

# Impact of the Strengthening Local Governance Programme on human settlements, urban renewal & urban governance



Study conducted by Dan Smit, Clive Forster, Anton Krone

Co-ordinating contractor: EISA

For the Strengthening Local Governance Programme  
German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ)

January 2007



**the dplg**

Department:  
Provincial and Local Government  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**housing**

Department:  
Housing  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**gtz**

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## Acknowledgements

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Strengthening Local Governance Programme (SLGP)

German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ)

Editing, Layout & Design: [www.intothelimeLight.co.za](http://www.intothelimeLight.co.za)

Cover Photograph: Department of Housing

Artwork: [www.intothelimeLight.co.za](http://www.intothelimeLight.co.za)

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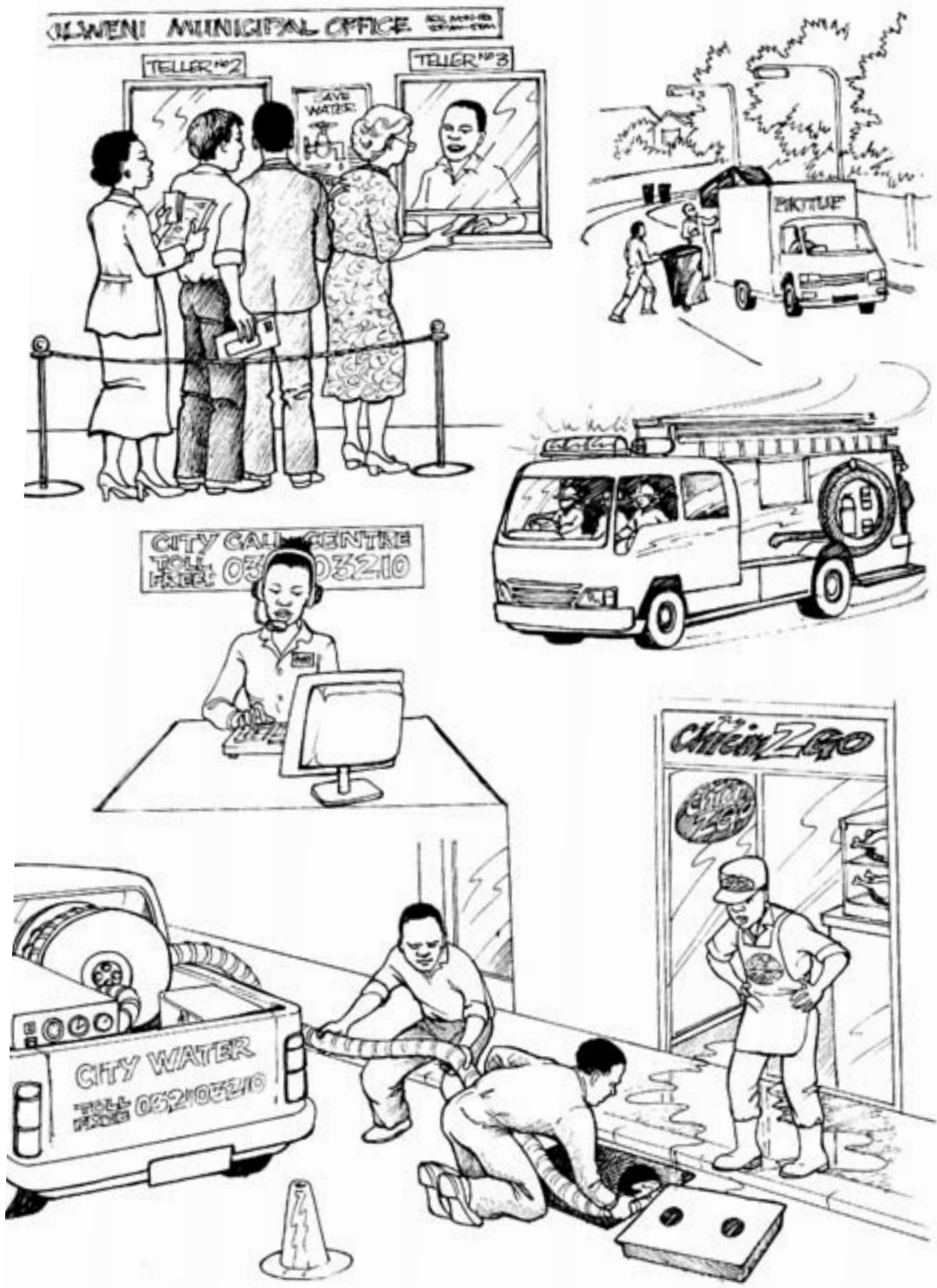
January 2007

# List of Acronyms

AMCHUD	African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development
BCM	Buffalo City Municipality
DoH	Department of Housing
Dplg	Department of Local and Provincial Government
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Co-operation
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
LED	Local Economic Development
MFMCB	Municipal Finance Management Capacity Building
NSDP	National Spatial Development Perspective
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SLGP	Strengthening Local Governance Programme
URP	Urban Renewal Programme
ZOPP	Zielorientierte Projekt Planung
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
CDS	City Development Strategy

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The SLGP: Working towards South Africa's five national development objectives

# Introduction

Coinciding with the end of the initial three-year phase of the Strengthening Local Governance Programme (SLGP) in February of 2007, this booklet aims to capture some of the lessons learned during this first phase as seen by counterparts and stakeholders who have interfaced with the SLGP. More specifically, the purpose of the booklet is to:

- articulate the key assets which emerged out of the process of working with the national Department of Housing (DOH), Department of Provincial and Local Government (the **dplg**), Buffalo City Municipality (BCM), The Presidency and other partners
- highlight critical steps for the consolidation of assets
- identify how to maximise the multiplier-effects of related knowledge sharing and management
- contribute to the improvement of monitoring and evaluation systems for urban renewal and human settlements development.

