, Ostrom, Rizvi, Wakeman, Bebbington, Alkire, Esmail and Polski, 2002).

In spite of numerous efforts in the form of policies, strategies and programmes that aim to involve the poor in their development, many countries and development agencies still exclude the poor in the decision making process and participation in the development process (Dongier et al., 2002). The top-down approach to development has not yielded optimal results as the poor are excluded from most of the development process. The poor are still marginalised and programmes are not effectively meeting their needs (Jacobs, 2009). Research into understanding how local initiatives could utilise aspects of the Community Driven Development Approach is therefore vital, and the researcher undertook this minor dissertation with that in mind.

The CDD approach has five main features, namely: a) realigning the centre, where government decentralises powers to the local level to promote development, b) empowering local communities, where local communities, through outside support and their own initiative, take part in the development process of their communities, c) empowering local governments, where local authorities take sound action in their local areas and provide an enabling environment for local economic development, d) accountability, as a CDD feature calls for all parties involved in the development process to take account and be answerable for their actions, and e) capacity

building where local communities are capacitated and given the skills to effectively and efficiently run the projects (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005).

Thus, when the above features emerge in any local project, the CDD approach would have been employed. The value of these features is that they allow control and decision making of the development process to be in the hands of the beneficiaries. They foster empowerment of local communities in the development process to design, implement and monitor their own projects. These principles are explored further in the Literature Review Chapter (see section 2.6). This study specifically used these principles to explore food garden projects as examples of Community Driven Development.

Food gardens have emerged in recent years as a strategy for dealing with food insecurity, stimulating economic growth and combating hunger. Some countries in Europe and Asia (Germany, Belgium, Japan and Korea) have supported food garden projects often as partial contributors to household food security. In Africa, food gardens have become important because they offer opportunities for poverty alleviation, for example by providing food security and income generation especially among the urban poor. The examples of Nairobi, Lusaka and Harare are explored by Kutiwa, Boon and Devuyt (2010). According to Small (2008), the food garden movement emerged in the early 1980s in South Africa. Food gardens were predominant in urban areas as the urban poor sought viable means to secure decent livelihoods, fight household hunger and secure food availability. These projects have drawn many unemployed people, especially the elderly, to participate so as to earn a living.

The area where research was undertaken, Khayelitsha, is a township outside of Cape Town in the Western Cape. While the Cape Town Central Business District is only approximately thirty kilometres away, there are few economic activities and opportunities in the township itself. Approximately 30% of the economically active population of Khayelitsha is unemployed, with women constituting 56% of this group (Cole and Narsoo, 2007). Unemployment has been viewed as a major determinant of poverty as the poor lack the income to sustain their livelihoods with women, children, the elderly and the youth, the most affected (World Bank, 2004; Motlounge and Mears, 2002). All the participants in this study are unemployed, yet support two generations of dependants, with household income comprising mostly social grants. Thus,

food garden projects have played a pivotal role in this area as they have enabled interested community members to become involved in the food garden activities and earn a living. Community Driven Development offers a valuable approach to overcoming poverty. Studies that enable development practitioners to understand how local initiatives utilise aspects of the Community Driven Development approach are therefore vital. With this in mind, this study focused on the experiences and perceptions of women involved in food garden projects in Khayelitsha in their quest to improve their living conditions. The study thus specifically answered the following questions.

1.2 Research Topic: Experiences and Perceptions of Women involved in Food Garden Projects in Khayelitsha

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the experiences and perceptions of the women involved in food garden projects?
2. What kind of challenges do they face in their daily gardening activities?
3. Are there any existing programmes or policies that support local urban agricultural programmes such as food gardens?

1.4 Research Objectives

Based on the above mentioned questions, the objectives of the study are the following:

1. To explore the experiences and perceptions of the women involved in food garden projects
2. To ascertain the kind of challenges they face in their daily gardening activities
3. To ascertain the existence of programmes or policies that support local urban agricultural programmes such as food garden projects.

1.5 Rationale and Significance of the Study

The causes of poverty in South Africa are complex and multi-faceted. High unemployment has been cited as a contributing factor to poverty in South Africa. It is also said to be a function of lack of economic and employment opportunities for the economically active group in townships (StatsSA, 2012). Isolation from economic opportunities has resulted in the majority of township

residents finding it hard to make ends meet, making them vulnerable to poverty (Huchzermeyer, 2003). Sen (1999) views poverty as a capability deprivation which hinders people's ability to lead the kind of lives they value. The study thus focused on food garden projects in Khayelitsha as examples of Community Driven Development initiative that contribute to poverty alleviation at the community level. The researcher was interested in exploring women's experiences and perception of how participating in these projects enabled them to earn a living, become self-sufficient and support themselves and their families.

The researcher chose to research women because they are the most affected by unemployment and poverty. Women constitute approximately 50% of South Africa's population and yet are the most vulnerable to poverty. StatsSA (2012) state that 60% of women live in low income households and 60% of that number being black women as compared to the 9% of white women. Women's realities in South Africa are still determined by race, class and gender and poor black women are severely affected as their access to resources, opportunities, education and wealth is severely limited. Rural women face the greatest lack of access to resources and basic services, unequal rights in the family structures as well such as limited access to family resources such as livestock and land (Tichagwa, 1998). These women are affected and discriminated against by the patriarchal forces, and hence live in immense poverty. Poverty, food insecurity and malnourishment affect both urban and rural female headed households most severely, since 43% of these households have no one employed (Kehler, 2000; Cole and Narsoo, 2007). The study thus examined the experiences and perceptions of women participating in food garden projects and also explored the nature and level of their participation and involvement in the running and management of such projects.

1.6 Clarification of Concepts

Poverty - Poverty is very complex and multi-dimensional as it has no single "correct" definition. It is however paramount to note that any definition of poverty has to be understood in relation to context, be it social, cultural or historical. Sen (1999) defines poverty as capability deprivation, exclusion, lack of resources, choices, securities and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, social, economic and political rights. In the same vein, Davids, Theron, and Maphunye (2009) define poverty as the lack of economic resources

and is an important cause of social exclusion. The latter is the definition that will be used in this study as it highlights how lack of economic opportunities have had an effect on these women's livelihoods hence they resorted to engaging in food garden projects to make ends meet.

Poverty Reduction – This refers to initiatives, strategies and policies that lessen the number of people and groups living in poverty. These are short term programmes that help low income people to meet their basic needs through interventions such as food banks and homeless shelters which help to overcome their vulnerabilities (Kraai, 2009).

Poverty Alleviation - Loewen (2010) views poverty alleviation as improving the negative impact of poverty on people in a more permanent and sustainable way, through strategies and policies that are long term, sustainable and developmental. The South African social grant system is an example of a poverty alleviation policy that provides an immediate and sustainable relief for the poor.

Unemployment - UN Habitat (2006) states that unemployment refers to a lack of opportunity to use oneself in a meaningful way that contributes positively to one's existence and survival. Furthermore, the Republic of South Africa through the National Treasury Document (2011:57) describes unemployment as when an individual is able and willing to work but cannot find work and remains jobless. This is the definition which was used in this research study as the women involved were willing to find employment but their personal circumstances hindered them.

Community Driven Development (CDD) - is an initiative of development that is meant to empower community groups by giving them control over resources and decision making in their efforts to improve their living conditions (Dongier et al., 2002).

Food gardens - are defined by the South African Herb Academy (2010) as any space devoted to growing edible crops with the intention of consumption or selling. These can be grown in an open space of land, in the backyard, on a balcony or on the rooftops depending on where one wishes to grow them.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter One: Introduction to the Research-The chapter introduces the study and provides the rationale and significance of the study. The chapter also presents the research questions and research objectives of study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review- The goal of the chapter is to review literature and theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. It also highlights the conceptual framework and foundation for the research.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology- A detailed account of the research design and methodology that was adopted in the study is provided in this chapter. The sample, data collection, data analysis and limitations of the methodology are set out.

Chapter Four: Research Findings and Data Analysis- An overview of the case study is given in this chapter. The chapter also presents the analysis of data collected through the face-to-face interviews.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations- Conclusions on the experiences and perceptions of women involved in food gardens are presented in this chapter. The chapter ends by giving recommendations to government, and NGOs and for further research and how this can add to knowledge on CDD based poverty alleviation initiatives.

1.8 Summary

This chapter provided an introduction to the research. It gave a brief overview of the rationale, purposes and significance of the study which is mainly the experiences and perceptions of women involved in food garden projects in Khayelitsha in their quest to improve their living conditions and better their lives together with that of their families. The reasons why women were the focus of the study was also highlighted. The chapter briefly outlined the Community Driven Development approach which is basis of this study as it offers a valuable approach to overcoming poverty. The next chapter will thus present and discuss the Literature Review undertaken by this research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The human development perspective views poverty as lack of voice, power and capability to choose the kind of life that individuals value. It hinders the affected people in enlarging their opportunities and capabilities so as to increase their productivity and participation in their own development (Sen, 1999). Poverty has also been defined as the inability of individuals, households and communities to attain minimal standards of living, thus making access to social services such as shelter, water and sanitation difficult for most households (UNDP, 2010). Lack of adequately paying, secure jobs and unemployment in general have contributed to the majority of people living in poverty (Motlounge and Mears, 2002).

Unemployment is viewed as when an individual is able and willing to work but cannot find work (National Treasury, 2011). The degree of unemployment in South Africa has been reported by StatsSA, (2010) as 40% and 22 million people live, on average, on less than R144 (\$21) per month (UNDP, 2010). Poverty and unemployment in South Africa have a racial and gender dimension, as 30% of the black active population are unemployed, compared to only 9% of the white population, hence making South Africa one of the most uneven societies in the world (Taylor, 2011). Unemployed people are the most likely to exist in poverty and are the least likely to get new jobs. Therefore, the link between unemployment and poverty is strongest in the case of long term unemployment (Motlounge and Mears, 2002). Poverty is even more severe when there are dependents in the household (Nolan and Callan, 1999).

Low levels of education and lack of labour market experience have contributed to high unemployment in South Africa. Most companies require at least a Matriculation qualification to hire people. Having education, skills and experience in the job market are important factors that ensure employability. It would thus be true to say that lack of education and experience are viewed as a great hindrance in the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of individuals (Keenan, 2007). It is recognised that providing employment opportunities could be one of the most sustainable routes out of poverty (Zaman, 2011).

Because of inequalities and distortions caused by the apartheid system in South Africa, unemployment and poverty are more visible in the previously deprived groups in particular. Inequalities of income and geographical settings have resulted in low standards of living within the lower income rural and urban areas (Davids et al, 2009). Most of the urban black population live in townships, areas that have few or no economic opportunities for the township dwellers. Local economic development of these areas may result in residents having access to employment or economic activities which can improve growth and reduce poverty (Taylor, 2011). Hence this study focused on how women in the township of Khayelitsha are turning their situation around in the midst of deprivation and poverty.

2.2 Unemployment and Women

Women constitute more than half the population of the world and yet their participation in the labour market is less than that of men. In South Africa, 69% of the women are unemployed compared to 30% of males (UNDP, 2003). Women in Africa and in South Africa in particular, remain vulnerable and marginalised with limited access to services and economic resources, compared to their male counterparts. They are still found at the bottom rung of poverty, illiteracy, landlessness and are concentrated in the rural areas where facilities and services are scarce and high unemployment has further worsened their situation (Kulik, 2000; Kehler, 2000; Tichagwa, 1998:3). Illiteracy limits women's chances in the corporate sector where they are unable to compete against men who are more literate. Constraints such as tradition, culture, finance, early marriages, pregnancy and the general attitude towards education has rendered women at a disadvantage compared to men (UNDP, 2003).

With the current trends of globalisation, rolling back of the state and cuts in social spending in the world and, of course, in South Africa as well, women are more likely to be faced with unemployment as they are concentrated in low skilled jobs and are prone to be affected by retrenchments before their male counterparts. Global events such as the sudden escalation in prices of essential commodities in 2007, the global financial crisis in 2008 and the global recession in 2009, have had a serious effect particularly on women who have dependents and have been hit by retrenchments and low wages (UNDP, 2010). The most affected by these global trends in South Africa have been female-headed households where the head is not employed and,

with no access to income, has relied heavily on social assistance through the social grant system (StatsSA, 2010).

Women's living conditions are directly affected by the basic services their households receive. They are also primary care givers to their children, orphans, the elderly and people living with disabilities, hence, if they are not employed, their lives are severely affected, together with those of their families (Ramphela, 2002). While provision of social grants and improved access to basic services have played a pivotal role as secondary sources of income and better living conditions (Department of Social Development, 2010), their situations have remained dire. Hence this study assessed how women made ends meet in the midst of lack and unemployment.

Unemployment had always been a matter of serious concern. It has topped people's development agenda and has become the prime of socio-economic issues in South Africa and other developing nations. Mahlwele (2012) states that unemployment contributes to poverty and inequality, erodes human dignity and also creates social and economic tensions among affected groups which mainly include women and the youth. He goes on however to state that surveys which focus on unemployment such as the October Household Survey (HOS), Survey of Employment Earnings (SEE), Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) and Labour Force Survey (LFS) have put minimum emphasis on women unemployment. This is because studying women's unemployment is very problematic because, even when women are unemployed, they continue to perform many household duties that while they are unpaid, remain essential for the running of the family and ultimately, the country's economy.

Although this might be the case, it is paramount to acknowledge that women unemployment exist because of many factors and these need to be addressed as accessing the job market is one of the greatest factors in securing economic autonomy for women and is also instrumental in reducing the inequalities affecting them (Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW Shadow Report, 2013).

Mahlwele (2012) states factors which contribute to women's escalating unemployment in South Africa and these include minimum or no education, lack of skills, age, marital status, race and geographic location. He states that employment is determined by the level of education whereby women with high level of education can access employment more than those with little or no

education at all. Lack of training means one is not skilled and equipped to access the labour market. Thus there is need to address level of skills and education among women which may be of great importance to policy makers in the formation of appropriate policies affecting this group.

Ages goes with experience and knowledge, thus new graduates and out of school young people with no experience always find it hard to penetrate the job market as they lack relevant experience.

Single women are the most affected by unemployment as they are left to carry the family burden by themselves. However, married women may also be affected by unemployment as they are forced to take care of their children and sacrifice employment in the process.

Kemleben, Sangweni and Kedger, (2003) state that the inequalities of the past such as Apartheid contribute to current trends of unemployment among black South Africans. Blacks' education was inferior to those of whites such that few blacks were qualified for well paid jobs. Official laws prevented blacks from having the same access as whites to employment opportunities, skilled occupations and fair remuneration resulting in racial segregation giving rise to the unemployment. Provincial imbalances due to former homelands also affect provincial employment in South Africa (Mahlwele, 2012). Residents in former "Bantustans" still entail a greater risk of unemployment than residents elsewhere. This is even worse for women who also have to deal with gender and cultural stereotypes to access employment. Provinces such as Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal for example, which were demarcated to be homelands, to this day remain under-developed compared to Gauteng and the Western Cape which are developed. Thus more needs to be done with the rising levels of female unemployment especially in budgets statements and governments' proposed policies to stimulate job creation.

2.3 Poverty and Women

More than one billion people in the world today, the great majority of whom are women, live in conditions of poverty, mostly in the developing countries. It is argued that poverty is rooted in demographic trends, cultural patterns and the general political economy. Women have been affected by poverty the most in recent decades, revealing the gender dimension of poverty. 70% of the world's poor are women and their poverty states are manifested at the household, sectoral,

occupational and locational levels (World Bank, 2004; Millennium Project Commission, 2010). Studies show that women continue to experience a myriad of challenges in a bid to emancipate themselves from poverty (Moyo, 2013). In most African countries, nuclear households are the most secure and female-headed households the most insecure and the most vulnerable to poverty (Frayne, Battersby-Lennard, Fincham and Haysom, 2009).

Inequalities in distribution of wealth and resources have rendered women more vulnerable to poverty than men. The Beijing Platform for Action (UN, 1995) calls for all governments to formulate and implement when necessary, specific social, economic, agricultural and related policies in support of women and to analyse policies and programmes from a gender perspective so as to promote equitable distribution of wealth, assets, opportunities, services and income (Moghadam, 2005; UNDP, 2003). Poverty and hunger are increasing and remain an important global challenge. The proportion of poverty and hunger has been rising since 2004 to 2006 and over a billion hungry people and more than two billion people are deficient in micro nutrients, with women and children being the most affected (UN, 2010).

Women constitute approximately 50% of South Africa's population and yet are the most vulnerable to poverty. StatsSA (2012) highlights that 60% of women live in low income households, with 60% being black women compared to the 9% of white women. In 43% of female-headed households no one is employed. The inequalities highlighted above reveal how poverty is influenced by racial factors as a result of the legacy of apartheid which favoured the white minority (Kehler, 2000). This view is also supported by the Triegaardt (2007) and Moyo (2013) who state that poverty in South Africa exhibits a racial, gender and spatial dimension, and is mainly concentrated among black Africans, and the most affected being the women. Thus women should be put in the forefront in the fight against poverty and should be included in the designing, implementation and monitoring of poverty alleviation initiatives if they are to be emancipated from poverty.

Most poor women are concentrated in rural areas where access to resources is minimal and are thus highly susceptible to the risk of poverty. Female-headed households are likely to include extended families, with high dependency ratios. This further exposes them to poverty as they do not have adequate resources to sustain the bigger households. The burden that children present on women, especially the female-headed households is illustrated by the high prevalence of "skip

generation” households, where grandchildren live with their grandparents in the absence of their parents who might be late or would have moved to cities in quest of employment (Ramphela, 2002). This causes a generational cycle of poverty as there is no escape for the children. Research shows that women who lived in poverty as children are more likely to continue living in a state of poverty as adults (StatsSA, 2010).

The majority of South Africans still live in poverty and under conditions that can permanently threaten their well-being. According to the 2011 census, only 40% of the households had an indoor water supply, and a further 17% had a tap inside the yard, while 13% of households still use dams, streams and rivers for their water needs. This further puts these households at risk of disease, with women greatly burdened as they care for the sick (Saunders, 2002). Women’s realities in South Africa are still determined by race, class and gender as indicated above, thus poor black women are affected as their access to resources, opportunities, education and wealth is severely limited. Rural women are the most affected in this case as they not only face greater lack of access to resources and basic services, they face unequal rights in the family structures as well as in-access to family resources such as livestock and land. These women are likely to be affected and discriminated against by the patriarchal forces, hence live in immense poverty. (Kehler, 2000).

Women have been viewed as the most vulnerable group after children, youth and the elderly. They have been affected by poverty and inequality due to social institutions that have been more patriarchal and male dominated (Malaba, 2006). Education is a tool for escaping poverty and accessing a livelihood but women in most cases have been found to be at the bottom rung of the literacy ladder (Tichagwa, 1998). Low quality of education constrained by inadequate conditions in South Africa has perpetuated poverty with girls and ultimately women being affected (Seekings, 2007).

Women and poverty has in recent decades become a serious global challenge because of the large number of women and children living in absolute poverty especially in the developing world (Moore, 2005). The Chronic Poverty Research Centre as highlighted by Moore (2005) estimates that between 300 million and 420 million people are trapped in poverty in Asia and Africa, with women constituting above 60% of the figures, which they sometime pass on to the next generation. To them poverty is about deprivation in many dimensions- hunger and under

nutrition, dirty drinking water, illiteracy, lack of access to health services, social isolation and exploitation as well as low income and assets. This has posed a serious threat to their wellbeing with women and girls, children and old people more likely to be trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty and bearing the brunt of taking care of the sick and needy (Seekings, 2007).

Women have in most cases been affected by poverty because they cannot compete in the economy sector as their male counterparts because of low levels of education and biological commitments. The low and narrowly based economic growth, where there are few opportunities for them to raise their incomes and accumulate assets further pushes them to dire poverty. This leads to disillusionment, disappointment and desperation as they strive to make ends meet to cater for their families (Idowu, Cofie and Adeoti, 2012).

Moore (2005) is of the opinion that because of being socially excluded, women remain in adverse poverty as they are forced to engage in economic activities and social relations that keep them poor- where they are poorly paid, found in insecure jobs, have minimal access to social protection and basic services. Rural women are affected by poverty the most because they are found in disadvantaged geographic regions where there is poor natural resources, infra-structure and basic services, weak economic integration and social exclusion can be obstacles for them escaping poverty (Idowu et al, 2012). In most cases, high and persistent capability deprivation, poor nutrition and lack of access to health care diminishes human development in ways that are often irreversible. Pregnant women affected by poverty have higher risks of maternal and child mortality and morbidity. This is compounded by early child bearing where women do not have access to contraceptive health services or maybe perpetuated by social, economic, and cultural factors (Moore, 2005).

Structural poverty which is rooted in socio-economic, political and cultural institutions, is experienced over a long period of time and is often transferred inter-generationally affects women (Malaba, 2006). She states that women often carry the heaviest burden of poverty by virtue of their reproductive roles and household division of labour as well as being carers. This has been exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic as they are to stay at home caring for the sick and not being productive and contributing to the household. The burden of poverty borne by women especially in the developing world has increased in recent years. This has been caused by the deprivation of capabilities and gender biases present in governments and societies in general

(Malaba, 2006). By giving them opportunities and choices, women are able to lead productive, long healthy lives without the fear of being deprived and socially excluded (Sen, 1999).

Poverty does not only affect women as individuals, but it also affects their families, communities and local economies. Thus they should be regarded as main actors in the development programmes aimed at emancipating them from poverty (Moyo, 2013). Because women are at disadvantage in terms of access to productive resources, extension services, access to information and credit, their inability to access land and credit compromises their security and leaves them vulnerable to poverty as stated by Moagi (2008). Thus there is need to ensure equity in resource allocation and balance development that benefits both male and female.

Policy makers need to reorder their priorities and set their sights higher than that of the current consensus on poverty reduction policy so as to emancipate women from poverty (Moore, 2005). Understanding socio-economic situations in a gender perspective is paramount to sustainable and sound policy analysis and is essential for effective development. Programmes and activities that take into account the reality of gender roles and relations have a higher likelihood of sustainability and effective poverty reduction impacts (Idowu et al, 2012). Thus a lot still needs to be done through policy and legislation to put women in the development agenda and alleviate poverty affecting them.

2.4 Poverty Alleviation Initiatives

With the above being said, confronting poverty has become a central concern for everyone striving for national and global development and recognition of basic human rights. Since poverty is multi-faceted, combating it is a complex task that requires tackling issues of power imbalances, limited economic opportunities and resources, and long term capacity building to ensure good governance, reduction in inequality and inequity, and improvements in the wellbeing of people (Chebil and Haque, 2003; Guitjt, Berdegue, Escobar, Ramirez and Keitaanranta, 2006). Chamberlain (2008) adds that, in alleviating poverty, there is a need to work on the premise that poverty is caused by multiple, complex and inter-related factors that require comprehensive, holistic and integrated initiatives to address both individual and community needs. It should be noted, however, that poverty reduction initiatives should be anchored on

sustainable strategies which will ensure that the poor, the vulnerable and the next generation continue to have access to resources.

The disparities which women face pose a serious impediment to sustainable development and the attainment of equality and equity between women and men (Kehler, 2000). South Africa, as a member of the regional and international communities, has signed and acceded to several declarations, conventions and protocols aimed at mainstreaming women in all facets of development. These include the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development and its addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to mention but a few. In an effort to effectively transform the provisions of the national, regional and international legal and human rights instruments to the practical level, the government of South Africa developed and adopted the Gender Policy Framework which provides guidelines and institutional framework to mainstream gender in all policies, strategic and operational plans, programmes and activities (SADC, 2010; UNDP, 2010).

Poverty reduction has been one of the priorities for the World Bank. Together with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), they launched the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) initiative in 1999. They aimed at adopting a holistic approach to poverty alleviation through the integration of the macro-economic concerns of the IMF and the structural social aspects of development addressed by the World Bank. This action highlights that poverty has not been only viewed as lack of income but also as capability deprivation (Sen, 1999), hence both economic and social initiatives are needed to combat it. Through the PRSP, countries identified as eligible for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poverty Countries scheme (HIPC), produce a PRSP as a condition for receiving debt relief and future concessional loans. This initiative has enabled most African, Asian and Latin American countries to take control of their poverty situation through obtaining financial aid. The PRSP initiative advocates for partnership in the public, private and civil society spheres and includes tackling issues of gender, inequality, and ineffective governance, as these are the lead causes of poverty. The strategy encourages transparency and broad based participation in the choice of goals, policy formulation and

monitoring and evaluation by the beneficiaries, hence its inclusive nature. The PRSP has been effective in most countries which have adopted the strategy as it is country-driven, results-oriented, comprehensive, partnership-oriented, long-term focused and includes a focus on women's emancipation. Women have been prioritised in local projects in an effort to reduce poverty affecting them (Ukpere and Slabbert, 2009; Bradshaw and Linneker, 2003; World Bank, 2004).

The United Nations has held summits on issues that include sustainable development, food security, focus on women's empowerment and social development and has time-bound targets such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for addressing poverty, hunger and disease, among other challenges (UN, 2010). The declaration of the MDGs represents the most collective undertaking ever made to the world's most vulnerable and marginalised groups, such as women. A number of countries have achieved major success in combating extreme poverty and hunger, demonstrating that MDGs are indeed achievable with the right policies, adequate levels of investment and international support (UNDP, 2010).

For poverty reduction initiatives at the grassroots level to be effective, there is a need for the creation of economic opportunities and empowerment of communities to access these opportunities (Sen, 1999). Women have been viewed as a vulnerable group hence most of these initiatives have been directed for their emancipation. The World Bank (2004) views empowerment as the expansion of assets, capabilities and choices of the poor, to participate in, negotiate with, influence, and control and hold accountable institutions affecting them. If communities are empowered, they are able to make choices to live the kind of lives they want. Kehler (2000) supports this view by stating that empowerment is important for reducing poverty as it determines the extent to which, for example, women gain access to education, are able to seek employment or health care outside of the family, and can acquire information on contraception and have the freedom to exercise their fertility preferences.

Creation of economic opportunities programmes the world over has become a poverty reduction initiative aimed at ensuring that the local economy generates opportunities for the poor household to earn income through jobs or self-employment. Non-governmental organisations have played a pivotal role in alleviating poverty at the grassroots level by providing income and self employment opportunities to vulnerable groups such as women. Microfinance, which

includes a broad range of financial services and products, has become the most common initiative among women in addressing poverty in the world. These range from small loans, no-interest loans, savings facilities, access to financial services, insurance and financial education. It has grown in prominence the world over since Muhammad Yunus started the Grameen Bank Project in 1976 (Cabraal, Russell and Singh, 2006). The loans are given to beneficiaries to start small businesses. Women in South Africa have benefited through various agencies and partnerships which finance microenterprises, set up by the Department of Trade and Industry under the government's Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMME) policy. Women, through the women empowerment policy, have been able to access loans to start small businesses to support their families and to repay the short-term loans they were advanced. Micro enterprise development initiatives create self sufficiency through the generation of savings and home ownership and create employment opportunities for others (Kehler, 2000; Triegaardt, 2007).

Human capital as an initiative to reduce poverty in South Africa has been fostered by government and NGOs through programmes and projects that provide health care and nutrition, education, training and skills development so that beneficiaries are able to engage with the economy. Skills building, such as carpentry, welding, sewing and cookery, have contributed significantly to poverty alleviation as beneficiaries are able to find work or be self-employed and sustain their livelihoods. Through health campaigns, especially in remote rural areas in South Africa, people have been able to access health services and have improved their health status. Children have been immunised and pregnant women have been able to access pre-and post-natal care and general health knowledge (Department of Social Development, 2010; Guitjt et al., 2006; Moyo, 2013).

The social security system, through the provision of social grants such as the old age grant, the disability grant, foster care grant and the child grant (Department of Social Development, 2010), has been the most powerful poverty alleviation initiative in South Africa. The government has acted according to the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996) which states that everyone has a right to access social security including when they are unable to support themselves and their dependent/s. Over ten million South Africans received social grants in 2006, with social security derived from 3.4% of GDP and amounting to R70 billion a year

(Minister of Finance, 2006). Households receiving social grants tend to spend this income on basic needs such as food, fuel, housing and household operations which protects them from the risks of poverty (Triegaardt, 2007).

Many community development organisations in South Africa such as Siyalima, Son of the Soil and Heifer International South Africa, to mention but a few, have partnered with impoverished communities to end hunger and poverty through engaging with the food garden projects in the local communities. These organisations provide communities with agricultural training, support, seeds, seedlings and manure, among other things, to start their own food gardens and small farming businesses. Most of the local projects have become viable and have been a source of livelihood through the NGOs' initiatives (Small, 2008).

2.5 Food Garden Community Projects

Food gardens are projects aimed at ensuring affordable quality food for poor households in order to supplement their diet, improve household food and nutritional security and provide sustainable additional income (Earl, 2011). Food gardens are defined by the South African Herb Academy (2010) as any space devoted to growing edible crops with the intention of consumption or selling. These can be grown in an open space of land, in the backyard, or on a balcony or the rooftops, depending on where one wishes to grow them. Food garden projects have been a viable option out of hunger and food insecurity for people living in South African townships in recent years (Small, 2008). The food garden movement emerged in South Africa in the early 80s as a strategy by communities for dealing with food insecurity, stimulating economic growth and combating hunger. Food gardens sprouted mainly in urban areas as the poor sought viable means to secure decent livelihoods. Most countries in Europe and Asia have supported food garden projects, often as partial contributors to household food security. In Africa, food gardens have taken on considerable importance (as in Nairobi, Lusaka and Harare) because of their many advantages in terms of poverty alleviation through providing food security and income generation, especially among the urban poor (Kutiwa et al, 2010; Aliber, 2009).

With high poverty and inequality prevailing in South Africa, approximately 40+% of people live below the poverty line and are at risk of hunger, thus community food gardens have emerged as an initiative to improve household livelihoods (UNDP, 2010; Earl, 2011). The question is: Can

small scale agricultural production such as food garden projects contribute to household food security, income generation and sustain a decent livelihood in South Africa? In response to this question, Earl (2011) states that food gardens form part of local movements and serve as a starting point for poverty alleviation and are a possibility for long-term food security, income generation and livelihood sustenance – if people are provided with skills, resources and tools to do things for themselves. Communities develop their own vegetable gardens in order to supplement their diet, improve household food and nutritional security and provide sustainable additional income. Organisations such as Siyalima in Cape Town, South Africa, have been instrumental in assisting community food gardens in the Western Cape through providing low cost bulk compost, seeds, seedlings, information, training and on-site project extension (Small, 2008). The projects have drawn community members to participate and contribute to their livelihoods through growing vegetables. Most people involved in food gardens are women, hence food garden projects are viewed as empowering women by reducing their vulnerability to poverty and giving them the ability to sustain their household livelihoods. Food gardens also provide women with access to social capital, as home growers establish a strong relationship network whereby some of the food is given to neighbours, relatives and friends (Lekganyane, 2008; Aliber, 2009).

Studies on food gardens projects that have been conducted in South Africa have shown how popular the movement has become and how they have had a positive impact on the communities involved in alleviating hunger and income generation (Frayne et al, 2009). These authors are of the opinion that poverty is associated with high levels of food insecurity in the household level and this has become a major policy and development challenge in South Africa. With this in mind, the studies conducted in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg on the impact of food gardens in addressing poverty and food insecurities revealed that food gardens contributed to food security among the poor and that they were a tool for community development. They fostered social capital which included features of organisation such as networks, norms and social trust which facilitated coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. The findings went on to reveal that food garden projects enabled communities to be self reliant, provide access to food, income generation and strengthening communities into building local food production (Frayne et al, 2009).

Food gardens projects have been supported in one form or another in South Africa by church networks, civil society, individuals and government. Studies on community food gardens such as Community Agriculture Project, Farm Trust, Vukuzenzele Urban Farm Association in Cape Town, Master Farmers Association in the Eastern Cape and Ubuntu Farmers Associations in the Western Cape reveal that despite challenges such as lack of long term income and subsidies towards the projects and lack of proper farming skills among other challenges, food gardens have provided a reasonable living and self sufficiency strategy among communities involved in these projects (Small, 2005).

The researcher thus chose, in this study, to explore women's experiences and perceptions in their food garden activities. This was evaluated against the Community Driven Development approach, which has been widely used in poverty alleviation efforts (World Bank, 2004).

2.6 Community Driven Development (CDD)

Community Development is a means of organising communities to join state and institutional initiatives aimed at poverty alleviation, solving problems, fostering democracy and achieving socio-economic development (Campfens, 1997; O'Brien, 2009). It is against this background that the World Bank in 1999 sought to foster Community Driven Development to further include people in the development process and place ownership and power for decision making in their hands, with the view that poverty can be fought and jobs created if communities in poor nations have control over their environmental resources and drive their own development (World Bank, 2004).