The booklet is not an evaluation of the SLGP. Nor is it a comprehensive capturing of all of the lessons learned during the first phase of implementation. It does, however, attempt to capture and reflect on the views of senior management in counterpart organisations in different spheres and organs of government who have had an opportunity to view the SLGP in action. Views of some other donor organisations that the SLGP has interfaced with have also been canvassed.

## Background on the SLGP

In 2002, the South African - German Development Cooperation established a **Local Governance and Development** focal area. Its aims was to contribute to the achievement of the five national objectives that government has set itself:

- Functional and efficient local government
- Financially sustainable municipalities
- Improved infrastructure and services
- Improved resilience and vibrancy of local economies
- Strengthened local democracy.

The focal area was comprised of several projects and programmes, including:

- SLGP (Strengthening Local Governance Programme)
- MFMCB (Municipal Finance Management Capacity Building)
- LED (Local Economic Development).

The overall goal of the SLGP is to ensure that:

**'Municipal development is co-ordinated and supported within and across spheres of government whilst reflecting a balanced stakeholder inclusivity.'**

In pursuit of this goal the SLGP advises and works closely with three national South African partners: the **dplg**, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the DoH in the following four areas:

- Linking municipal planning with the entire public planning system.
- Supporting municipalities through provincial and district administration.
- Integrated development of urbanising municipalities.
- Civil society participation in local governance.

# Main activities of the SLGP

The main activities of the SLGP can best be described in relation to three key areas of core support: policy advice, capacity building and institutional strengthening.

## Policy advice

The SLGP has contributed to a wide range of policy initiatives. It has worked with **dplg** and contributed to the development of policy regarding intergovernmental relations. Moreover, it has supported the formulation of high-level policies jointly championed by The Presidency and **dplg** such as South Africa's new **Urban Development Framework**. A substantial further contribution has been the formulation of the **dplg's National Implementation Framework for Urban Renewal**. The Implementation Framework comprises five distinct components that address the challenges currently encountered by the URP. These are:

- A policy and strategic framework
- A financing and funding framework
- An organisational and institutional framework
- A management systems and instruments framework
- A framework for the mobilisation of human resources and capacities.

These components were integrated to render a holistic framework for urban renewal implementation within an approach that articulates '**development as freedom**'.

The SLGP has contributed to the formulation of the innovative **Breaking New Ground** strategy championed by the DoH, which proposes a shift of emphasis from delivering houses to building sustainable human settlements. The SLGP also participated in the formulation of a **Draft Policy Framework for Public Participation** using experiences from ward committee training and pilot studies on community based planning. At a policy level, the SLGP made a further contribution towards HIV and AIDS mainstreaming via the **dplg**. Finally, the SLGP has been instrumental in introducing policy-makers and practitioners to 'softer' approaches to development, which stress social and economic development.

## Capacity building

The SLGP has played an important role in bridging often-abstract policies into useable guidelines and handbooks for action. Examples include the **Handbook for Ward Committees** and the **Practitioner's Guide to Intergovernmental Relations**. Another important example is the **Operational Guide for Urban Renewal Practitioners**, a training resource providing implementation guidelines for the managers of urban renewal projects.

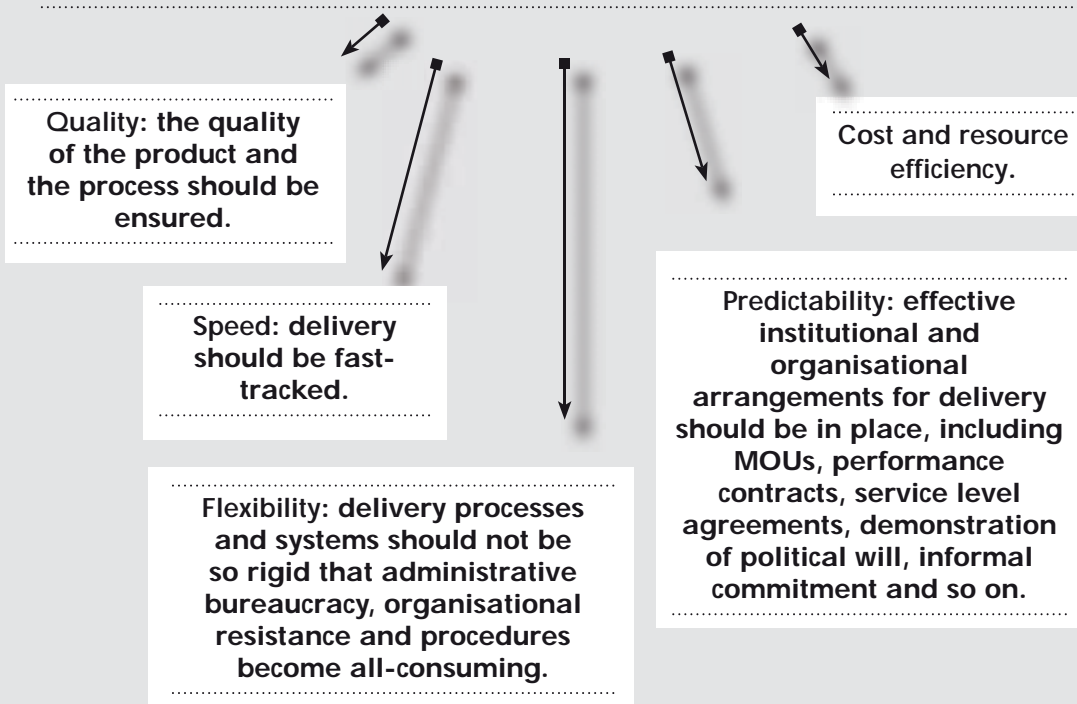


This guide identifies a set of four interconnected management processes associated with urban renewal management:

- Strategic and programme planning for the node
- Identification, mobilisation and institutionalisation of implementation partnerships and capacities
- Strengthening the enabling environment for development in the URP node
- Establishing and operating systems and functions to ensure the successful execution of project implementation within the URP.

The execution of these processes was inspired by the following process objectives of operations management as adapted to high-level public sector programmes

### Process objectives underpinning the SLGP approach



Source: Adapted by F. Menguelé from Pycraft et Al, 1997

The SLGP has also facilitated the accreditation of training institutions, assisting with the development of unit standards for the **Integrated Development Planning and Ward Committee Governance** qualifications. Furthermore, it has developed and tested training concepts, such as, councillors' training, the training of trainers for ward committee strengthening and community based planning in selected municipalities. The SLGP was also involved in developing the capacity of officials in the field of regional management by interfacing them with international best practice. This involved formal training, a study tour, a study on international best practise and the development of a guidebook for practitioners.

## Institutional strengthening

The SLGP has endeavoured to improve interaction and synergies between its main partners, the **dplg**, SALGA and DoH. The programme has also attempted to increase the exposure to new innovations via international exchange, taking the form of co-operation with Ethiopia around Integrated Development Planning (IDP) issues, study tours on intergovernmental relations and regional management and use of international benchmarks. Support has also been provided to **Project Consolidate**, a national government programme of 'hands-on' engagement with local government, particularly in the area of knowledge management.

# Methodology

A team of interviewers conducted and transcribed sixteen interviews. Key insights derived from the interviews were then analysed by three external development professionals with different core expertise. Each focused on a different perspective including management/monitoring and evaluation; policy; and community participation/civil society/people-oriented development. Their insights were then compiled into this booklet.

Respondents were drawn from senior management in institutions receiving support under the SLGP or associated with it. Their views focused on one or more of the of the following sub-programme elements:

## Strengthening municipal planning processes.

- Aligning housing with IDPs and linking them with financial planning.
- Guidelines on ward committees and community participation.
- The urban development framework.
- Inter-governmental relations.
- IDP qualifications framework for capacity building and learnership programmes.

## Sustainable human settlements strategy.

- National Housing Programme for Housing Planning within IDP
- Accreditation of municipalities to perform housing functions.
- Western Cape Sustainable Human Settlements Strategy.
- "Breaking New Ground", A Comprehensive Plan to Create Sustainable Human Settlements

## Support to trilateral co-operation and pan-African processes.

- Co-operation agreement between South Africa and DRC on human settlements and urban development.
- Strategic support to African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD).

## Urban Renewal Programme and City Development Strategy.

- Implementation Framework and Implementation Manual.
- Strategic development and institutional business plans for Mdantsane and Motherwell.
- Mdantsane Livelihoods Security Support Programme.
- Mdantsane Urban Agriculture and Food Security Support Programme.
- Mdantsane Addressage Programme (signage, street & house numbering).

The interviews were structured around a set of nine questions as follows:

Briefly describe your role in the programme and how you have interacted with it?

What inputs were contributed by GTZ into the partnership?

What outputs accrued from these inputs?

Who were the intended users of these outputs?

Who were the actual users of these outputs?

How are the outputs being used?

Are there any spin-offs or unintended benefits emerging from the partnership? Was the partnership influential in the new way the partner does business?

Does this framework of retrospection help the partner to monitor the benefits of the partnership?

Is the South African partner clear about how to sustain the results of the partnership or what is required to do so?

## Key assets

All but one of the respondents placed equal or greater emphasis on benefits derived from the **mode** through which SLGP support was rendered, rather than focusing on the substance of the SLGP or its specific outputs. In other words, they emphasised aspects relating to **how** the SLGP Phase 1 was executed. Furthermore, all but two of the respondents emphasised the particular contributions and characteristics of the mode adopted by the SLGP Programme Advisor. Indeed one respondent went as far as saying that 'François himself was the biggest contribution'.

The team of reviewers discerned four areas where the mode of intervention and operation of the SLGP through its Programme Advisor was cited as a significant contribution by the interviewees:

### Theoretical, conceptual and strategic support to South African management counterparts

The majority of the respondents emphasised the contribution of the SLGP Programme to themselves and/or their departments in deepening their own theoretical, conceptual and strategic capacities. Specific reference was made to support around the shaping of strategic issues, where partners were enabled to shape their own solutions as well as the provision of 'hands-on' guidance. Two respondents cited appreciation for the role of the Programme Advisor as a 'sounding board'.

In addition, four respondents acknowledged the Programme Advisor's 'analytical approach and ability to approach municipal matters from another angle', whilst three other contributors emphasised how their thinking had shifted from municipal infrastructure and service delivery towards 'softer ways of thinking'. The Programme Advisor 'introduced **softer** issues like social capital and livelihoods.'



#### Commentary

Many urban senior governmental managers in the urban development sector are currently unable to secure conceptual and theoretical guidance from their departmental superiors and peers. The SLGP mode adopted during Phase 1 has responded to this gap by enhancing the theoretical, conceptual and strategic capacities of a number of counterparts.

Respondents revealed that the SLGP has also had a major substantive impact in terms of its outputs. The SLGP has contributed to the conceptualisation and compilation of pioneering policy directions across the different spheres of government. For instance, it has contributed to the introduction of a suite of policies dealing with a paradigm shift from housing delivery to the delivery of sustainable human settlements.

The SLGP has also contributed substantively to development implementation and management, evidenced by their inputs into the programme management of Urban Renewal initiatives in the Eastern Cape. However, in terms of both process and substance, respondents see themselves as the owners of the outputs to which the SLGP has contributed.

Essentially, it seems that the SLGP's mainstreaming and facilitating mode of support has been highly valued. The characteristics of the approach adopted in Phase 1 should be documented and steps taken to ensure that Phase 2 maintains these strengths.