In CDD projects, communities identify their problems, opportunities and constraints and develop projects and activities they would like to undertake to meet their needs. CDD represents a change in thinking in the development process by development practitioners since, unlike the top-down approach to development which has government imposing programmes and projects onto the people, it has emphasised and fostered community participation and involvement in the inception and implementation of local projects. Local people have been placed at the centre of the development process and have been viewed as assets in their own development (World Bank, 2010; African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005).

There are two types of CDD. The first includes, amongst others, community control of resources backed by direct channelling of funds to their needs. There is active participation of the local people in the development process, as communities identify their needs and find ways and resources to meet these needs. Examples of this type of CDD can be projects such as improvements in the environment and natural resources like curbing deforestation and veld fires, and women's projects such as sewing and bead making. These projects, supported by local NGOs, are common in South Africa. The other type of CDD emerges when projects are initiated from outside, that is, provided by the government, private sector and civil society together with expertise and financial and technical assistance. The local people are trained and capacitated in the design and implementation of the projects with development practitioners acting as facilitators of the development process. Examples of these may be building of a local dam and nutrition or education programmes in local communities. Most CDD programmes and projects may focus on infrastructure, livelihoods, healthcare, education, and/or agriculture, depending on the level of need in a locality (World Bank, 2004; 2010).

The following are five main principles that govern the CDD approach to development, as highlighted by the African Institute for Community Driven Development (2005) and as mentioned in Chapter One:

- (i) **Empowerment of communities where communities have ownership of their own development.** Here, people through collective action are involved in designing, implementing, managing and directing the development process. As communities are empowered, they are able to form organised leadership groups, such as ward committees, which enable them to collectively hold government accountable and also promote local development.
- (ii) **Empowerment of local government** as a principle happens when local authorities facilitate, provide, promote and coordinate the provision of services at the local level and contribute to economic and social development. Structured communication between local government and ward committees as representative groups for communities and communities in general is vital for the development process, as communities highlight their needs and local government also makes known how it can support and assist local projects. In this case, local governments are in a position

to realise the outcomes of development and take it upon themselves to empower marginalised and excluded groups within communities.

- (iii) **Realigning the centre** has also been vital in the CDD process as the central government provides strategic direction, redistribution, coordination and oversight of the development process. The CDD approach advocates for the decentralisation of powers from the state to the local level which is closer to the people, while still playing a distributive role. Although the government oversees the planning and implementation of projects, its main role is reduced to that of a facilitator of development. The government also decentralises roles to the local government which basically acts as an agent to development although they still have responsibilities of providing financial resources, training and monitoring for local projects
- (iv) **Improvement in accountability and (v) building capacity of local communities** are the fourth and fifth principle of CDD (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005). In this case, local communities are capacitated and given the skills to effectively and efficiently run the projects. Thus they are able to hold institutions governing them accountable and positively direct local development in their communities.

2.7 Theoretical Frameworks

Theories provide researchers with different “lenses” through which they examine complicated problems and social issues (Reamer, 1998). Two theories have been selected to frame the study: social exclusion and the capability approach.

2.7.1 Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is an approach used to identify forms of social disadvantage where individuals, groups and communities are systematically blocked from rights, opportunities and resources. Social scientists, social activists and human rights activists view social exclusion as a framework for understanding the processes and outcomes of deprivation, marginalisation, exploitation and oppression (Cohen, 2006). These involve a combination of linked problems, such as discrimination from the mainstream social, economic and political activities, unemployment, low

incomes, poor housing, poor skills, high crime and family breakdown. Individuals, social groups and geographic areas can be said to be socially excluded when they do not participate in the social, economic and political activities of society (UNDP, 2006). Since the women in the study were unemployed and already excluded from the job market, the researcher assessed whether they had access to other social and economic opportunities in their communities so as to better their situations. Access to economic opportunities serves multiple functions of providing income, conferring social legitimacy and granting women access to full citizenship rights, thus enabling them to be included in the mainstream (Sen, 2000).

Women are a group that is disadvantaged as they are discriminated against both in the home, under the patriarchal forces, and in the labour market. With fewer qualifications and skills than their male counterparts, they do not compete equally in the labour market and consequently constitute the highest number of the unemployed in South Africa (StatsSA, 2010). Thus social exclusion highlights the gap between those who are active members of society and those who are forced to the periphery.

The UNDP (2006) views social exclusion as a circle with three components that are interrelated; that is, unemployment, poverty and social isolation. These components influence one another, creating a spiral of insecurity which ends in multiple deprivations. The researcher therefore assessed how unemployment affects the women in the study, its effect on their standards of living, and if they were at increased risk of poverty. The researcher also examined whether the women in the study were active participants in social and economic activities; which might reveal social isolation if they were found not to have access to sources of information and support needed to sustain their livelihoods.

The social exclusion theory was used in this study to analyse the policies and the programmes, as well as institutions, in relation to whether they excluded women from participating in food garden projects. It helped the researcher assess whether women had information and access to structural and institutional support in running their food garden projects which would result in them not being excluded in the development process. The main policy that the researcher thus analysed was the City of Cape Town's Urban Agriculture Policy (City of Cape Town, 2007) which aims at creating an enabling environment where public, private and civil society agents can work collectively to create more real and sustainable opportunities for local area economic

development. The policy aims at a dual approach to urban agriculture through which it proposes a focus not only on achieving household food security, poverty alleviation; and improved nutrition, but also on creating income through economic development. The City provides assistance to access land, basic infrastructure, production inputs, tools and equipment, and capacity and skills development (City of Cape Town, 2007). This policy provided the means for the women not to be excluded in accessing support for their projects. However, to determine whether these local government strategies are effective in practice, they needed to be tested by the findings from the study. These will thus be explored in the findings and conclusions chapters.

2.7.2 Capability Approach

The capability approach was developed by economist and Nobel Prize winner, Amartya Sen. It is a framework to assess and evaluate human well-being and development. Sen refers to capabilities as opportunities/means that enable people to achieve their goals, which he refers to as ends/beings and doings which, in turn, he refers to as functionings (Sen, 1999). Functionings are choices that individuals make in their daily lives, which reflect what they hope for and aspire towards. To achieve these functionings, capabilities or opportunities need to be provided.

In light of the above, poverty can be said to be a capability deprivation (Sen, 1999). Since the poor lack, they are unable to live decent lives or lives they would value. People without income are not able to send their children to school to access education which may enable them to escape poverty, as it increases their ability to earn an income and also to be free of income poverty. Sen (1999) also mentions unfreedoms/obstacles/hindrances that prevent people from living the lives they would value. He states that there has to be an enabling environment politically, economically and socially so that people have choices and opportunities for exercising their reasoned agency (Sen, 1999).

Women, as an example, are deprived of their capabilities, as the majority in South Africa are experiencing inequalities in opportunities in the labour market because of their lack of education or low level of skills, described earlier. Young girls and women in most rural African countries still walk long distances to fetch water and firewood and still lack access to basic services (Tichagwa, 1998). Women, because of the patriarchal forces, are unable to participate in

community meetings thus being deprived of citizenship (UNDP, 2003). Their voices remain unheard and cannot influence any decision concerning their lives (World Bank, 2000).

Chambers (1989) views poverty as a vicious cycle that entraps one in vulnerability, isolation, powerlessness and voicelessness. Making available capabilities/opportunities and removing the unfreedoms of poverty may improve the standards of living for women. Using the lenses of the capability approach, this study assessed whether women involved in food garden projects were able to access the opportunities/capabilities to engage in their activities effectively without any barriers or constraints. This was achieved through examining the legal frameworks (policies and programmes), agencies and NGOs that support food gardening activities to determine the opportunities available to women in food gardens projects.

2.8 Policies and Programmes that Support Poverty Alleviation Initiatives

The South African government has initiated anti-poverty strategies and pro-poor policies, among them, the Expanded Public Works Programmes which was established in 2004 with the main focus of alleviating poverty, creating job opportunities for the vulnerable groups such as women, the youth and the disabled, to engage in work and obtain skills which would be sustainable. This is a programme that creates temporary jobs while providing assets that add to income generation, capacity building and poverty alleviation. It provides employment opportunities for communities in the most impoverished areas as it is believed that unemployment is the major cause of poverty. The policy has been very influential in reducing poverty (Triegaardt, 2007; Department of Public Works, 2009).

The Social Security Policy, through the Social Grant System, was also put in place so as to tackle inequality, poverty and unemployment. The system has become a safety net for the poor and vulnerable as the targeted beneficiaries have been mainly children, the elderly and the disabled (Department of Social Development, 2010). The Land Reform Programme has also been an initiative by government to alleviate poverty although it has been met with a lot of criticism and controversy which will not be discussed in this paper. The programme has been viewed as an initiative that would contribute to economic growth through giving households the leeway to engage in productive land use and by increasing employment prospects through greater rural economy investment (Moyo, 2013). The Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) is a fund put in

place by the South African government to safeguard workers from financial disaster during periods of involuntary unemployment which may comprise of illness, termination of employment and maternity (Triegaardt, 2007). Among the many anti-poverty strategies employed by the South African government, the above mentioned programmes have been in the forefront in helping address the deep rooted poverty in the country and have helped families in distress.

Focusing on food gardens which are projects central to this study, policies and legislation have been developed in support of urban agriculture (food gardens) in an effort to reduce poverty in South Africa (Jacobs, 2009). These policies have been put in place to mainstream the poor into the socioeconomic activity of the society. Excluded groups such as women have been at the centre of government policy through affirmative action and gender imbalances redress strategies (Department of Social Development, 2010). This has enabled women to be given priority and support in their projects. Government Departments such as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Rural Development, the Department of Social Development and Department of Land Affairs continue to support local projects such as food gardens through the provision of funds and grants to local NGOs working in small-scale agricultural initiatives (Small, 2008).

The National Development Agency's primary mandate is to eradicate poverty by granting funds to civil organisations that implement developmental projects for poor communities. That includes strengthening of capacity to enable poor communities to access and use developmental resources towards self-reliance (Jacobs, 2009). The City of Cape Town formulated its Urban Agriculture Policy (2007) as its holistic approach for the effective and meaningful development of urban agriculture, as they acknowledge that food gardens play a pivotal role in these poor households through food security and income generation (see section 2.7 above). The Urban Agricultural Policy was approved by Council in 2006 with the aim of also creating an enabling environment where public, private and civil society agents can work collectively to create more real and sustainable opportunities for local economic development.

Although there are some initiatives that support food garden activities, Frayne et al, (2009) argue that these are not enough. They are of the opinion that, until urban agriculture is mainstreamed into the urban planning and national development policies of South Africa, the activity will remain ad hoc and the full potential of this sector for economic and social development will not

be fully realised, as productive urban agriculture requires institutional and financial support. Community service organisations or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have the potential to play a substantial role in poverty alleviation, but until resources are disbursed to them at the grassroots level, their role remains limited (Small, 2008). The 1996 White Paper on Agriculture recognises food gardens' potential contribution to food security but Gauteng is the only province, through the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, Environment and Land Affairs, that has provided significant funding to food gardens, followed by Cape Town, Pretoria and East London (Aliber, 2009). These provinces and local municipalities can also learn from European countries which have structures such as urban food policy councils that have been formed to help guide government's decisions on food security and poverty alleviation. These councils are comprised of coalitions of local politicians, activists, environmentalists, sustainable agriculture advocates and community development groups which allow food and poverty alleviation policy decisions to reflect a broad range of interests, as they facilitate the integration of a variety of perspectives and skills in the process (Frayne et al, 2009).

The fact that there is no government department that directly focuses on urban agriculture poses a potential constraint to the initiative which draws its support from various departments. It is paramount that there is a department that takes the lead in coordinating the activities of urban agricultural initiatives which is important for policy development and successful implementation. Government thus has a very important role to play in generating local initiative opportunities through its public works programme thereby contributing to poverty alleviation (Aliber, 2009). The CDD approach to development emphasises the need to re-align the centre for local development. The national government should provide strategic direction, redistribution, coordination and oversight on local activities by decentralising powers to local level in its quest to alleviate poverty (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005). By redistribution and providing support to the local level, the government plays a vital role in providing for local people's needs and also contribute to their development.

2.9 Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter clearly shows that women in developing countries are the group that is most severely affected by unemployment and poverty. The reasons for this are many. CDD is advocated, on the grounds of its success in many parts of the world, as an

effective strategy to reduce poverty through engaging the people trapped in these conditions to respond to opportunities that are specific to their needs and capacitating them to improve their livelihoods. Food garden projects in urban areas have the potential both to provide food security and a means of income to people on the periphery, but their success depends on support from various agencies: central and local government and other social agencies and NGOs.

The theory of social exclusion helps to shed light on the reasons that women suffer lack and the capability approach illuminates what is necessary for people to live decent lives that are meaningful to them. The data collected in this study will be analysed through these lenses in focussing on the experiences of women participating in food garden projects in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, in an attempt to find solutions to the problem of poverty in this area.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research study. The research design will be laid out and justified, sampling, data collection, data analysis and data verification will be highlighted. Finally, limitations to the study will be discussed.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design was suitable for the objectives of this study, that is, to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of women participating in food garden projects. Babbie & Mouton (2005) state that the major characteristic of qualitative research designs is the researcher-participant relationship, where the researcher attempts to understand the participants from their own perspectives in terms of their opinions, feelings and the meaning they attribute to life. In trying to establish this relationship, the researcher made several trips to food gardens in Khayelitsha where women spent most of their time. The researcher even purchased vegetables from the gardens, not to buy their participation, but as a gesture of support of their projects. Through these constant visits the researcher was able to develop a rapport with and could gain the women's trust. This was the first step towards gaining the in-depth understanding of the women's experiences and perception in their own context.

3.2 Population and Sampling

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) define population as a larger pool from which sampling elements, that make up a unit of analysis are drawn. This study's population consisted of adult women living in Khayelitsha. From this population, the researcher selected a sample of 17 women from four food garden projects in Khayelitsha. Mouton (1996:132) defines a sample as a group of individuals selected on the basis of unique or specific characteristics with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are taken. For the purpose of this study, two sampling techniques were employed to select respondents, namely: purposive sampling and convenience sampling. A purposive sample consists of individuals with specific characteristics selected according to the degree to which they were able to provide rich

and detailed information about the issues that were integral to the study (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Therefore, respondents in the study were selected using specific criteria:

- a) they were women involved in food garden projects
- b) between the ages of twenty eight and sixty,
- c) with or without dependents,
- d) single or married,
- e) unemployed and have been involved in the food garden activities for more than six months.

The researcher then used convenient sampling to access respondents who were readily available for interviewing. According to De Vos et al (2009), convenient sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher where the elements of the sample are available and willing to take part in the study. The respondents are usually those who are nearest and most easily available until a sample reaches a designated size. During the visits to food garden projects, the women were interviewed based on who was available that day. This was because the women were constantly busy with their gardening activities and selecting a group of individuals to interview was going to disrupt their routine activities.

3.3 Data Collection

Data was collected through the use of individual in-depth face to face interviews. This method was chosen because it allowed the researcher to explore women's experiences and perceptions. De Vos et al, (2009: 305) describes an in-depth interview as a short-term secondary interaction between two strangers with the explicit purpose of one person obtaining specific information from the other. It afforded the researcher possibilities for dynamic interaction to stimulate new ideas and create concepts in order to learn more about the participant's opinions and experiences (Barbour and Kritzing, 1999:5).

A semi-structured interview schedule was used to collect data. This helped to formalise the interview process but also gave the researcher the opportunity to probe. Creswell (2003:287) states that an interview schedule allows researchers to think explicitly about what they hope to cover in the interview and also to think about potential difficulties that may be encountered during the interviews. The semi-structured interview schedule was used as a guide and was not

adhered to rigidly. The broad questions that were covered in the research study were aligned to the research questions and covered: (a) motivations for women's participation in food garden projects, (b) significant changes in the women's lives due to their participation in food gardens, (c) challenges women face in their daily activities, and, (d) programmes and policies that women know of, that support programmes such as food gardens. During the interviewing process, the researcher was interested in knowing the women's perceptions and experiences in their involvement in the food gardens. Hence, in transcribing, much attention was paid to what the women were saying with regard to the motivation for their participation, changes in their lives, challenges they faced in their activities and their general knowledge of support structures.