## Networking and partnership brokerage dividends

Respondents cited contributions from the SLGP in areas of networking and partnership formation in a number of facets. Three respondents emphasised the Programme Advisor's contribution in 'mobilising and integrating other German development partners and the negotiation of long-term partnerships with GTZ.' Other respondents cited the facilitation of access to donors, international expertise and networks. One respondent from another international development organisation commended the Programme Advisor for securing the necessary partnership agreements to become active in the local development arena. Finally, a respondent involved in tri-lateral co-operation and pan-African processes stressed the importance of the SLGP Programme Advisor's role in providing content and material support to regional knowledge sharing events, such as the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD).



### Commentary

The SLGP in its first phase has transcended the inter-organisational rivalry so common on the development terrain and adopted a mode of operation that supports the assembly of multi-agency and multi-lateral partnerships. The emphasis placed on this aspect by respondents suggests that the SLGP Programme Advisor filled an important void in this respect.

## Relationship building and inter governmental relations strengthening

The third frequently cited area of contribution was the strengthening of relations between arms and levels of government. Four respondents highlighted the role of the SLGP Programme Advisor as 'facilitator and catalyst between agencies and actors' in improving communication between spheres and enhancing vertical integration. Others mentioned the 'relationship orientated approach' and mediation capacity of the SLGP Programme Advisor. One respondent reported that 'national government also learnt about getting all sector departments involved in integrated planning.'



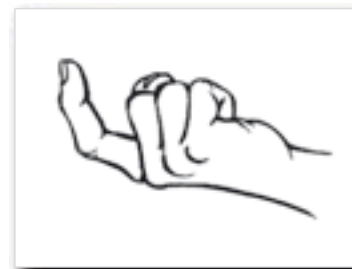
### Commentary

The emphasis respondents placed on this aspect reflects the difficulties that inter departmental rivalries pose for results-orientated senior managers in government. The SLGP has had to transcend this problem in order to succeed. The structural position of the SLGP may have allowed its Programme Advisor to adopt an honest broker role in overcoming constraints of this type, but the success referred to by the respondents also requires considerable relationship management skills and personal qualities. This has important implications for the SLGP Phase 2 and similar programmes. Programme advisors deployed to programmes of this type need to command, in addition to their substantive expertise, the skills and personal qualities necessary to build effective relations with and between their counterpart agencies and spheres.

## Supplementary resource mobilisation

Respondents also emphasised – from a management perspective – the programme’s ability to act as ‘a channel of access to extra capacity’. Although responses varied, highly valued components of the support package clearly included:

- the formulation of sound briefs
- finding people with skills
- connectivity with international and national service providers and new ideas
- tender appointments.

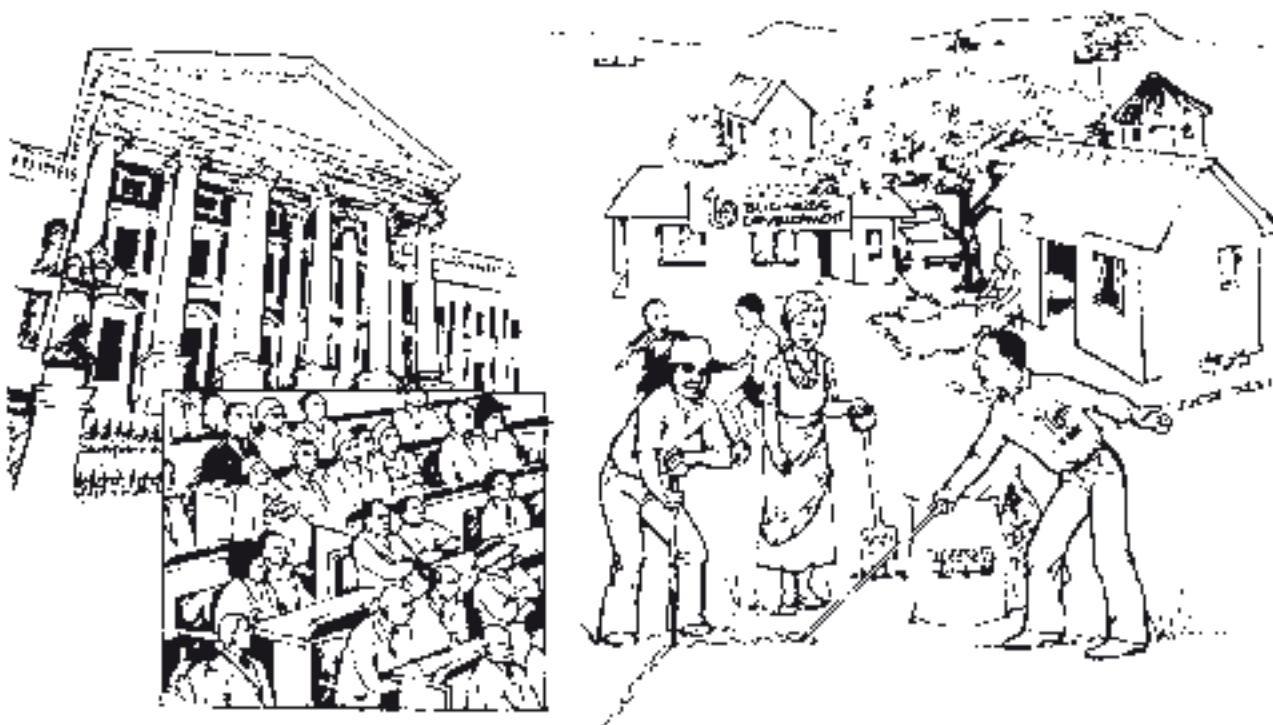


### Commentary

Given the critical skills gap at higher levels of government and the overloading of competent management at this level it is perhaps unsurprising that the contribution of the SLGP in mobilising hitherto untapped capacity is highly valued by the South African counterpart managers. The absence of a single critical comment about the appropriateness of the skilled personnel and service providers mobilised thereby is unusual and may suggest particular GTZ expertise in this area.

The SLGP’s most valued contributions generally fall into one of the four categories described above. However, two main areas – both of which have been mentioned above – require further attention. The first area concerns the SLGP’s **mode of intervention**. The four generic categories described above collectively constitute the SLGP mode. The second area pertains to an important **substantive contribution** – the way in which the SLGP has succeeded in shifting development thinking and effort away from overly physical orientations to more people-centred approaches. While there have been a wide range of distinctive substantive contributions made this is perhaps the most distinct and most important.

# The SLGP mode and international development thinking



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## The SLGP: Providing the bridge between policy development and existing endogenous capacity

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Contemporary thinking on development aid/support rejects the idea that aid involves the importation of ideas, frameworks and capacity from 'outside' and imposed on 'recipient' countries. Instead, development is seen as a process set in motion in institutions, organisations and individuals in developing countries themselves and that appropriate 'development aid' involves a mainstreamed and sophisticated process of supporting these endogenous processes. Kaplan (1999) captures the essence of such an approach as follows:

'Whether the intervention is into the life of an individual, organisation or community, it is critical to realise that the process of development is already well established and needs to be treated with respect. The most fundamental challenge facing the development practitioner is to understand the development process into which she or he is intervening. To know where the individual, the organisation or the community is located on its own path of development. To understand where it has come from, how it has changed along the way and what the next development challenge is likely to be. And to be able to 'read' in this way, openness is required, an ability to observe acutely and without preconception, but with a fine understanding of development processes, so that insight can be brought to observation.' (Kaplan, 1999)

Similarly, Balfour (2003) writes:

'Development practitioners should see themselves as facilitators of people-driven development processes, not expert providers. Therefore, they should not bring answers but questions that prompt answers during their interactions with people... Expert advice can be appropriate and useful, but only if it enhances indigenous capacity that already exists rather than replacing or ignoring it.' (Balfour, 2003)

Thus, in contemporary thinking, a successful support programme should:

- be locally demand driven
- recognise that a development trajectory is already in place, which should be supported
- spark an indigenous process in organisations and individuals in counterpart organisations
- rely, wherever possible, on the mobilisation and organisation of local capacities
- have system-wide and strategic intent
- focus as much on developing the capacities of institutions as individuals
- have a long-term and ongoing orientation.

Interview responses suggest that the SLGP has been the epitome of contemporary thinking and is in many respects a model programme. A likely reason for this is that it was conceptualised in a professional and appropriate manner. The support intervention was mainstreamed and appropriately located upstream – in DoH and the **dplg**. But the nature of the programme also allowed for substantial reach further downstream – to local authorities. Notably, mainstreaming was less prevalent at a local level – as illustrated in one respondent’s reference to the ‘brilliant GTZ team’ parachuting in from time to time.

GTZ positioned itself in a way which allowed it to act as a bridge between policy and practice and between central and local government. Thus, on the one hand, it played a major role in putting a policy framework together for urban renewal. On the other hand, it assisted local authorities develop business plans to allow the implementation of the framework. A senior official in **dplg** commented as follows:

**‘It is the first time in five years that we have had a document pulling together strategy, planning and practice. The ideas were there. But Mr Menguelé confirmed them.’**

The focus on bridging theory and practice has been particularly valuable and is a distinct feature of the SLGP. Sound pre-conceptualisation and good positioning notwithstanding, respondents made numerous references to the personal qualities of the Programme Advisor and the people that he introduced to the process. This focus on personal qualities does not receive much emphasis in the international literature, which is why it is being emphasised here. This raises the possibility that the personal qualities of those involved in providing development support may be quite central to achieving developmental outcomes. If this is so it becomes important to gain a deeper understanding of precisely what sort of qualities contribute positively.

One of the first things to note is that the Programme Advisor is an African – from Cameroon – but trained in Europe. He is also relatively young. It appears that both his African identity and his youth have contributed to his ability to relate well to counterparts in an African context where many of the counterpart officials in senior management positions are also young Africans. A number of respondents indicated that they were able to relate to and identify with him more easily. One respondent noted that Mr Menguelé was given more space than is usually allocated to donor-funded support staff in government because he was trusted and also talented. On the basis of experiences in South Africa it seems that counterparts are more able to relate to a programme advisor with a background and profile that is not considerably different from their own. On the basis of the SLGP a case can be made that ‘experience’ may be a less important variable in choosing a programme advisor than similarity of profile and background.

However, even if his profile and background were quite different it is likely that Mr Menguelé would still have succeeded, as he was able to relate to fellow practitioners across a wide socio-economic and ethnic spectrum, because of his personal qualities, intellect, ambassadorial and networking qualities. Respondents stressed that counterpart professionals saw him as a sounding board. A local government official in Buffalo City referred to him as her ‘talking partner.’ The SLGP Programme Advisor is an unusually talented individual who operated in a way that corresponds very closely with the key success factors of contemporary approaches to development aid articulated above.

# People-centred development approach



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## The SLGP: Working with local communities to identify solutions

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'Trust is built when local governments demonstrate that they are pro-poor and commit to working with communities on projects. And once the trust exists, daunting environmental problems in slums become solvable. When governments and their citizens work together, innovative win-win solutions can be identified.' (IDRC, 2006)

Internationally it is increasingly accepted that insufficient attention has been given to the social and economic dimensions of urban renewal and human settlement development. There is a growing consensus that development has in the past been defined in very physical terms, and has been driven by the logic of a technical delivery process involving housing and associated infrastructure (e.g. roads, water and sanitation). This has certainly been true in South Africa.