A digital recorder was used with the respondents' consent, as an aid to enable the researcher to capture everything that was said during the interview for analysis, and consent forms were signed. This allowed the researcher to focus on the non-verbal cues and establish rapport rather than concentrate on note taking. The digital recorder also enabled the researcher to use it for transcription purposes.

In-depth interviews were conducted with all the seventeen participants. Most of these interviews took place in the food gardens' store room as it was the only private and separate place where privacy and confidentiality could be secured. The researcher first introduced herself and explained the purpose of the study. Ethical considerations were mentioned to the participants before the interviews and a consent form was signed by the participants as an agreement to voluntarily participate in the interview. All participants were able to sign the form without any assistance. Interviews were conducted in the respondents' home language, isiXhosa.

Participants freely expressed themselves, as the researcher had assured them that there was no right or wrong answer to the questions that she would be asking them. The researcher constantly reminded and assured them that the information they gave was private and was going to be kept confidential. As highlighted above, the interview schedule was used only as a guide and was not relied on rigidly. This enabled the researcher to probe using more questions and ask for clarity where she needed it. The researcher tried to transcribe after every interview but this seemed cumbersome and overwhelming as for every one hour interview, six to eight hours were taken in transcribing. The researcher thus transcribed after doing all the seventeen interviews. Since data was collected through the participants' home language, that is isiXhosa, the researcher had to

first translate into English and then transcribe and this also contributed to the long hours of transcribing. Audio recordings had to be listened to attentively and for several times so as to capture all the data. Data collection took between three to four weeks. The shortest length of an interview was twenty five minutes eleven seconds and the longest was fifty nine minutes eleven seconds. The average length for all interviews therefore was forty two minutes eleven seconds.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethics are a set of moral principles which are suggested by an individual or group, are widely accepted and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects or respondents (Strydom 2005:57). In every research process, ethical considerations need to be put into practice so as to prevent violation of the rights of participants under study. The following are the ethics which the researcher adopted in interviewing her participants:

Informed Consent- The researcher gave the participants a detailed background of the study at the beginning of every interview. All relevant information about the research, possible advantages and disadvantages and risks to which the participants might be exposed were highlighted (Strydom, 2005:58). Participants were accurately informed about the purpose of the study and why they were participating. A consent form (Appendix 2) was used to obtain permission from the participants and also to emphasise confidentiality of the information that they were going to give the researcher. The researcher translated the consent form into IsiXhosa so that participants could fully understand what they were agreeing to. All participants interviewed voluntarily signed the consent form and were willing to participate in the research study. The consent forms were kept in the researcher's cabinet for safe keeping.

Confidentiality- Reamer (1998:126) views confidentiality as central to research, hence it has to be promoted at all times so as to gain trust from respondents. The researcher assured her participants of the confidentiality of the information given to her and explained that only the researcher's supervisor would have access to it. Interviews were also done in a safe break away place to enhance the private nature of the interview process. This was also a way to encourage the participants to speak out freely as there was no outside interference. Pseudonyms were used

in the findings and analysis chapter to protect the identity of participants as well as food garden projects, thus enhancing confidentiality.

Debriefing- Strydom (2005:58) highlights that debriefing of respondents is vital in any research project as it minimises harm they may experience during and after the interview sessions. At the end of the interviews the respondents were asked to comment on their experience of the interview and were given a chance to ask questions. This gave them clarity on their participation in the research study. Many thought they were going to gain something from this research. The researcher however, countered this expectation by briefing the participants before and after the research that she had nothing to offer and that this was merely a research study.

Avoidance of Harm- Participants can be emotionally affected during research interviews by being asked questions which are sensitive or questions which may raise physical discomfort (Strydom, 2005:59). To curb this, the researcher approached her interview questions objectively and was sensitive to issues which might arise and negatively affect the participants during the interviews. The researcher did not deceive the participants as to the reasons for the research. The highest priority of this research process was to protect the rights of the participants.

Voluntary Participation- Reamer (1998:127) is of the opinion that voluntary participation entails the free will to participate and withdraw by the individual in an interview process. The researcher informed the participants at the start of the interview and through signing of a consent form that they had the right to withdraw from the interview if they chose to. The participants in this study were not forced or coerced to participate. All of them voluntarily participated in the study.

3.5. Reflexivity

According to De Vos et al, (2009: 363), reflexivity is the ability to formulate an integrated understanding of one's own cognitive world, especially understanding one's influence or role in human relations. The researcher is radically passionate about issues affecting women and how they can be emancipated in all facets of society. This had the potential to cloud her perception about the real issues affecting women and how they have resorted to dealing with them. To counter this, the researcher took time to read literature with a particular focus on women and poverty and some initiatives that they have adopted to better their situations. This helped her to have a better understanding of the real contexts of women, poverty and deprivation. The

researcher was anxious and at the same time curious about the outcome of the interviews when she met the women in their food garden projects. The researcher felt that it might be an emotional process as the women would be talking about real issues affecting them. The researcher approached the interviews with a non-judgemental and affirming attitude towards the participants she interviewed, and the interviews were successful.

Although the researcher did not have much experience, especially in interviewing older women and using their IsiXhosa language, she was determined, to the best of her ability, to reach out to the women and draw as much information as possible from them during the interview sessions. This she did by clarifying and by probing for more information.

3.6 Data Analysis

Creswell (2003:190) defines data analysis as the process involving in making sense out of text and image data. Data was analysed through the use of Tesch's (1990) eight step analysis, as cited by De Vos et al, (2009). This approach allows for the exploration of complexity and contradiction in the data analysis of broad themes arising from the data collected. The eight step processes of data analysis by Tesch as applied in the study were:

3.6.1 The researcher read through all the transcriptions so as to get a sense of the research and also to remind herself about what the women highlighted as their perceptions and experiences of being involved in the food garden projects.

3.6.2 One interview was selected so as to understand what the respondent was saying in relation to the objectives of the study. The selection was done through assessing the transcripts which emerged as having rich, sound and solid data.

3.6.3 Notes were jotted down in the margins alongside the text. These explained, described and raised questions that the researcher saw as necessary for answering the goals of the research. This helped the researcher by quickly reminding her of the main points which were important to her analysis.

3.6.4 Highlighters were used to label notes, with similar colours used for those notes that appeared to be linked to each other. This enabled the researcher not to go through the whole

transcript but to focus on the main points. This also made it easier to group the themes and sub-themes together.

3.6.5 Repetition of the process was done so as to make sure that vital points were not skipped.

3.6.6 Labels under main themes or sub-themes related to the theme were then grouped. During this process the researcher made sure that main themes reflected issues linked to the research questions and objectives.

3.6.7 Mutually exclusive themes were identified and a developed schema that sets main themes with the sub- themes was done. Data which emerged was grouped together under the same themes.

3.6.8 Refining of the schema allowed for coherent and logical flow of the collected data.

3.7 Data Verification

The eminence of any qualitative study is determined by the level of trustworthiness it portrays (Babbie and Mouton, 2005). Wood and Habber (1994:276) address the important issue of data verification by stating that it involves checking for the most common biases that can steal into the process of drawing conclusions. Guba's (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:290-296) approach in De Vos (2009) states that to ensure trustworthiness addressing ways to ward off biases in the results of qualitative analysis, four strategies: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability need to be applied.

3.7.1. Credibility of research findings is established if the results match the reality of the participants. Creswell (2003:15) states that credibility can be achieved by the use of prolonged varied field experience, time sampling, reflexivity, member checking, peer examination, established authority of the researcher, structural coherence and referral adequacy. The use of qualitative research allowed the researcher to understand what women perceived of their situations. Continuous visits to the food gardens and getting to know the women and their daily activities had an impact on credibility to the study as the researcher was now familiar with the field of study. Using their mother tongue also gave the participants the freedom to express themselves and this also contributed to the credibility of the study.

3.7.2. Transferability demonstrates the applicability of one set of findings to another context as postulated by Krefting (1991:217). In this regard, the researcher laid down the theoretical framework of the study and how data was collected and analysed. This could make it easier for the research to be transferred to another setting and environment although it should be acknowledged that similar findings may not be found.

3.7.3. In terms of dependability data collected using a qualitative research design cannot be highly depended upon as the social world is dynamic and constantly changing.

3.7.4. Confirmability focuses on whether the results of the research could be confirmed by another, and places the evaluation on the data provided (Krefting, 1991). It focuses on whether the same result may be reached if a similar study took place in the same environment, with the same respondents. In this study, the researcher perceived that confirmation of the findings might be very minimal although it can be possible, as one is dealing with human beings who might forget what they said before or add more information that they would not have given or not mention some things that they would have said before.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

3.8.1 Access to the Food Gardens

Access to food gardens would have been easier through the local NGO, Siyalima which works closely with the local food gardens. This was however denied as the NGO claimed that the women were overwhelmed by many researchers descending on the food gardens to do research. Some project leaders in these food gardens were, however, sceptical as to why the researcher needed to interview them however details of the study were explained to them and they agreed.

3.8.2 Access to participants

The researcher had to visit different food gardens in Khayelitsha in order to obtain the number of participants she needed for her research. This was not an easy task because she had to walk and in some cases hitch-hike from one area to the other in search of the food gardens. This was very strenuous and time consuming as, in some cases, the researcher spent much time looking for participants who were ready and willing to participate.

3.8.3 Time Constraints

The researcher had to gather data, transcribe and interpret it, analyse the findings and write the dissertation within a set time frame. This might have limited the comprehensive and in-depth analysis of some transcripts as the researcher was racing against time.

3.9 Summary

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology used in this research. Data was collected using face-to-face in-depth interviews and analysed using Tesch's framework by De Vos et al (2009). Data was verified against the constructs proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) in Krefting (1991:215) and limitations of the study were discussed. The findings will be presented and discussed in the next chapter in the context of literature

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

4. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results obtained from the data collected from face-to-face interviews with seventeen women involved in food garden projects in Khayelitsha township. A profile of the participants in the study is provided in Table 1 below and explained in the analysis that follows

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

VARIABLE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender Females	17	100%
Average Age	52	
Marital Status Married Never Married Widowed Divorced	6 5 5 1	35% 29% 29% 6%
Family Structure Nuclear Single Parent Extended Cohabitation Other	4 5 8	24% 29% 47%
Average No of Children	4	
Education Tertiary High School Certificate Less than High School	1 2 14	6% 12% 82%
Employment Status Employed Unemployed Self-Employed State Pensioner	0 14 0 3	0% 82% 0% 18%
Type of Dwelling Formal Informal	13 4	76% 24%

Access to Electricity		
Yes	17	100%
No	0	0%
Access to Flushing Toilet		
Yes	16	94.%
No	1	6%
Access to Water		
Yes	16	94%
No	1	6%
Access to Refuse Removal		
Yes	16	94%
No	1	6%
Credit Account		
Yes	3	18%
No	14	82%
SAMPLE SIZE = 17		

4.1.1 Age, Race and Gender Profile

Participants were women whose ages ranged from 28 to 60 years old. The average age was fifty two. All the participants were black. This is because the study was conducted in Khayelitsha, which is a predominantly and historically black township situated on the outskirts of the City of Cape Town, in the Western Cape Province. The township emerged in the early 1980s as a result of the migration of black people, mostly from the Eastern Cape, who moved to Cape Town in search of work (City of Cape Town, 2009).

All the respondents in this study were women because this is the group mostly affected by unemployment and poverty. Findings from the 2012 Statistics South Africa Report show that women are twice as likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts. Recent results from the South African Census 2011 also show that women constitute approximately 56% of the unemployed (StatsSA, 2012); yet they find themselves carrying the burden of poverty and are expected to provide for the family in spite of being unemployed. In most cases, it is women who keep the families' hope alive in the midst of deprivation (Ramphela, 2002).

4.1.2 Marital Status

Regarding the women's marital status, six were married and living with their husbands. Five had never been married and another five were widowed. Only one woman was divorced. All the single, divorced and widowed women were not in any relationship at the time of the study. Some were living only with their children with no partner and some were still living with their parents. The married women stated that their husbands were unemployed. This made it difficult for their families to make ends meet. When asked about the quality of their relationships, however, the married women highlighted that they had supportive husbands and they had good relationships with them. They, however, indicated that they sometimes had their differences, which they tried to work out so that they built good homes for their families.

“Yes, he is very supportive. We are happy together but like every other couple; we have gone through some problems so as to provide a good home for our children.” (Nelly, 44)

“We have been married for 22 years now and he has been there for us. Yes, we sometimes had our own fair share of problems but we worked on them and we do get along so much.”(Zonke, 58)

“The marriage thing is a process because there are situations where you don't understand each other because you come from different backgrounds. I got that after ten years. That's when we got to know each other and the fights got less. I got to understand him. I then realized that, ooh, this person is like this and this. Some things I must not question because he has always been like this. In spite of our differences, he has been there for his family.” (Nomsa, 56)

The women drew support from their marriages. Although their families were in a state of lack and deprivation, they always managed to be there for each other which strengthened their relations.

4.1.3 Family Structure

Most participants (married, single, widowed and divorced) came from extended family structures, and were sharing their homes with their unemployed adult children and grandchildren. In most of these homes, the women had to support between seven and nine family members. Because the married women's husbands were unemployed, they also had to seek out some means

of providing for their families. Living in a household with many people who did not earn an income made it difficult to secure a decent livelihood.

“My children are very old and all stay with me. The one who was born in 1977 has four children. She left her husband. The one who was born in 1980 has only one child. There is the other one who was born in 1983 and she also has one child. The other one, who is a boy was born in 1986 and has three children. They are all not working and that really stresses me a lot. No one is employed in the house which means I have to try some means to make sure that everyone gets at least something to eat.” (Zintle, 59)

“I have six children and I also have six grandchildren. We are all staying together in one house. There is no one who is employed in my household. They are all not working. The only person who is working is my other daughter who is staying by herself in Kuyasa. She is the one I look to when I need something, like food and money for electricity.” (Sipho, 52)

Three generations living in the same house is common in most poor households in South Africa. Often the younger generation of working age are unemployed and still live with their parents because they do not have the means to support themselves. They cannot provide shelter for themselves and their children. This places the burden on the respondents, who are matriarchal figures in their households, to find alternative ways to make ends meet so that they can support their families. A cycle of poverty is bound to exist from one generation to the other in this case. Chambers (1989) states that “the poor find themselves in a vicious cycle of poverty” wherein lack of income leads to other disadvantages including material deprivation, physical weakness, isolation, powerlessness and vulnerability. The women in the study found themselves in a trap where they lived in the midst of conditions that rendered them deprived, as they struggled to support their families (Cloete, Kenka, Marais, and Venter, 2009).

In the group, there are senior members of the family who should be retired and living on their pensions but are still carrying the responsibility of how to support their families. The majority of the women rely mainly on their old age, children and foster care social grants because they have no income. The social grant system was put in place in South Africa as a social security policy strategy to support households living below the poverty line. This system provides monthly financial assistance ranging from R250 to R1200 for children from 0 to 18 years of age and for

the elderly from 60 years upwards. Children in foster care and people with disabilities sorely depend on these grants for their survival as they can obtain the basic necessities needed in the household (Department of Social Development, 2010).

4.1.4 The Role of Women in their households

Having all of their children and grandchildren in the home continues to be the burden of the elderly members of the household. Most of the women in the study indicated that they assume different roles in their households. They are managers, they are housekeepers who attend to all household chores, and they are nurturers who ensure that everyone in the house eats.

“In the house, I am the manager. I see that the grocery is done. I also have to see that I wash, clean the house and know what people need to wear. I lead and manage everything most of the times in the house.” (Nomsa, 56)

“I cook and wash clothes for them when I come from the garden. I make sure that they have eaten and that they are not cold, especially the little ones.” (Sipho, 52)

“I work in the house, I clean, I wash clothes, especially when they are working or at school, I do everything for them.” (Zonke, 58)

“They are my responsibility because they are young, I cook for them and I do washing for them. They need to eat and I make sure there is food for them to eat at least, even though it is very difficult.” (Susan, 29)

“They are looking to me on everything. So I do everything for them, whatever they ask me to do. I clean the house and do the washing. I also cook if I get there early from the garden.” (Noma, 61)

The women in the study did all the household chores and yet they had children who were unemployed and always at home. When asked about why their children did not help them with the household chores, the women stated that their children did not want to work.

“Do young people like you want to work? All they want to do is drink and have fun. But when they do that I make sure I chase them away so that they don’t do things in front of the children. They know I chase them away.” (Zintle, 59)

“My children are always roaming the streets and not in the house. If I do not do anything in the house, the children will die of hunger.” (Zethu, 57)

“Our children are spoilt. They are not like us when we were children. We used to work and did not have any time to see friends. But these ones, all they want is to sit and chat with friends, nothing more.” (Sandy, 60)

4.1.5 Level of Education

Most of the participants did not complete their high school education. They, however, cited different reasons for why they did not further their studies. For most, lack of income in their families was a major contributing factor. Their parents could not afford to send them to school. Some women highlighted that lack of motivation to continue with school also contributed to their dropping out of school. This was because they lived far from school and were expected to walk long distances to and from school and this discouraged them from continuing with school. They however reiterated that if only they had continued with their education, they would have had better opportunities than they do in their current situation.

“If I had continued with my education, sisi, I think I would be very far. It’s only that our parents did not have anything at that time. They had little money and that could not allow us to do things that we wanted.” (Nathi, 56)

“Going to school was going to really help me get a good job because working in the garden is very difficult, but if you are not educated there is nothing you can do.” (Sipho, 52)

Lack of income in the home and travelling long distances to school were the obstacles that the women faced. Lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills have resulted in them being unskilled and remaining marginalised from the economy since they lack the capabilities to access the economic opportunities (Van Zyl Slabbert, Malan, Olivier, Marais and Riordan, 2003).

The women’s social constraints such as living with extended families and not having enough in terms of their livelihoods also hindered them in attaining education.

“There was no money at home. We really had a very poor upbringing. The money that was there back home was used for us to get food as my father did not have any other money to send us to school.” (Zethu, 57)

“Long ago things were very different and very tough. In some instance you would grow up in a family that is not yours and even when you do daily chores, you were not going to do them like their own children, you were expected to be the one who would look after the cattle and wash the dishes and everything . So that is how I grew up. I was not given the chance to go because I did not stay with my mother.”(Sandy, 60)

“There were many children at home and my parents could not afford to send us all to school, that is why.” (Amanda, 59)

The chances of escaping the vicious cycle of poverty through attaining education are very limited for the poor as they do not have the resources to access the education that could help better their livelihoods (Sen, 1999; Chambers, 1989). Unemployment and poverty appear to be strongly interlinked and often coexist as causes of one another. The impact of poverty on schooling is crucial to consider. The Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) (2000:39) states that unemployment means that parents are unable to pay for their children’s school fees, uniforms as well as resources for learning. The direct costs (fees and books) and indirect expenses (uniforms and transport) of schooling present major obstacles to school attendance for learners from poor households.

When asked if they would like to continue with their education and whether they had attempted Adult Education, the women stated that it was too late for them to study as they had children to look after and other responsibilities to take care of. They indicated that they were now too old to study and would rather start small businesses, provided they received assistance and resources to do so.

“I am already late. All my years have gone by and I cannot be expected to go to class now.”(Noma, 61)

“Well I cannot go back and study with all the responsibilities I have. I’d rather start a business of selling things such as clothes and food to people if I manage to get money to start.” (Sethu, 55)

“I always thought of going back to school but after I had children I could not; I had to look after them. Now I can’t do that anymore I would rather work here in the garden.” (Sipho, 52)

Despite the women’s prevailing status of being unemployed, they aspired to future economic activities in areas that interested them.

“I want to register my catering business. It has been long and I have been thinking about it. I want to register my business very soon and see how I get into the database because that way I can be hired by other companies.” (Nomsa, 56)

“I have a wish here in my heart of starting a business. If only I had money to start a business where I could sell some things, you know. If I have something of my own, I would stop the cry of always wishing that if only my husband was there for me, if only my parents were there, you understand.” (Nathi, 56)

“Yes, I wish I could get some money to start my small business. I am good at selling things because I used to sell clothes long back.” (Nelly, 44)

The opportunity to start their own businesses would enable these women to improve their lives in meaningful ways. They would be empowered and self-reliant, enjoying the freedom of making significant choices in their lives. By empowering them, the women become architects of their own personal development and that of their families, communities and society in general (CASE, 2000). In order to do so, they need opportunities and financial support that would enable them to get a good start. As Sen (1999) observed, for people to be included in the development processes of their lives and that of their communities, they need to be provided with necessary resources and opportunities to better their circumstances and situations.

“The thing that comes very strongly to my mind for the future is that God provides some employment for my children. That’s my prayer at this moment because we are really struggling. The other thing is this garden thing that I am doing. I wish it does not end when I retire, but that it should continue. I wish that young people, should continue after the old ones are gone. I wish

that it doesn't just vanish into thin air but that it may progress and be able to generate employment. If only God helps me to get young people who will not let the project die. I want people who will mention that this project was started by me and it has grown and helped people in the community. I want my name to continue." (Bantu, 57)

"If I had to find a job, I can say that things might be better because I want my child to learn and be educated and not be like me. She should be able to go to school having eaten and also eat when she gets back from school. And that she may have something to carry in the lunch box when she goes to school." (Luyanda, 38)

"If I can find a job and be able to work and support my family, I would be very happy because we are currently struggling with only one person working in the household." (Sethu, 55)

"When we started this food garden we hoped it would help our families have food on the table but we also thought it would create jobs for the other people in our community. With more support our vision may be fulfilled." (Sandy, 60)

The above quotations highlight how most women in the study aspire for the betterment of the people around them. Not only are they aspiring for their own upliftment but they want their children to be educated, employed and have better lives. The women also had a vision of the food garden project as contributing to the development of their community by creating jobs for the locals. This would create economic opportunities and empowerment of the community and thus enlarge their capabilities, which might enable them to live meaningful lives (World Bank, 2004; UN, 2010).

4.1.6 Employment Status

None of the participants were employed at the time of the study. They stated how being unemployed made their lives very difficult.

"No one is working in the household. That's the thing that stresses me a lot. I have got five children and they also have their children and they all stay with me. We only survive through the children's grant and my husband's old age grant." (Zintle, 59)

“There is no one who brings in money in my household. No one is working. It is me who is trying by being involved in this garden but it is very little. I cannot get everything that I want from this garden.” (Nathi, 56)

“It is very difficult, my child, especially as I am not working. My daughter used to work and she’s the one who used to buy clothes and all the things that we needed. Now my daughter is not working; she stopped working in February so I can’t buy afford things like clothes and food. It is so stressful because you have to know what they will eat in the house, yet you do not have a job.” (Amanda, 59)

Unemployment can place an emotional strain on the caregivers because they are always thinking of where the next meal will come from (Monde, Fraser, Botha, and Anderson, 2004). Most of the participants, however, highlighted how they relied on social grants and the food garden project for income. Three pensioners had started receiving their pension grants and the majority of the women relied on the children’s grant and that of their grandchildren.

“I receive my pension and the social grant for my grandchildren. It really contributes a lot to what we need in the household.” (Nana, 61)

“I get a grant because I was involved; I was shot during the apartheid time, but it is not enough because it is the one that I am using to teach my last born. Since I stay with my children and grandchildren, I also use their grant to buy the food in the house.” (Bantu, 57)

“I get the children’s grant because right now there are three children who receive the child grant. What I do with the children’s grant is that I make sure that I buy a food hamper. I also buy electricity, soap and meat, then it gets finished. At least it does help for us to survive you know.” (Sipho, 52)

“We survive with my husband’s old age grant and the children’s grant also covers their problems. That way life goes on.” (Zintle, 59)

The social grants system in South Africa as a social security policy seems to be playing a pivotal role in terms of rescuing these families from poverty. People’s lives are improved through the policy as accessing the grant enables them to have the money to buy basic necessities of the household in the midst of lack and deprivation (Triegaardt, 2007).

4.1.7 Access to Basic Services

Most participants live in formal Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses. The RDP programme is a formal housing project whereby houses are built for people living in informal settlements (Everatt, 1994). Being in these formal houses means that they are able to access proper shelter, sanitation, refuse removal, water and electricity. Most of the women, however, indicated that they were in arrears with their bills because they were unemployed and did not have the income to meet these commitments.

“We are supposed to be paying bills but we are all unemployed. When my father died, we could not pay.” (Luyanda, 38)

“The house is mine. I don’t pay any rent. The only thing that comes out now are the bills for the water that need to be paid. We haven’t been paying because we don’t have the money but we owe a lot of money. Like I said, no one is employed and paid every month so that we could also pay the bills.” (Sipho, 52)

“We used to pay rent, but right now we have stopped paying. When our daughter was working, we used to pay and she helped in buying clothes. Now we have stopped paying for the water.” (Amanda, 59)

In the midst of being in arrears, the women have, however, depended on their social networks to assist them to access some of the basic services. Thus having strong and effective relationships meant that the women are able to access some form of support from their networks in times of need and this has kept the women going regardless of their circumstances of being unemployed and finding it difficult to make ends meet.

4.2 PROFILE OF FOOD GARDEN PROJECTS STUDIED

Food garden projects have helped many people living in South African townships by providing them with vegetables for consumption and income generation (South African Herb Academy, 2010). As mentioned above, the food garden movement has been going in South Africa since the early 80s when communities sought a viable means to combat household hunger and food insecurity. Food gardens sprouted mainly in urban areas as the urban poor sought viable means to secure decent livelihoods (Small, 2008).

NGOs such as Siyalima in Khayelitsha for instance, work closely with these projects. Siyalima, a Cape Town based NGO, has stimulated and developed the township food garden movement. Its main mandate is to assist individuals, groups and community projects to initiate and maintain permanent organised food growing projects as the basis for sustainable life styles, job creation, poverty alleviation and environmental renewal. After the United Nation's research in the 80s and 90s which showed that 15% of the world's food supply is produced in urban areas, there was significant growth in the project (Small, 2005). Among other activities, Siyalima supports small scale organic community urban projects in townships such as Nyanga and Khayelitsha and other surrounding areas in the Cape Flats in Cape Town by providing them with low cost agricultural and horticultural inputs such as seeds and manure, and capacity building through training. The organisation aims to build and strengthen urban agricultural projects they are involved in so that they are sustainable and can effectively provide a livelihood. Most of these local food garden projects do not have resources to transport their produce to be sold in the market place, hence Siyalima filled this gap by collecting all harvested produce and selling it on behalf of the food gardens at their vegetable market. The proceeds are deposited into the food garden projects' bank accounts on a monthly basis (Small, 2008, 2005; Kirkland, 2008).

In this study, four food garden projects in Khayelitsha were visited. A brief overview of each of the projects is provided in the section that follows. Pseudonyms are used for the names of the NGO and four food garden projects visited, for confidentiality purposes.

Sibambene Food Garden

Sibambene is a food garden in Makhaya, Khayelitsha. The garden has eight members, consisting of six women and two men. Five women of this food garden project were interviewed in this study. The project was established in 1996 after one local woman was approached by Siyalima to organise people who were interested in participating in the food garden project. A truck with a loud hailer went about the local area inviting people to join the food garden. This is how some of the women interviewed in this study became involved. Although the project was the brainchild of Siyalima, the women have total control of the daily running and activities of the project. The main function of the NGO is to facilitate the development of the project and assist in its sustainability. The women, however, do not have sole ownership of the land as they operate under Siyalima. The women have a chairperson and a treasurer both of whom are chosen

democratically. The food garden is divided into two sections. There is a commercial section where the women plant vegetables to sell to the local community and a section with individual plots where each woman plants her own vegetables for consumption. They did not receive any stipends at the time of the study and depended solely on the individual plots for their day-to-day needs. Money generated from the commercial section of the food garden project is divided equally among the participants at the end of each year. The remaining funds are used in the daily running of the project. The project also runs a catering project which services tourists visiting the township. The money generated in this way also contributes to the sustainability of the food garden project and their yearly dividends.

Masakhe Food Garden

Masakhe Food Garden was established in her community by Bantu in 1997. The garden is situated in area “E” in Khayelitsha. Noticing that most women in her community were unemployed, Bantu decided to gather everyone with the idea of coming up with a project that might contribute to their food consumption and income generation. The project now has nine members (six women and three men). Five women from this food garden project were interviewed. They started planting vegetables in their backyards with the help of a local businessman who bought manure and seedlings for them. As their vegetable project grew, there was too little space on their plots because of house extensions. They then approached a local high school for space and were granted a piece of land where they could do their work. When the project grew further, they had to apply for use of a vacant piece of land in the area from the City of Cape Town, which they were granted. At the time of this study, they were working in this open space. Bantu is the overall coordinator manages and supervises the daily activities of the project with the help of other members. Community members who are interested in the food garden project are allowed to come and assist. The men and women in this food garden do not receive any stipends and they share equal dividends generated from selling the vegetables, at the end of the year. They do not have individual plots at the project site but can take home vegetables for consumption every Monday and Friday.

Sosebenza Food Garden

Sosebenza Food Garden in Harare, Khayelitsha was established after six food garden projects in the area were dissolved because the Department of Social Development withdrew its funds in 2002. The food garden has satellite branches in Makhaza and Ilitha Park that report to the main branch in Harare. The food garden has eight members, five women and three men. All the female members were interviewed in this study. All the members joined the project when it was first established in 2002. Nana manages the food garden's activities, although the other branches also have their own leaders. These women assist Nana in the day-to-day running of the food garden activities. The sustainability of the project currently depends on income generated from its produce. They were given the land by the City of Cape Town after they applied as they did not have land to operate on. The land is in their name and they do not pay any rent. The project was donated three computers after they asked for assistance for their project. They use these computers to boost their workforce by inviting young people to attend computer classes and, in return, the young people help the women in the garden activities.

Ilitha Food Garden

Ilitha is a food garden in Makhaya, Khayelitsha and is situated in the grounds of a local school. The project was initiated by the school caretaker, who passed away in 2012. The project is run by the widow of the caretaker, who has two people assisting her. Two women from this food garden were interviewed. This is a family project, as the members are closely related, and they do not recruit anyone from outside. The project does not pay any rent to the school; instead they take care of the school grounds by cleaning and by watering the school garden. They also do their harvesting every Monday and sell the produce at the vegetable market in Philippi. Monthly dividends are used to support the activities of the food garden and their family.

4.2. FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSION

Table 2 below presents the major themes, categories and sub-categories that emerged from the interviews with the women. The major themes highlight the women's experiences and perceptions of a) social and economic exclusion, b) daily activities in the food garden projects, c) the challenges they face in their activities, and d) what they perceive as solutions to these challenges. It should be noted from the onset that pseudonyms were used to refer to respondents and the local NGO which works with the food garden projects to protect their identities.

Table 2: Framework for Discussion

Themes	Categories	Sub-categories
Social and Economic Realities of the women participating in food garden projects	Household and community circumstances of the participants	Caregivers and household supporters Unemployment Deprivation and vulnerability Aspirations and dreams for the future
Experiences and Perceptions of women in their daily activities	Reasons behind women's participation in Food Garden Projects	Reasons for joining Food Garden Projects Social Networks Place of hope and encouragement Livelihood sustainability
Challenges faced by participants in their daily activities	Unavailability and inconsistency in accessing support	Expensive Manure Lack of Resources and enough support structures Corruption Theft
Solutions to the challenges	Capacity building and consistent institutional support and involvement	Local/Central government support Decentralisation of funds and resources Capacity building for the women involved in the food garden projects

4.2.1. Women's Social and Economic Realities

Social exclusion is a concept used for understanding the processes and outcomes of deprivation, marginalisation, exploitation and oppression. It appears when individuals, groups and communities are systematically excluded from rights, opportunities and resources in the society (Cohen, 2006). The women's experiences of poverty, obstacles towards achieving their education and lack of income in their households are indicative of social exclusion and hindered instrumental freedoms and limited their access to better livelihoods (Sen, 1999).

"I always think if I had finished education and maybe had a certificate, I would be working now and being able to buy myself clothes and everything that I need. I would also be able to support my child because I have a child. Life is very difficult when you are not employed because you don't have the means to get what you want." (Luyanda, 38)

"Eish, it's not nice to be out of work. You need money to help educate the children and you also need to buy food in the household. You are expected to buy electricity and also pay for the water. It's so difficult when you are not employed. Even the little money that my husband is getting is not enough." (Zonke, 58)

Women viewed employment as a vehicle to escape their deprivation. Lack of economic and social opportunities hindered the women in living the lives they wanted. However, getting the support of social institutions in the food garden projects seems to be enabling them to go some way towards realising their goals. This supports Sen (1999)'s view that there is need to expand people's capabilities and provide them with opportunities so that they are enabled to lead meaningful lives. Moore (2005) takes this further by stating that local initiatives such as food garden projects need more than opportunities for them to be viable, they need targeted support and protection and political action that confronts exclusion. For policies to genuinely address poverty, issues of inequalities and exclusion should be addressed especially amongst vulnerable groups as women.