Developments that have taken place have tended to be dependent on the availability of large tracts of easily secured land; land which is often provided on the urban periphery. Invariably such locations mirror the locations of townships developed under apartheid. The result is that poor and vulnerable groups are frequently displaced to locations that may serve to entrench and even exacerbate their poverty. Diminished access to social and economic opportunities, or reduced opportunities to exercise their 'livelihood strategies' serves to entrench their social and economic exclusion. Yet policy responses have often emphasised physical interventions in the form of housing, engineering infrastructure and social infrastructure. Whilst such interventions make a contribution, they may miss the essence of the development challenge – social and economic exclusion.

One of the strong messages that comes through in the interviews conducted as part of the process of compiling this booklet, is that the SLGP has made a distinctive and major contribution in shifting the direction of development thinking and action in a more people-centred direction. The head of the Mdantsane Urban Renewal Programme makes the point as follows:

‘Prior to the GTZ involvement, [development planning formulation] was geared towards technical and infrastructure priorities. GTZ introduced a much stronger focus on the “softer” (social and economic) issues and the business plan has been refined in terms of this new emphasis. GTZ inputs ... [brought] related expertise and advice on livelihoods and other social issues. This resulted in a re-definition of the concept of “social development” within Buffalo City Municipality.’ (Interviews with Stakeholders, 2006)

The SLGP further supported the translation of social and economic development strategies (developed with funding support of the European Commission and GTZ) into practical and more tangible programmes. This was done through an interactive process with the municipality, residents and other agencies, as potential partners in implementation. The challenge is to now ensure that these proposals are implemented, and are subject to effective monitoring and evaluation, so that they may serve as fertile learning experiences to inform policy and practice across government programmes. The introduction of the Intergovernmental Relations Act should enable sharing and learning through such experiences, as well as providing a platform for joint planning.

A mindset shift is needed to embrace a human settlement and urban renewal development approach. The poor are not passive recipients waiting for the delivery of services and housing by government. They are resourceful and dynamic in their response to poverty and engage in a variety of extremely creative and logical activities, sometimes drawing on the collective assets of robust institutions. Research commissioned by GTZ into livelihood strategies in Mdantsane shows an extraordinary level of local ingenuity in the design of collective action, not only for the benefit of the direct participants but also with intent to respond to current crises in their community. In one case, a savings club of 10 women demonstrates remarkable innovation capacity and commitment to local self-reliance and community service. It operates with the purpose of fulfilling four objectives:

- Provision of death support in the form of R100 per member and groceries for the funeral.
- Rotating savings and credit lump sums of R900 (R100 x nine women).
- Nested weekly savings and credit lump sum distribution of R100 in the first week of the month, R200 in the second, and so on.
- Ad hoc support to people in the community that have a specific problem. HIV/AIDS impacts, especially orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), are the main areas they try to assist. (GTZ, 2006).

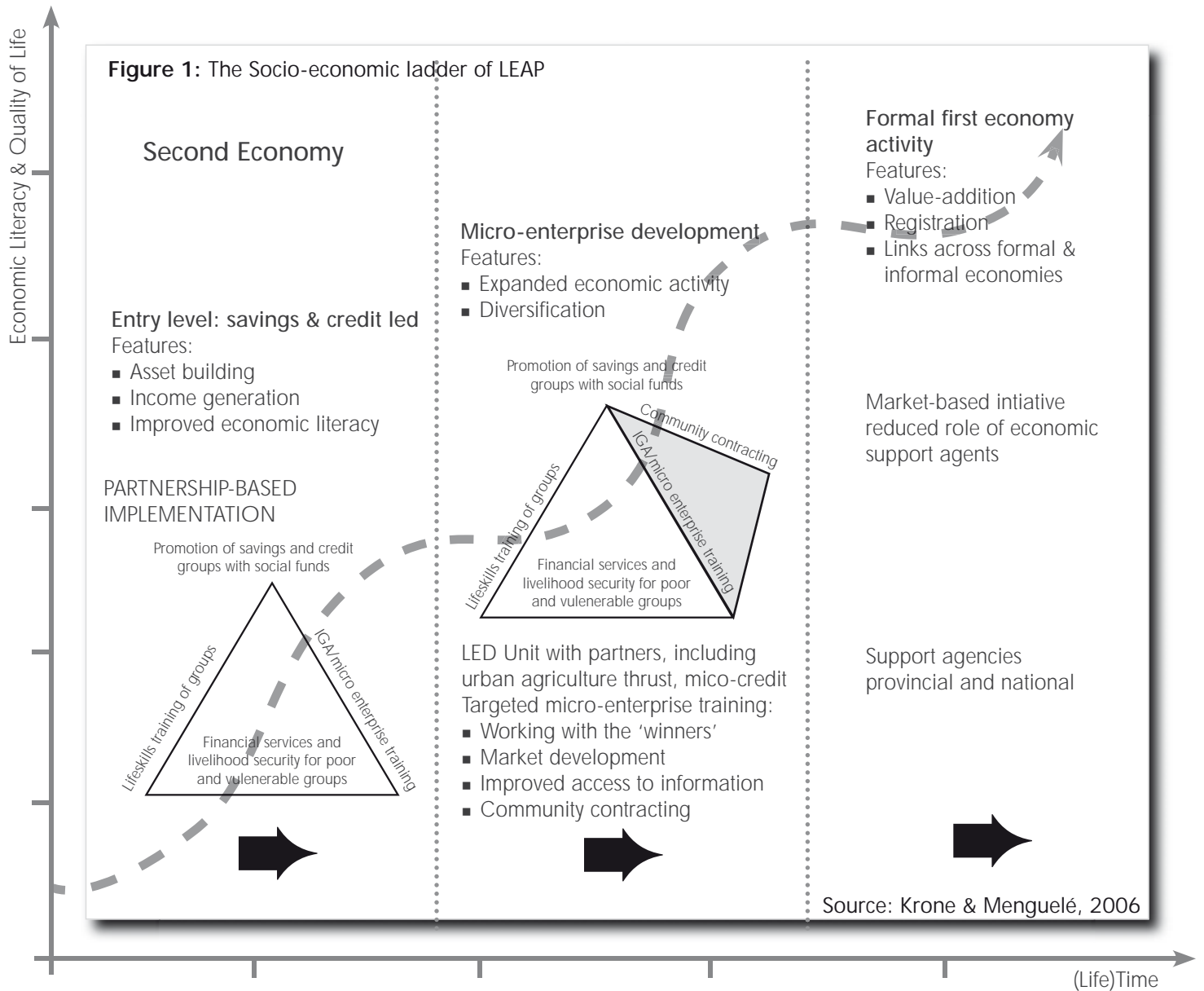
Such rich endogenous capital should serve as a challenge to all agencies, including government. How can such capital be nurtured and supported so that it becomes part of the contribution towards the achievement of more sustainable human settlements? How can such agencies plan and act with such assets, rather than such initiatives needing to find ways of adapting to or withstanding outside interventions? These are challenges that government, agencies and donors alike need to confront and find ways of responding to.