4.2.2. Women's Food Garden Projects Activities

It should be noted from the onset that the projects are run solely by the participants. They receive minimal assistance from local NGOs who provide tools, manure, seeds and seedlings. They however sell their produce through a local NGO, Siyalima, although they also sell directly to the local people. Most of the women were fulltime participants in the food gardens at the time of the research, as many are unemployed.

Garden Maintenance

The main daily activities the women are engaged in include maintenance of the food gardens which they do by watering the plants and cleaning the plots.

"We open the borehole. We then clean and water the garden. Like you are seeing now, our garden is very beautiful. We clean it very well and remove all the dirt [leaves and sticks] along the edges of the garden." (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

"We come in the morning and water the garden and we also remove some weeds and clean up the place. Right now since its winter; we don't always water the garden. We also clean our garden when it's not raining a lot." (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

"If it's hot in summer, we wake up in the morning at six and water the garden so that when it's ten we are done. This is because if we would have planted some seedling, they need water that early in the morning." (Sandy, 60 -Sibambene Food Garden)

"We weed using hoes and plant some seeds and seedlings if they are there. We also water the garden, but now it's raining almost every time, so we don't water always, we only remove weeds. You can even see that woman is weeding there. Even if it's always raining and weeds constantly come out, we are always here. There is need for the garden to be always clean even in all pavements, it should be clean so that even any person who comes in, like you, can really see that it's a good thing that is done here." (Luyanda, 38 - Masakhe Food Garden).

Women highlighted their commitment to the food garden projects' activities and maintenance. They woke up everyday looking forward to doing something that would grow and expand their projects. Working corporately towards a common goal helped the women attain their objectives

and that also enabled them to access help and support from interested institutions. The Department of Social Development (2010) highlights that support would be given to organised groups and showing their daily commitments to the projects increased their chances of accessing the support they needed.

Harvesting and Selling of the Food Garden Produce

Members work collectively to achieve a common goal in the food garden projects, that is, growing more vegetables. This thus means more vegetables sold and more income generated. The harvesting of the vegetables is done once a week and is the means through which the women earn their income from selling the vegetables.

“There is a market where we send our produce on Mondays and Tuesdays. Actually, Siyalima, collects for us when we harvest and they sell the vegetables on our behalf.” (Nomsa, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“We harvest mainly on Mondays and the produce is collected in the morning of Tuesday the following day. Siyalima makes an order beforehand on what they want and in what quantity. They can say that they want 50 bunches of broccoli, 50 bunches of cauliflower, maybe 30 bunches of carrots and 15 of beetroot. They send papers beforehand which state how much to harvest. For most of our crops we need to clear the land and prepare it for summer when the cold has gone. Winter is affecting us a lot. We then harvest these vegetables. After that we wash them and put them into crates and in the morning a car from Siyalima comes to collect and take the produce to the market.” (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden).

Working together enabled the women to grow the vegetables which they managed to sell every week when the harvested. This increased their chances of getting more income at the end of each month. This is evident in Small (2008) when he states that food gardens have proven to be a viable vehicle out of poverty for many local communities. Not only are they able to gain financially through selling the vegetables, women are able to eat healthily together with their families without spending money on food sold in the shops. The food garden projects thus proved vital in enabling women access decent livelihoods.

4.2.3. Reasons for Joining Food Garden Projects

The women in the study had different reasons for joining the food garden projects. Some women stated that they became involved in the food garden projects because they were bored at home because they were often sitting and doing nothing. Others indicated that being involved in the food gardens helped them put food on the table and it also assisted them in having an income for their households. The women highlighted that they saw the food garden as a way to escape hunger because they were unemployed and had no other support or income coming in.

“We only come here to release stress and loneliness. If you sit at home, you are going to think of a lot of things and that stresses you a lot. It’s also boring to just sit and do nothing you know.” (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

“The reason I came here was to find help because there was no way to get food. We saw a way that is better for us to do something and earn a living at least. That is why we came to this garden.” (Zintle, 59 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“Not having a job and also avoiding sitting at home doing nothing made me join this food garden. When they said there was a garden, I told myself that I will come.” (Zonke, 58 - Masakhe Food Garden)

Unemployment, hunger and loneliness were the reasons highlighted by women to be involved in the food garden projects. This enabled them to access vegetables which they could not buy because they were unemployed and did not have the income to do so. This reveals how unemployment has had a negative impact on vulnerable groups such as women as they still remain vulnerable and marginalised with limited access to services and economic resources, compared to their male counter parts (Kulik, 2000; Kehler, 2000; Tichagwa, 1998:3). Thus the women in the study need to be applauded for making a living out of their desperate circumstances.

Food Security

Most women in the study mentioned food security as their motivation to participate in the food garden activities. Food security refers to the physical, social and economic means to access sufficient, safe and nutritious food necessary to meet dietary needs and an active healthy lifestyle

(Food Agriculture Organisation (FAO), 2010). Ensuring food security at the household level requires access to food which can be facilitated by a stable income or purchasing power. Being involved in the food garden projects enabled the women and their families to escape hunger, as they were unemployed. This supports Small's (2008) view that being involved in food garden projects can provide a local foundation for food security among the poor as they are involved in their emancipation from hunger and lack.

"Since we were not working we thought of starting a vegetable garden project with other women in my street so that we would be able to put food on the table for our children because if you grow spinach or cabbage, you are able to eat and you can't go to sleep hungry." (Nelly, 44 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

"I can say that it is helping me a lot because I eat healthy organic food. Also I know that I don't buy vegetables because I get into my plot and get potatoes, onion, carrots, whatever I want in my garden. I always have something to eat at home. My life is alright. In my garden, I can always sell to people. Like yesterday, I sold you that onion bunch for R5 and also added a few rands and went and bought some bread. If I sell, the money that I have, I can go and buy electricity or go and buy whatever is not there at home." (Nathi, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

"I now eat healthy organic vegetables with my children. Even the vegetables from the shops don't taste nice anymore for me." (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

The women joined the food gardens as they obtained nutritious organic vegetables which contributed to improving their health and basic food security. Most women had no other option for them and their families to find food, and joining food gardens was viable and contributed to their having food to eat.

"We started this garden because if you grow spinach, you are able to put something on the table. We also thought that if the garden grows big, we are able to create jobs for other people like us who are not employed." (Nelly, 44 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

"We started this food garden so that people can be able to earn a living from it. If we can only get funds, it can be big and can also employ other people in the community." (Zonke, 58 - Masakhe Food Garden)

The initiative of starting food garden projects was not only aimed at improving the standard of living for the women, it also was a way of empowering others in the community through employment creation. They had a bigger vision with regard to their local development which included seeing a better society for all.

“I joined this garden because of this thing which was spoken about in the TV of Vukuzenzele [wake up and do things yourself]. I heeded that call, that’s why I came to this garden... to keep myself busy and at the same time getting something you know.” (Zethu, 57 - Sosebenza Food garden)

“I got involved because I was just sitting at home and not working. Also our government talked strongly about people doing things for themselves (Vukuzenzele) and not waiting for government. We then got up as women and asked for land at schools and we were given it and that is how we started.” (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

The women heeded the call by the government to participate in their own development. The ANC’s post apartheid manifesto- the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) promised attacking poverty and deprivation, and would be the first priority of the democratic government. The programme aimed at empowering the poor with the opportunities to develop their full potential and to sustain themselves through productive activity (Seekings, 2007). The use of the television to inspire people to go out and do things for themselves played a pivotal role in developing communities. It is interesting to note that some women took the government’s advice about communities having to do things for themselves.

Income generation

The women also stated that being involved in food garden projects helped them to buy basic household necessities such as bread and electricity, thus they found their involvement to be beneficial.

“I am benefiting a lot from this food garden. Where can you pick up R1000 from? Look now, we even get some vegetables and sell from our own plots so that we can buy bread and electricity.” (Nomsa, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“For us to get money sometimes here is beneficial. Like now, since I have planted my own onions and carrots in my own plot, I can sell a bunch for R5 and this helps me in the house; maybe to buy bread you know.” (Sandy, 60 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“You know, my child, I can tell you that this food garden has helped me feed my family. I make sure that I plant a lot of seeds so that I can send at least twice or three times a month to Siyalima. That way I know I will get R2000 or R3000.” (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

Being involved in food gardens requires one to work very hard to earn the benefits. Increasing production through increased efforts is key. Aiming to plant more seeds so that they can make more money meant that they had the freedom to direct their work. They had control of decision making with regard to how much is planted. This confirms the CDD approach which calls for the power and control of decision making to be in the hands of the local people (Dongier et al., 2002). The money that the participants received after hard work reveals that these women do earn a living by being involved in these food gardens.

“We share the money that would be there because we have a bank account. Sometimes we get R800 or R1000 at the end of the year. It is something you know.” (Sandy, 60 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“We sell our vegetables and every month we might go home with R300, which is something, you know. I am able to buy a few things that I need in the house.” (Nelly, 44 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

Women in the food garden projects revealed the spirit of community by working together to achieve a common goal as they shared their dividends at the end of the year. Coming together and sharing their hard work meant that they had some form of income at that time. Having a bank account reveals the seriousness of the project and the vision that these women had with regard to saving from the proceeds of their sales. The Department of Social Development (2010) highlights that there is support for organised community groups such as these women who were focused and had a goal of making a living out of the food garden projects that they were involved in.

4.2.4 Significance of Food Gardens in Women's Lives

Putting food on the table and earning income

The food garden projects have proved to be important social and economic factors to the women involved. As seen above, the women in the study were emphatic about the benefits of having access to food directly from the vegetables they grew and being able to access income to obtain the food they could not produce themselves, as well as other basic necessities, such as electricity. They constantly reiterated that their children were now able to eat good, fresh vegetables which contributed positively to their health.

“My life has changed so much for the better. Buying food is very expensive and right now there is something that I don't buy, like vegetables, spinach, potatoes and carrots, you see. I eat healthy organic vegetables which are fresh.” (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“It's helpful to be here. I take a rest from buying spinach and veggies from Shoprite. We get veggies here to cook at home and sell some to other people and get money after we sell the vegetables, so it's better than nothing at all.” (Zonke, 58 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“I can say that I am benefiting because health-wise, I am not affected by the township stress. I am able to come here and work and be able to exercise my mind. At the end of the day I get nutritious vegetables and eat healthily at home. People come and buy the vegetables, so we are able to get money to buy electricity at home.” (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“There is much benefit because we see the good of planting healthy vegetables. It's beneficial because we eat organic vegetables which are fresh and healthy. Buying food is very expensive and right now there is something I don't buy in the shops, like vegetables.” (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

Being involved in food garden projects has played a significant role in the women's lives. Not only has it contributed in providing them with something to eat, it has also benefited them in terms of their health as they are no longer anxious about what to eat in their households as they have the food garden which provides them with food. Small (2007) supports this view by stating that having nutritious foods also means that their families are healthy; indeed, their organic produce is superior to what they would purchase in the shops. In addition, selling vegetables to

the community enabled them to get some form of income which also helped them in accessing household necessities. This supports Sen (1999)'s view that if people are given the opportunities, they will be in a position to sustain their own livelihoods without burdening the state and people around them. Thus there is need to increase their capabilities so that they are able to lead meaningful lives.

Creation and expansion of networks

Being involved in food gardens has helped the women build and maintain supportive social networks. Apart from the immediate network among themselves, they have also managed to establish some relationships with people visiting their food gardens in the township. This wider network has assisted them to access help and support to sustain their food garden projects, as well as their households. These social networks have enabled individuals to secure benefits as a result of their membership and this has had a positive effect on their welfare and reduced their exposure to risk (Dongier et al., 2002).

“I can say that it has helped me a lot because one; it has kept my brain alright so that I don't stress in situations and also it has helped me to meet other people and network. There are a lot of people who come here plus the tourists, I talk to them. They help especially with the project because there are a lot of things I talk to them about, and tell them what we need and all those things usually come, and they try by all means to help us.” (Nomsa, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“Coming here has helped me and my family because my mother is also here in the garden and she is no longer doing her gambling habit because she is occupied. I can say that this has helped me a great deal.” (Vicky, 30 - Masakhe Food Garden)

These networks have enabled the women to connect with other women who are in the same situation as they are, as well as with organisations and individuals who are in a position to support their initiatives. The social networks have established increased social cohesion, coordination and cooperation among the women thereby ensuring the sustainability of the food gardens. Coming together for collective action has reduced the risk of these women being excluded from the community's development activities. The food garden projects provide a safe

haven for the women. They revealed that every day they had something to look forward to in the garden; something that lifts them in the midst of the daily struggle.

“Life has changed a lot. All these days I wake up and know that I am going to the garden. It has really changed for the better for me. When I don’t have anything, I ask from the women that I work with, you see.” (Sandy, 60- Sibambene Food Garden)

“When I came here I had no friends. Now I can say I have a family because I can come and chat with the women in this garden. I can also ask from them what I need when I need it. We are a family here my daughter.” (Noma, 61 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“We are like a family in this food garden. We talk about different things here in garden and we even advise each other here and there when we have problems.” (Zintle, 59 - Masakhe Food Garden)

Although the women were economically disadvantaged and therefore socially excluded, participation in the food garden projects has enabled them to find solace in the support networks which they have formed in the food garden projects. Getting up in the morning has been meaningful for these women. They now have friends that they can talk to. The support systems derived from the social networks thus serve to make the women feel included in their community and this contributes to their having stronger capacity for collective action which results in more effective and self-organising development projects as fostered by the Community Driven Development approach (Dongier et al, 2002).

“Ever since I came here, I have met people that I can talk to. When I came to Cape Town, I had no friends but now these women are my friends as I can talk to them and tell them whatever affects me. I also ask them if I don’t have anything at home.” (Susan, 29 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

“Working with these women in the garden has given me a place where I can go to when I have township stress you know. Sometimes my children stress me, so I come here and talk to others; we talk about a lot of things. We talk about things that are affecting us in the community. That’s why I like coming here.” (Zethu, 57 - Sosebenza Food Garden).

Place of hope and encouragement

The women in the study shared that the food garden projects have come to be known as a place where people who are hungry can come and ask for vegetables to eat. Although they sold their produce through Siyalima, they also sold to the local community.

“We do give people. There is a hospice here at the clinic, we give them. Also, in that pink roof, there are orphaned children. There are people who are not well, people who are discharged from hospitals and do not have a place to go and there are also people who are given over by their families. So far, those are the people we often help by giving them vegetables. Also those who are HIV positive and have TB who tell us that they don’t have money. Behind us here there is a church that cooks for children sometimes, so we give them.” (Zintle, 59 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“We do give people especially those who are sick. We give them if they come and ask. And there are other soup kitchen people, we also give them when they come and ask because they will be feeding our children at school.” (Nelly, 44 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

“We do give people vegetables, especially those who are not well. We tell them that they should bring a paper from the doctor or the clinic which shows that they are not well. It’s just that people are scared to come. They don’t want people to know that they are sick. Yet on our part, we just wanted to confirm because if we don’t do that, everyone will come here pretending to be sick. We are very free that people come and ask. They are scared that it will be known that they are sick; maybe they have TB or HIV. They don’t want it to be known that they are sick.” (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

The women indicated that they also gave vegetables to those who did not have money to buy. This shows the welfare aspects of the food garden projects to the general community as they are able to help the less fortunate in a time of need. Helping the community through giving the needy vegetables is a role of these food garden projects. They give the vegetables to the needy under no obligation but as a sign of goodwill, that is, of helping those less fortunate than themselves. The projects thus do more than just provide food for their families. The women, through the food garden projects, have helped the sick, the destitute, the elderly and the orphans. By giving

vegetables to the needy, they contribute to the social construction of their community. Food gardens thus have become a fabric that holds the community together in terms of the social cohesion and development in these deprived local areas (World Bank, 2004).

4.2.5 Challenges Faced in Their Daily Activities

Expensive manure

One of the major challenges women face in their work is access to affordable manure, which is crucial for the growth of the vegetables they are producing. The women indicated that they mainly got manure from Siyalima but it was very costly. They reiterated that they sometimes got free manure from the Department of Agriculture (once or twice a year), which was not enough, considering that their projects are ongoing and needed ongoing support.

“The challenge is that we plant on sandy soil, so every time you plant, you have to put manure. So there is no money for us to buy manure. If there is no manure, there isn’t anything to do in the garden. We often ask for help especially with manure, but we don’t always succeed. Manure is so expensive on the farms where we usually get it.” (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

“We need help especially on manure because it is very expensive and we always use it. We also need seedlings and tools because they are very few. So they make our work very difficult because we have to be borrowing each other the tools.” (Nathi, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“Sometimes we don’t have money to buy seeds and manure. So we sometimes don’t have anything to plant. Sometimes we get seeds and manure from Siyalima and they make us pay when they sell our vegetables at the market. This is not nice because you don’t get your full money after they sell for you because they take that money.” (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

Women highlighted that they needed support through being provided with manure which was central to their food garden projects. Although they reiterated that there received little support, more needs to be done by institutions such as the government, local authorities and civil societies in supporting these local initiatives. It is paramount that there is a department that takes the lead in coordinating the activities of urban agricultural initiatives which is important for policy development and successful implementation. Government thus has a very important role to play

in generating local initiative opportunities through its public works programme thereby contributing to poverty alleviation (Aliber, 2009).

Limited resources

Financial constraints hindered women from carrying out their daily activities in the food gardens. The women mentioned that they did not have financial capacity to buy items needed in the food garden projects, such as seeds, seedlings, tools and manure. This was a major constraint to their activities as their projects needed constant provision of resources which contributed to the effective and efficient running of the food garden projects. CCD thus emphasises the importance of resource provision in the development process, whether it is internal or external support to community projects. The concept stipulates the importance of providing support to local projects, however bearing in mind that they (the community) has overall control in the decision making process (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005).

“Most gardens here in the location need money to work effectively. Right now we need tools so desperately here. The tools break and now we only have a few. When we are working in our gardens, we have to be borrowing from each other. We also need a container to store our tools. This one that we have we were given by the Department of Agriculture, but it is now leaking. So we really need help.” (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“We do not have protective clothing for us to work well, such as gumboots and overalls. We don't have the money to buy those things. And the tools that we use are few which affects how we work.” (Zintle, 59 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“We need that help here because we struggle a lot to get manure and seedlings. Sometimes we don't have seeds or manure and only sit and wait. Sometimes we also ask Siyalima who later deducts from our money and maybe leaves us with R500.” (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

“Right now I can say that we do not have enough money to buy the things that are needed in this food garden. We need a hose pipe for us to be able to water the garden without us carrying the buckets. We are in need of tools so much because they break, especially now in winter. We really are facing difficulties in that regard.” (Susan, 38 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

Although the women were faced with these challenges, they however indicated that they did not always rely on external help such as the government and NGOs, but came up with homemade methods of dealing with the situation of snails and fleas damaging their vegetables.

“We try and get water and put garlic, chillies and soapy liquid and then sprinkle it on the vegetables. Sometimes we pick them [snails] up, put them in a bucket and pour some water and then leave for some days. After that, you put water and sprinkle on the vegetables. They are scared to come near that smelly scent of the water.” (Sandy, 60 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“For us, we can’t use chemicals because we only plant organically. We pick them [snails] up every day and crush them. We then use that soup to scare them away by sprinkling on the plants.” (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

“You see these snails, here we do organic planting. So we pick them up and crush them. We sometimes use chilli water. When we finish we sprinkle that solution because they hate smelly things.” (Nelly, 44- Sosebenza Food Garden)

Women in these food gardens proved to be pro-active. Instead of waiting for help and doing nothing, they came up with a solution to a problem that affected their gardening activities. This is one of the traits of the CDD approach where people come up with initiatives even in dire times. These women had to work hard in picking up the snails so that they did not destroy their vegetables and also to protect the organic nature of their vegetables by not using chemicals.

Theft

Theft is another challenge faced by all the participants in this study. The women indicated that they had little security in place to protect their food gardens. They stated that this was a problem with which they had to live, as they did not have the means to stop it.

“Theft is affecting us a lot here. They come in sometimes when they see that there is no one and break in. There is nothing that we can do.” (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“The problem is that we have children that come in and steal carrots. You see it all over the place and see that it’s the children, they really affect us a lot, they take the small ones [carrots]

and throw them all over. We see that they just want to destroy. They are just being naughty.”
(Zonke, 58 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“There is a lot of theft here. The reason that we got this house is that we would wake up and find that the place has been broken into and see that the fence has been cut. Since we got these people who moved in here, there has been so much change and reduction in theft although there are still people who steal the vegetables.” (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

The rate of crime in the community affected the women’s food garden projects. Although they had fenced the food gardens, thieves jumped over to steal. They reiterated that they could not afford to hire a security guard to look after the place when they were not there. Although they had people living in the food garden projects as “security”, that did not stop the thieves from stealing the vegetables, hence the women stated that theft was a problem that they had to live with.

4.3. FOOD GARDEN PROJECTS AS COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Community Driven Development (CDD) emphasises and fosters community participation and involvement in the inception and implementation of local projects (Mansuri and Rao, 2003). This was portrayed in this study as women mentioned how they became involved in the food garden activities. The respondents had control of their food garden projects and decision making with regard to what happened in the projects.

CDD is of the view that local projects can be initiated by the local people without outside influence and those that can be birthed by outside influence, through provision of funds and expertise with cooperation from the local community (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005). Three food garden projects were initiated by the women with the other food garden project established by a local NGO, Siyalima. All four food gardens, however, received outside support in terms of funds and expertise as the government, through some departments, and the NGO, Siyalima, sought ways to support these food garden projects so that they are viable and sustainable. The projects in the study displayed the CDD features as the

women had control of the food garden projects and decision making with the projects rested on them.

The five principles of CDD, as indicated by African Institute for Community Driven Development (2005), could be identified in this study these are (i) empowering local communities, (ii) empowering local government where the local authority fosters local economic development, (iii) realigning the centre where central government decentralises responsibilities to local level institutions, (iv) improving accountability and (v) building capacity. These features and how they are reflected in the food garden projects studied will be discussed.

The value of these features is that they allow control and decision making of the development process to be in the hands of the beneficiaries. They foster empowerment of local communities in the development process to design, implement and monitor their own projects. Food gardens in this study showed features of CDD mentioned above as the women saw their situation of being unemployed and acted upon it by being involved in the food garden projects where they had ownership and control of the decision making process. The government, through the Department of Agriculture, supported these local projects. The City of Cape Town, as the local authority, also pitched in to support these local initiatives. In addition, the women were capacitated through the provision of training and capacity building from the local NGO, Siyalima (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005).

Empowerment of local communities

The World Bank (2004) views empowerment as the expansion of assets, capabilities and choices of the poor, to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold institutions affecting them accountable. CDD emphasises local autonomy, empowerment and inclusion of the marginalised groups in local development. The concept advocates for community control over planning decisions and investment resources (Wong, 2012). The women in the study saw that they were unemployed and sought ways to escape their situation for the better. All the food gardens were responsible for their own daily activities. Although they had outside support, decision making and implementation rested with them and this rendered them empowered.

“We tell ourselves that tomorrow we are supposed to do such and such. If maybe seedlings would have arrived we know that we need to clear the land so that we can put in those seedlings

that would have arrived. If we have done that, then we are free to go and work in our own plots. We don't have a supervisor here.” (Sandy, 60 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“Here everyone is the manager. We know that for this project to go forward we need to work so we make sure that everyone works and not wait for anyone to tell us that we need to do this and that. We all decide when to plant and what to plant. We are a team.” (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“We work very well together. Even if we sometimes disagree on some things, we try and work them out, but what really makes us fight a lot is that they are very lazy. But with other things we try and tell each other what to do because if we don't do that, we won't get anything at the end of the month.” (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

“There are no problems because we have our supervisor who makes sure that the work is done. He manages all of us and we work very well together. All of us are free to tell him what we think needs to be done and he is also free to tell us. There are really no problems because at the end of the day if we fight, nothing will come out of this garden.” (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

Community projects can be excellent vehicles for community empowerment and development, and above all, for promoting inclusion and equality for vulnerable groups (World Bank, 2010; Tune, 2008). The women were part of the development process in their projects and this empowered them to have a say with regard to the food garden project's activities.

Support Experience from local government

Local government authorities need to provide leadership, encouragement, practical support and resources for the community and foster local development. This would enable local authorities to be in a better position to support individual and community initiatives and to direct community energies into projects and programmes which benefit the area as a whole and foster local economic development (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005). The City of Cape Town, in an effort to promote community food garden projects came up with the Urban Agricultural Policy (2007), which indicates the City's position in supporting and promoting people involved in food garden projects. The policy states that the City of Cape Town will

support community projects with land, planting materials and other resources that they deem necessary to facilitate their projects' activities.

“We were given this land that we plant in from the City of Cape Town. When we were still at the school, we saw that the land was beginning to be small and we applied for this vacant land from the City and were given it.” (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“This land we were given by the City of Cape Town. The City also gave us these containers to store our belongings and they also gave us tools to help us in our food garden activities. They also drilled a borehole for us to water. So we don't pay for water. What we need is just money for electricity”. (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

However, the interaction between the City and the projects is not all plain sailing:

“The other day there was this lady who came from City of Cape Town. She said she had come to bring money to this garden in Ward 95. We could not fill in the forms because here there is no chairperson of this ward who was going to sign for that money, the person who is our chairperson here, stays in Harare, so she ended up returning the money that was going to help us. They never came back again.” (Zethu, 57 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

“The City of Cape Town was once here. They had come to ask about what we needed but we have only received tools from them.” (Sandy, 60 - Sibambene Food Garden)

The City of Cape Town is supportive in trying to promote local economic development by being part of these grassroots initiatives even though it was not always effective. Institutions such as the local government need to actively support these food garden projects so that they can contribute to towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities and enhance community participation. According to the CDD approach, the local authorities need to be aware of projects within their local communities, and seek to promote the participation of marginalised and excluded groups in community process by providing them with the assistance they need. This was evident in the projects in the study, even though there were problems with delivery of resources.

Realigning the centre

Policies and legislation have been developed by the South African government and other policy makers in support of urban agriculture (food gardens) in an effort to reduce poverty. These policies have been put in place to mainstream the poor into the socioeconomic activity of the society. The central government in this case decentralises responsibilities to local level institutions where power resides and redistribution of resources takes place. Government departments such as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Rural Development, the Department of Social Development and agencies such as the National Development Agency (NDA) and Independent Development Trust (IDT) have been vibrant in supporting local grassroots development (Department of Social Development, 2010). The women in this study mentioned that they received help from certain government departments.

“We sometimes had support from the Department of Agriculture. They came here and gave us seedlings and they also gave us manure but it has been long back. Now when you ask them for manure, it is a very difficult process, you need to be always going there. Sometimes you get the help, sometimes you do not get.” (Nomisa, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

“We just got this irrigation system from the Department of Agriculture. We were really suffering a lot here. We used to put buckets on our heads to water the garden. We have a nursery which we were given by the Department of Agriculture.” (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“The government supports us but not always. We only got help from the Department of Social Development and the Department of Agriculture where we would go and ask for seeds, seedlings and tools and we were given.” (Nana, 60 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

“The people from the Department of Agriculture are the ones who really help us a lot. But I have only put in a request for more tools when they came here. They promised that I am on their list and they will help me very soon. I know they will support us because every time when I ask they give me the things that I would have asked.” (Sipho, 52 - Ilitha Food Garden)

The government departments have been pivotal in supporting these grassroots initiatives so that they meet their daily needs to sustain their activities. This support has enabled the women to carry out their activities in the food garden projects. The government is viewed here as the facilitator of local development projects and has responsibilities for providing financial

resources, training and monitoring for local projects (Dongier et al., 2002). There is, however, need for more support from institutional actors in food gardens, as this has become a livelihood strategy for many of the lowly skilled and unemployed people in the townships. According to the capability approach (Sen, 1999), given more options and opportunities for people involved in food gardens, the women would have better chances to effectively run projects that would sustain themselves, put them in a better position, and also create employment opportunities for others in their communities.

Although women in the study had control of decision making with regard to their food garden project activities, they lacked resources to fully implement and execute the plans they had. Lack of resources seemed to be a very serious constraint in this study, as highlighted by the women interviewed:

“We need funds. I think what is important here is that all things need support here. We need some form of training in vegetable production and that requires money.” (Vicky, 30 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“Most gardens lack funders, or let me say money, to work effectively. Right now we need tools so desperately here. The tools break and now we only have a few. When we are working in our gardens, we have to be borrowing from each other and we do not have money to buy new ones.” (Amanda, 59 - Sibambene Food Garden)

This highlights that for any development process to occur, there is a need for financial resources, thus the importance of both economic and social development in the development processes in CDD. Thus, it is paramount to note that, in coming up with poverty reduction initiatives at the grassroots level, there is a need for the creation of both economic opportunities and empowerment of communities to access these opportunities. Empowerment will enable the women to hold government institutions and structures accountable to support their food gardening activities (Narayan, Chambers, Shah and Petesch, 2000).

Improving accountability and building capacity

The last two features of CDD, which are improving accountability and building capacity, will be discussed together and treated as cross-cutting and applied at the three levels: community, local government and national levels. Creating an enabling environment, approving investment for local support and building support systems for communities to develop is the mandate of the government (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005). NGOs, on the other hand, facilitate and complement government's role. Their role is to mobilise communities to solicit community participation, training and capacity building of local projects and this results in community empowerment and development which is likely to foster inclusive local governance. Capacity building is a building block for CDD as it ensures long term sustainability, as local people are equipped with skills to run their own projects. Capacity building is viewed as the strengthening of skills and knowledge of beneficiaries. Offering training to foster capacity building is a vital tool which contributes immensely to the women's projects as they will be equipped with the skills to produce good quality and more vegetables, resulting in the growth of their projects.

"We were trained by Siyalima. At first when we were trained, we did not get any certificates. It was because we didn't finish the course. But we also started another one last month, we got our certificates. There was also same training which was done here; we are still waiting for the certificates." (Luyanda, 38 - Masakhe Food Garden)

"We were trained by the Department of Agriculture. We held a four-day training when we first started where we were taught on how to prepare the land so as to be able to plant and how you actually plant up till you harvest." (Nelly, 44 - Sosebenza Food Garden)

"We got training from Siyalima where we were taught to do compost and mulch for our vegetables. They helped us with this hedge so that it can block the wind from affecting our crops. They also help us when we don't have money to buy things needed in the garden; they buy on our behalf and we pay later when we have the money." (Nomsa, 56 - Sibambene Food Garden)

"We have a nursery here which was built by the Department of Agriculture. They trained us in how to grow our own seedlings in the nursery." (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“Capacity building is needed for us because you can’t do something, yet you don’t know how it is supposed to be properly done. Here and there you will make mistakes. Training and awareness on vegetable production should be done. We have to meet with other food gardens and share ideas. These things go hand-in-hand with current affairs, so we also need to be constantly changing.” (Vicky, 30 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“We need to be given the skills so that we can do the job well. Some of us only came here without any knowledge. We need to be taught to do it right.” (Zethu, 57- Sosebenza Food Garden)

The local NGO, Siyalima, in collaboration with government departments, has helped in empowering the women by providing them with skills and training which will help them in the long run to sustain their projects. Women know their needs with regard to their livelihood strategies and support from government structures and other organisations can fulfil these needs and provide them with the necessary skills to realise their potential. This indicates the importance of the skills for the women to be productive in their projects. The participants noted that, as long as they were empowered, they would be able to sustain their projects because they would have the necessary skills to do so. If women’s skills and knowledge in terms of vegetable production are enhanced, it would increase their sense of control and independence over issues and decisions which affect them and would promote self awareness, self identification and an understanding of their own situation. Poverty alleviation initiatives should thus enhance people’s capabilities, invest in people, facilitate economic development and contribute effectively to people’s well being so that they are able to sustain themselves even when there is no help (Narayan, Patel, Schafft, Rademacher, and Koch-Schulte, 2002, World Bank, 2004; Triegaardt, 2007).

Support structures need to be accountable to their source and also to their beneficiaries. Some of the women interviewed in the study were aware of the support given to people involved in food garden projects but they did not have the resources or the capacity to access them. Asked about why they had not been part of these programmes, the women stated that there was a lot of corruption which hampered small projects like theirs in gaining recognition and access to those programmes.