Development planning must begin to focus on social and economic issues, as these are central to the achievement of more sustainable livelihoods of the poor. Urban design and physical planning should seek to respond to these imperatives, instead of forcing poor and vulnerable groups to cope with the assumptions and preconceptions of planners and urban development practitioners. Only then will settlements become more human and sustainable. Such an approach also lays a foundation for a long-term social contract, with reciprocal benefits to citizen and government.

Such key points of departure are presently being accorded some recognition. There is nevertheless a long way to go before livelihoods or asset-based approaches become part of mainstream discourse in policy and practice. There are however encouraging signs. The SLGP has played an important support role in accelerating this process by commissioning livelihoods research designed to clarify what it means to be engaged in social and economic development focused on poor and vulnerable groups. This has then been followed up by the formulation of strategic development plans in the social and economic sectors within urban renewal nodes such as Mdantsane. During this period three strategies have emerged with the first two being detailed into programme design.

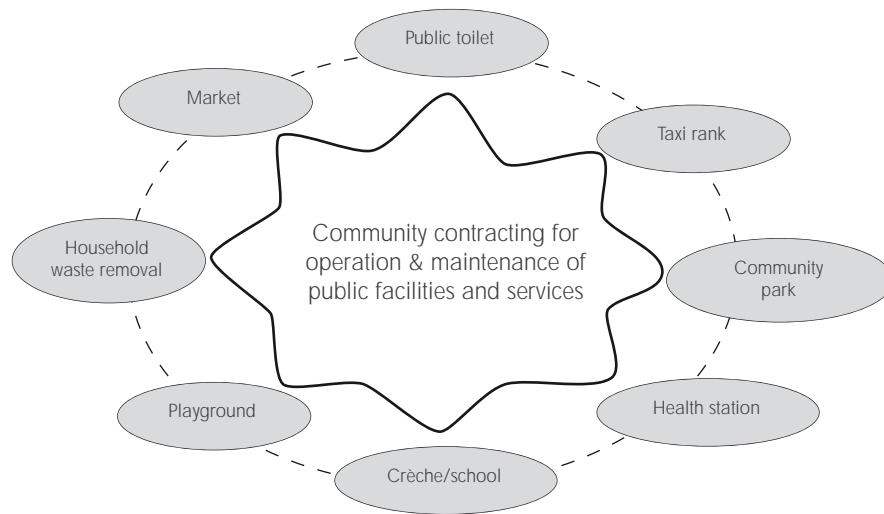
These are:

- The **Local Economic Action Partnership (LEAP)**, designed to empower women and enable vulnerable groups – through savings and credit, life skills and enterprise development – to climb up ‘the ladder’ and perhaps ultimately migrate into the ‘first economy’ (see **Figure 1**).



- The **Livelihoods and Innovation Fund Enablement (LIFE) Project**, designed to stimulate local initiative, innovation and demand-driven development.
- The **Case for a Deepened Social Contract through Municipal-Community Partnerships in Environmental Management**, also intended to create mechanisms that support demand-driven initiative in the area of the management and maintenance of the built environment. **Figure 2** on page 14 provides a pictorial depiction of an aspect of this initiative.

**Figure 2:** Deepening the social anchoring of the developmental state



Source: F. Menguelé, 2006

## Consolidating these assets

Whilst the interviews provide little in the way of specific input into the management dimension of this issue, a few observations can be made.



It is clear from the interviews that institutional instability (staff turnover and unstable political guidance) at the top level in at least two of the programme counterpart institutions is currently inhibiting the impact of the SLGP. This is a phenomenon that plagues many if not most South African public institutions at present and represents a profound challenge for the design and consolidation of capacity development orientated programmes such as the SLGP. Systematic and multi agency initiatives need to be established at the highest level to develop and embed mechanisms for dealing with this problem.

It is apparent from two interviews that the continuously fluid policy position on aspects of the urban development policy and economic development strategy act as an inhibiting factor to capacity building initiatives such as the SLGP. This mirrors the experience of the authors of this booklet and has been discussed in the 'Policy' section of the SLGP-supported **Implementation Framework for the Urban Renewal Nodes**. One respondent reports how the absence of stable policies generates ad-hoc approaches from political leadership whilst another respondent records the potential for conflict and misunderstandings arising out of this. One respondent notes that one draft output from the SLGP currently contradicts the NSDP illustrating the problems of aligning policy. The consolidation of SLGP outputs and learnings will probably continue to be plagued by this problem until interventions at a level higher than the SLGP delivers the necessary policy anchors and convergence.



A **dplg** respondent noted that in terms of the SLGP it is important to 'get champions in each area focusing on implementation and taking it seriously'. This important observation is mirrored in a number of Buffalo City related interviews where the translation of many SLGP supported instruments into practice on the ground has not substantially occurred due to institutional instability associated with the king-pin implementing official. The management question that the SLGP faces in this respect is not whether implementation champions should be put in place, but rather how this could be done in South Africa where public institutions are chronically unstable.