“It is very difficult to get help from these programmes if you do not know anyone. It all depends on who you know. If you don’t know anyone there [government departments], there is nothing you will get.” (Bantu, 57 - Masakhe Food Garden)

“There are other programmes which are there but you know, you need to know someone there for you to be given support.” (Vicky, 30 - Masakhe Food Garden)

Corruption hinders progress in the local community projects, because they lack resources or capacity to bribe the officials so as to gain access to programmes which could give them the opportunity to obtain resources and effectively run their projects. This thus poses a serious problem for the sustainability of these grassroots projects. Accountability needs to be fostered at the micro, mezzo and macro levels for CDD projects to be effectively implemented, as lack of accountability is an obstacle for grassroots development (African Institute for Community Driven Development, 2005; Dongier et al., 2002).

4.4. Summary

The findings highlighted the perceptions and experiences of women involved in food garden projects. They revealed the reasons why they were involved in the food garden projects which included lack of employment, lack of food in the household and general loneliness when at home. The women highlighted that in their plight to earn a living through participating in the food garden activities, they had obstacles and challenges such as lack of manure and financial resources for their work to move forward and they needed support from interested institutions for their projects to be viable. The next chapter will present the conclusions to the study and recommendations that emerged from these conclusions.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will build on the data analysis presented in this study and draw conclusions from the research findings. It will also provide some recommendations as to how all role players can support people involved in food gardens.

5.2 Conclusions

This section will first highlight a conclusion based on the research design and methodology employed in this study. It will then proceed to offer conclusions based on the findings from the study using the research objectives as the headings.

5.2.1 Research Design Methodology

The study employed an explorative and descriptive research approach to the study together with face-to-face interviews as mentioned in the third chapter. Using this approach enabled the researcher to answer all the research questions with regard to perceptions and experiences of women involved in food garden projects. This use of the research design and methodology allowed participants to describe their personal experiences and to give reasons for their involvement in the projects. They were able to voluntarily participate in the study and were free to express their feelings and thoughts regarding to their participation in the food gardens.

5.2.2 Personal circumstances that led to the women's participation in local food garden projects

The women in the study mentioned various reasons for being involved in food garden projects. Many of them reiterated that unemployment and lack of any source of income forced them to be involved in food gardens as that was the only viable means of putting food on the table and their families escaping hunger. Most women had large families comprising of three generations in one household. This indicated the intensity of poverty, as the young people could not support themselves therefore sourcing support and shelter from their matriarchal homes. This caused pressure for these women, as their children who are of working age, were not participating in the

labour market to support themselves and their own families. They were in a situation where they needed to provide for their families and yet they had no viable means to do so. The poverty surrounding these women thus pushed them to find an alternative means of putting food on the table and thus the motivation to join food gardens. The participants mentioned that in the midst of their dire situation, provision of the pension and children's grants made a huge difference, as it contributed to their livelihood. The literature revealed, as did the participants' responses, that food gardens have brought a source of hope for people in townships and the urban poor who mainly live in informal settlements. Participants highlighted that the hunger they experienced in their families made them join food gardens as they contributed to food security in their households. Most of the women in the study dropped out of school and could not acquire the skills for them to be employable. The extents of deprivation in these households might also affect the younger generation who are also not in a position to access education which may be the only way to escape the poverty their families are in. This highlights how poverty can be passed from generation to generation and that it can be a trap which is hard to escape (Chambers, 1989).

5.2.3 Understand how women's lives have changed (or not), by their participation in local food garden projects.

The women in the study highlighted how food gardens have positively contributed to their livelihoods. They mentioned that not only were these food gardens providing food for their families, they contributed socially to their local communities as they donated some of their vegetables to the needy who did not have money to buy the vegetables. This highlights the social responsiveness of these projects in these local areas. Social networks which act as a glue that hold society emerged as one of the traits of these community projects. They fostered social inclusion as highlighted by participants, in that they felt they were part of a family, particularly in the food garden projects. These social networks evoked a sense of social cohesion as the women came together for a common purpose which empowered them and also emancipated them out of poverty. This community driven development strategy of food gardens saw the women as being at the centre of the development process. This highlights the strategies employed by the poor in attempting to sustain their livelihoods. Women interviewed revealed how their lives had changed for the better, as they no longer sat at home doing nothing but rather, they were involved in something productive that also helped their families.

5.2.4 Examine whether women are able to earn a living and be self-sufficient through participating in these food gardening projects.

The participants in the study highlighted that being involved in food gardens have helped them gain income which they used to buy things that they needed in the household. Although they indicated that the income they earned was not much, they appreciated it, as they said it was better than having nothing at all. In terms of income, the participants mentioned that they could buy bread and electricity for their households. Many stated that because of participating in the food gardens, they now did not buy any vegetables in the shops as they got them from the garden, which also saved their income for other necessities in the household.

Some women in the study highlighted that they had individual plots where they planted vegetables for their own consumption and also to sell in the community. In this way they benefited as they sold the vegetables and earned some income. They stated that they grew vegetable to be sold and shared the profits at the end of each year. This emerged as a viable move as they were able to sustain themselves through these projects in terms of income on a daily basis and that it also contributed to their year-end groceries for their households. Participants stated that this was beneficial as they knew that at the end of the year, they also had something to celebrate with, together with their families.

5.2.5 Challenges women face in their gardening activities

The participants in the study mentioned that lack of sufficient income and support for their activities was one of the challenges they faced in their gardening activities. They mentioned that the tools, seeds and manure were very expensive hence they needed support in that regard. They however, reiterated that government, through the Department of Agriculture, supported them by giving them seeds and manure, but that it was not enough as they received these only once in a while. They stated that they needed constant support which would enable their projects to be sustainable. The participants indicated that there were limited opportunities for them to supplement their income and finances to support their gardening activities. Participants also pointed out that snails and fleas were a threat to their plants because they always destroyed mainly the leaf vegetables such as broccoli, cabbages and lettuce. The participants revealed however, that they were proactive and resourceful, as they had come up with homemade solutions to eliminate these snails. Theft was a challenge which the participants faced and they

stated that it was mostly children who stole and destroyed their crops. More support, also in terms of security, was mentioned by some women as very vital.

5.2.6 Knowledge and experiences of institutional support available for food garden projects

In their responses, the women interviewed in this study mentioned the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Social Development as the only government Departments that had supported them. Most of the participants mentioned that, the support was not sufficient and inconsistent. Those who approached the government departments said it was very difficult to access their services as they did not know anyone there. They stated that corruption was the main obstacle that hindered them from accessing the support as only those who knew people in the government departments were given help.

The participants highlighted that there was one organisation, the NGO, Siyalima, which always supported their cause and also helped them to sell their produce. The organisation also helped them when they did not have money to buy what they needed, which contributed to their production because they were able to work even if they did not have the funds to do so.

None of the participants however, knew of any other programmes that supported food garden projects apart from the organisation and the government departments mentioned above.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are drawn from the participants as well as the researcher's views on the strategies and initiatives that can be put in place to support food gardens as a viable poverty reduction strategy. Recommendations to government and organisations working in the field of community development will be highlighted. The last section will offer recommendations for future research.

5.3.1 Recommendations to government

The food garden projects in the study helped the women involved to sustain their livelihoods. It is thus essential for government to adopt grassroots initiatives approach such as these, as micro development model that could be replicated elsewhere. In this, government needs to do more in terms of support of these local strategies than it is currently doing be it financially or through provision of other resources. Government should improve on keeping an ear to the ground, to

remain up-to-date with what is happening at the grassroots, so that policies and programmes are geared towards benefiting this level and those who need them the most. Thus more needs to be done by government to develop and maintain relationships with local projects. Government should continually check on underutilised land and resources so that they can be used by local projects to create sustainable livelihoods for the poor. More funds needs to be channelled by government to micro initiatives so as to foster local development.

5.3.2 Non-governmental organisations and other agencies

Most of the time, NGOs do not have the means to support emerging projects such as food garden projects. There is a need for them to link with church organisations which could be viable for financial and other support for the noble acts, charity and generosity displayed by these women through their food garden projects. NGOs can also increase exposure of these food garden projects to other donors thereby sourcing financial help. This can also be done through awareness-raising, whereby information is sent out to the general society on the plight of the poor. NGOs and other organisations working with the grassroots need to capacitate these local initiatives as this would support their sustainability. Further training and improvement of gardening skills will strengthen their human capital. This will encourage more production as vegetables will be sold and more income generated in for their benefit.

5.3.3 Further Research

The relationship between food garden projects as a poverty reduction strategy and their sustainability can be further researched. This can be done through an evaluation of these food garden projects in the long term. This might yield more information on the impact and effects of these local initiatives. Further research can also be done with regards to the influence of the food gardens. There is need to establish, why some people in the midst of adverse poverty choose to be involved in food gardens and some do not. There is a need to assess why some communities come up with food garden projects and some do not and this can add to knowledge.

5.4 Conclusion

This study examined food garden projects as a community driven development strategy and poverty alleviation initiative. Food garden projects were found to have a far-reaching impact on

women's lives as far as their economic and social well-being is concerned. This also empowered them as they had control over decision making with regards to the activities in their projects. Hence, the researcher concludes that local initiatives such as these can play a pivotal role in reducing poverty for those affected.

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APPENDIX ONE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:

Research Topic: Experiences and Perceptions of Women Involved in Food Garden Projects in Khayelitsha

INTRODUCTION

My name is Sibusiso Ndlovu. I am pursuing a Masters Degree in Social Development.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the research is to assess the experiences and perceptions of women involved in food garden projects as a means of reducing the effects of poverty. The knowledge gained from this study might help role players to know more about what support is needed for people involved in food garden projects. It is my hope that by sharing your experiences and perceptions with regard to your personal lives, food gardens may become an option to alleviate poverty among the less privileged.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw or terminate your participation in the interview session at any time. All the information you share with me will be treated with strict confidence. No one will have access to the interview transcripts and your name will not be revealed in any publication resulting from this study. I also request to use the tape recorder to record the interview session as this will allow me to concentrate more on what you are saying and not be continually scribbling down some notes. There is no right or wrong response to the questions that I am going to ask you.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

What is your name?

How old are you?

Are you married?

If yes, how long have you been married?

If not, are you in any relationship? How would you describe your relationship for me.

Probe on Is your spouse/partner supportive?

Do you get along?

How far did you go at school?

How far did you go in school? (Level of schooling)

If you think back to your life, is there anything that would have helped you gain more education?

What stopped you from getting further education?

Has anything changed today to make it possible for you to continue with school?

If yes, what has changed?

If, No why not?

Would you like to continue with your education?

If yes, how far would you like to go?

Why is it important for you to continue with your education?

What has been your experience of trying to continue with your schooling?

If not interested in more schooling, Why not?

Are you working at the moment?

If yes, where do you work?

What kind of work do you do?

What is your position?

How long have you been working?

Clarify whether it is full time or part time.

Can you describe the community that you live in?

Is the community peaceful, are there any tensions?

Do you feel safe in the community?

If yes, what makes it safe?

If no, what makes it unsafe?

FAMILY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Who do you stay with, in your household?

How long have you lived with these people?

What is your role in the household?

Could you describe your role in the household.

Would you say that you are the head/mother of house?

As head/mother of the house, what do you do?

What are your responsibilities?

What kind of things do you do?

What kind of support do you give your household?

What it is like as the head/mother of the household?

How many people work in the household?

How many people get an income?

How many people in the household depend on you financially? (Mention their ages)

What other ways do they depend on you on apart from finance?

EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Have you worked before?

If yes, where have you worked?

What kind of work did you do?

What was your position?

How long have you been out of work?

Do you mind telling me the circumstances that led you to leave the job?

In what ways has your life changed since you left your previous job?

How has life changed for you?

What are your aspirations for the future?

What are your plans for the future?

Do you have hope for the future?

EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTION OF POVERTY

Are you responsible for the finances and paying of bills in your household?

Please tell me at least how much you spend per month in your household?

Including rent, telephone, groceries etc.

If you don't mind, please tell me approximately how much do you raise per month?

Is it enough to cover all your expenses?

How much do you think you would need to cover all your expenses?

EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Financial difficulties:

Do you or members of your family find it difficult to make ends meet?

If yes, what makes it difficult for you to make ends meet?

In what ways is it affecting your life?

Are you or members of your family in arrears with paying rent and utility bills?

Basic necessities:

Are you and members of your family able to afford meat, fish or chicken every second day?

Are you and members of your family able to afford to buy new clothes?

Are you and members of your family able to afford a week's holiday away from home?

Housing conditions:

Do you have access to electricity for lighting and cooking?

Does your house have flush or chemical toilet?

Does your house have potable water on-site or in-dwelling?

Does your household have refuse removal by local authority weekly or less?

Do you have to walk far from your house to go to the toilet?

Do you have to walk far from your house to collect water?

Durables:

Do you and/or members of your family have access to a car?

Do you and/or members of your family have access to a telephone?

Do you and/or members of your family have to a colour TV?

Health:

How would you describe your health?

Would you say its good or health?

If bad, what kind of health problems do you have?

Do you have access to medical help?

If yes, what kind of help do you have access to?

If no, why not?

Social contact:

How often do you have contact with your friends?

How often do you have contact with your relatives?

Dissatisfaction:

Are you satisfied with the way your life is going thus far?

If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?

Looking at your life now what would you say are your main needs (money, food, shelter, respect, friends, success)?

What kind of things would make you feel better about yourself? i.e. What are your dreams, goals, aspirations that would enable you to become happy and comfortable?

How important is the achievement of these dreams, goals aspirations for who you are?

What do you need to do to achieve these?

What would help you to achieve your dreams and goals?

What do you think will prevent you from achieving your dreams and goals?

Do you have an account at a shop?

If yes, what kind of things do you use it for? (Food, clothing, household furniture?)

If no, how do you get food, clothing, and household furniture?

Are you able to pay your bills every month?

How do you pay your monthly bills?

Do you buy food, clothes, and so on, on credit?

How do you pay for your electricity and water?

FOOD GARDEN PROJECT PARTICIPATION

Now I would like to know about your involvement in the food gardening project:

When did you start working here?

What made you decide to get involved in the food garden project?

Did you have any formal training for practising food gardening?

If Yes, what kind of formal training did you receive?

If No, how did you learn work in food gardening?

MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN FOOD GARDEN PROJECTS.

What do you find most beneficial about your involvement in food gardening?

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE DUE TO PARTICIPATION IN FOOD GARDEN

How has your life changed since you started participating in food gardens?

How has things changed at home?

How is the standard of living?

How are the finances in your household?

How was your relationship with your household before you started food gardening?

How has this difference been?

FOOD GARDEN PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Describe your daily activities in the food garden?

Do you own or rent the land?

If yes, how did you obtain it?

If No, who ones the land?

Are you individually running the food garden or you are a group?

How is it like being an individual/or in group?

Do you get along?

If individual, do you have any people who help you?

If yes, what do they do to help you?

How do you get hold of the supply you need for gardening?

What are your daily activities?

What is your role in these activities?

How do you sell and market your produce?

How do you sell your produce?

Can you say that you are making progress or not?

CHALLENGES FACED IN THEIR DAILY ACTIVITIES

What kind of challenges do you face in your daily gardening activities?

What do you think needs to be done to counter these challenges?

PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES THAT SUPPORT FOOD GARDENS PROJECTS.

What government support do you receive?

Which NGOs/organisations help food garden projects?

Do you receive any support from other organisations or agencies?

Do you have any government or NGOs that you collaborate with?

If yes, which of these have you had contact with?

How long have they helped you?

How has your collaboration relationship been for you?

In what ways do you think government or NGOS can be of assistance to people practising food gardening?

CLOSING

Thank you for spending time with me.

Is there anything that you want to know before we wrap up? How has this interview been for you?

APPENDIX TWO: Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: Experiences and Perceptions of Women Involved in Food Garden Projects in Khayelitsha

Researcher: Sibusiso Ndlovu

Please Tick box

1. I understand that there is no right or wrong answers to this study. My participation in this interview is voluntary, and I am allowed to withdraw at any time during the interview when I feel like.

2. I understand that my participation in this study is anonymous and that all responses that I will be disclosing will be kept strictly confidential and that only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to my responses which will be anonymised.

3. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any questions which I feel are inappropriate or I do not have answers to.

4. I agree to take part in the above mentioned research project and agree that a tape recorder be used for the purposes of the research.

Name of Participant Date Signature

Researcher Date Signature

APPENDIX THREE: PHOTOS OF FOOD GARDENS VISITED

University of Cape Town