The same **dplg** respondent also noted that ‘role-players are not seeing the whole programme and how the different inputs work together. The different projects come together in a specific spatial area. The projects relate to the NSDP in the sense that all deliverables – especially the social and economic potential of the area – require credible IDP and LED frameworks.’ This is a very important observation and suggests a need for a component of the SLGP in Phase 2 to clarify this aspect and assemble mechanisms whereby this blind spot is remedied.



One interviewee suggested that the SLGP was perhaps inappropriately located in terms of the level of government it addressed. Consequently ‘by working in line-departments or sub-departments it can reinforce the rigidity of government.’ This observation needs to be considered further although it is unlikely that it would be possible to identify how the SLGP could conceivably be located at a higher level of government given the current set of institutional arrangements (unless the SLGP was located in the office of the State President).

Three municipal level respondents have reported the difficulties that municipal officials have in digesting documents that are heavily based on Logframe or ZOPP language and styles. The SLGP in Phase 2 could perhaps ensure that future documents are rendered in formats more familiar to local officialdom.

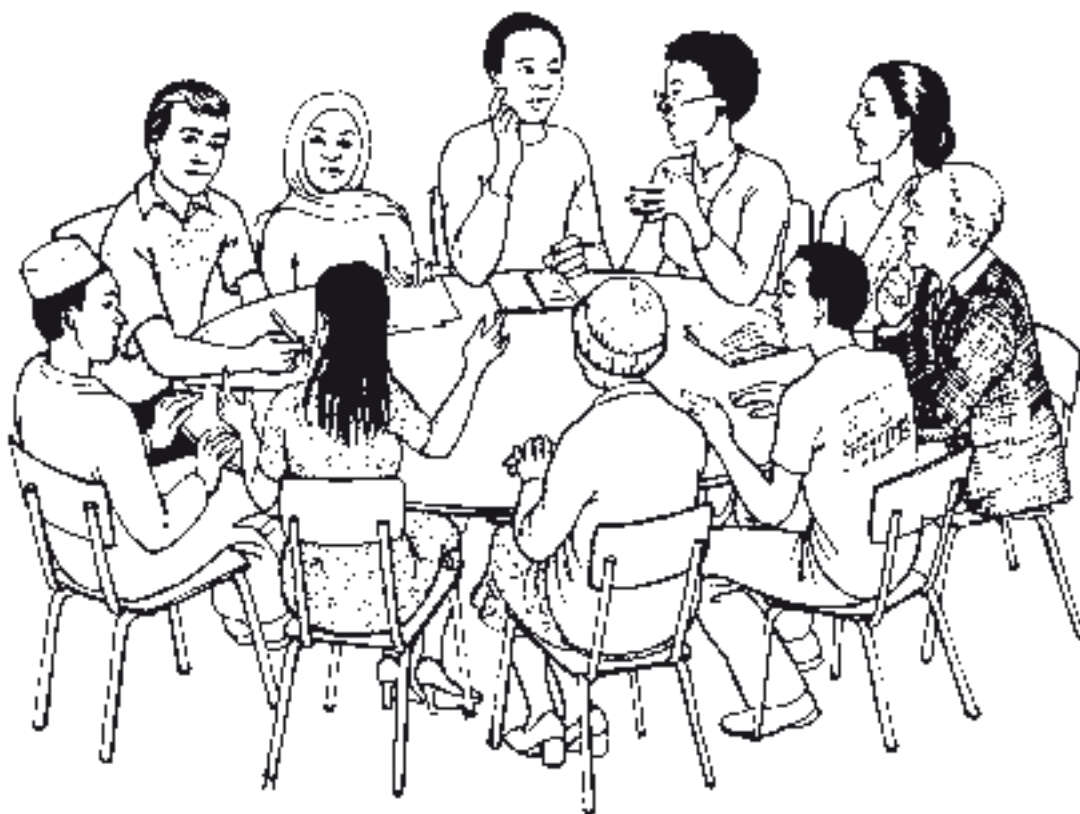


One interviewee raised the possibility of using the SLGP experience as a case study for the AMCHUD conference. Given the extent to which the SLGP could be a model of development support, the idea of popularising the SLGP experience at conferences of this sort has merit.

As far as consolidating assets and moving forward in respect of mainstreaming 'softer' and 'people-centred' approaches to development is concerned the following observations are pertinent. The SLGP has been encouraged by the receptiveness of actors within government towards these alternative methodologies and emphases. The challenge in the next period will lie in giving effect to their implementation and in the gradual mainstreaming of such paradigms and programmes within government.

Going forward, government programmes can be strengthened through support for capacity building of planners and facilitators of development processes aimed at increasing exposure to more 'people-centred' approaches. Training in livelihoods and asset-based methodologies, pitched initially at senior through to middle management level, would assist in establishing a coherent understanding and discourse of what it means for government to embrace a livelihoods framework. From this point it will become possible to jointly plan diagnostic reviews of urban settlement challenges as well as past interventions. This will enable a fresh reflection on policy and strategy and how to give practical expression to the ideas and new approaches. Likewise, support for pilot initiatives that allow for experimentation and innovation need to be encouraged.

## Concluding comments



The interviews analysed here reveal that the SLGP has been well received by all counterparts. It is clear that the favourable impression of the programme is largely due to the mode in which development support has been provided and of the personal qualities of those providing the support. In many respects the mode through which the SLGP has been delivered is close to the epitome of contemporary thinking around the provision of development support.

The content and logic that lies at the heart of the programme is summarised from a monitoring and evaluation perspective in **Figure 3**.

**Figure 3: Combined impact**

Managers within partner organisations are demonstrating greater policy confidence and operational capacity to implement livelihoods and asset based strategies in human settlements and urban renewal while networking the emerging lessons across government.



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