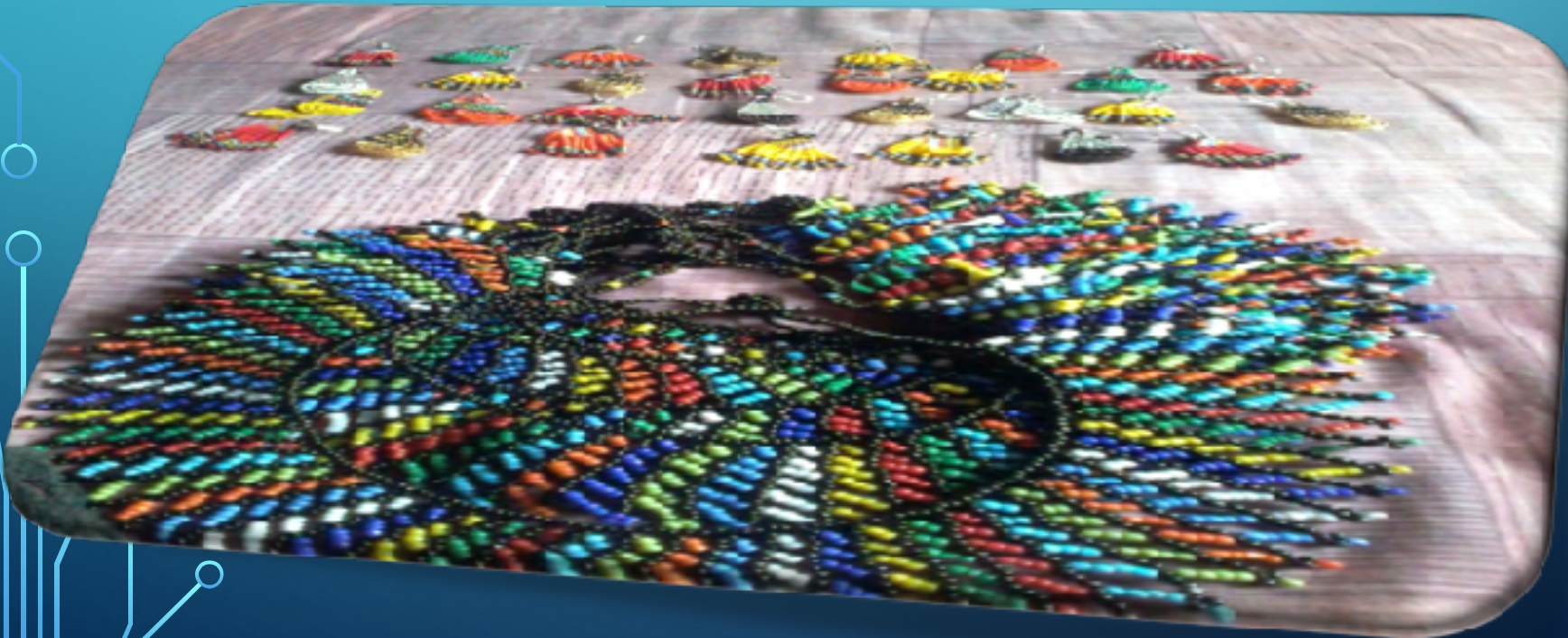


Project Title : A Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction: Participatory Experiences of Women in an Economic Cooperative Project in Bhambayi, KwaZulu Natal

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Supervisor: Dr T Raniga



# The background of the study

- This study is an extension of a pilot study that was conducted by Raniga and Ngcbo (2014) in a predominantly informal settlement in Bhambayi... single parents from low income communities face social and economic exclusion on the grounds of poverty reduction.
- Transformative interventions should include the establishment of a business forum to assist single mothers to network and lobby for funding, and to implement business training programmes.
- Cooperatives' forum was established in early 2015 as the economic development strategy ...women...receive social grants-means of financial support
- 3 cooperatives were established and registered (2015)-art and craft, garden and construction primary cooperatives
- Art and craft cooperative was chosen for the study.

# The background of the study

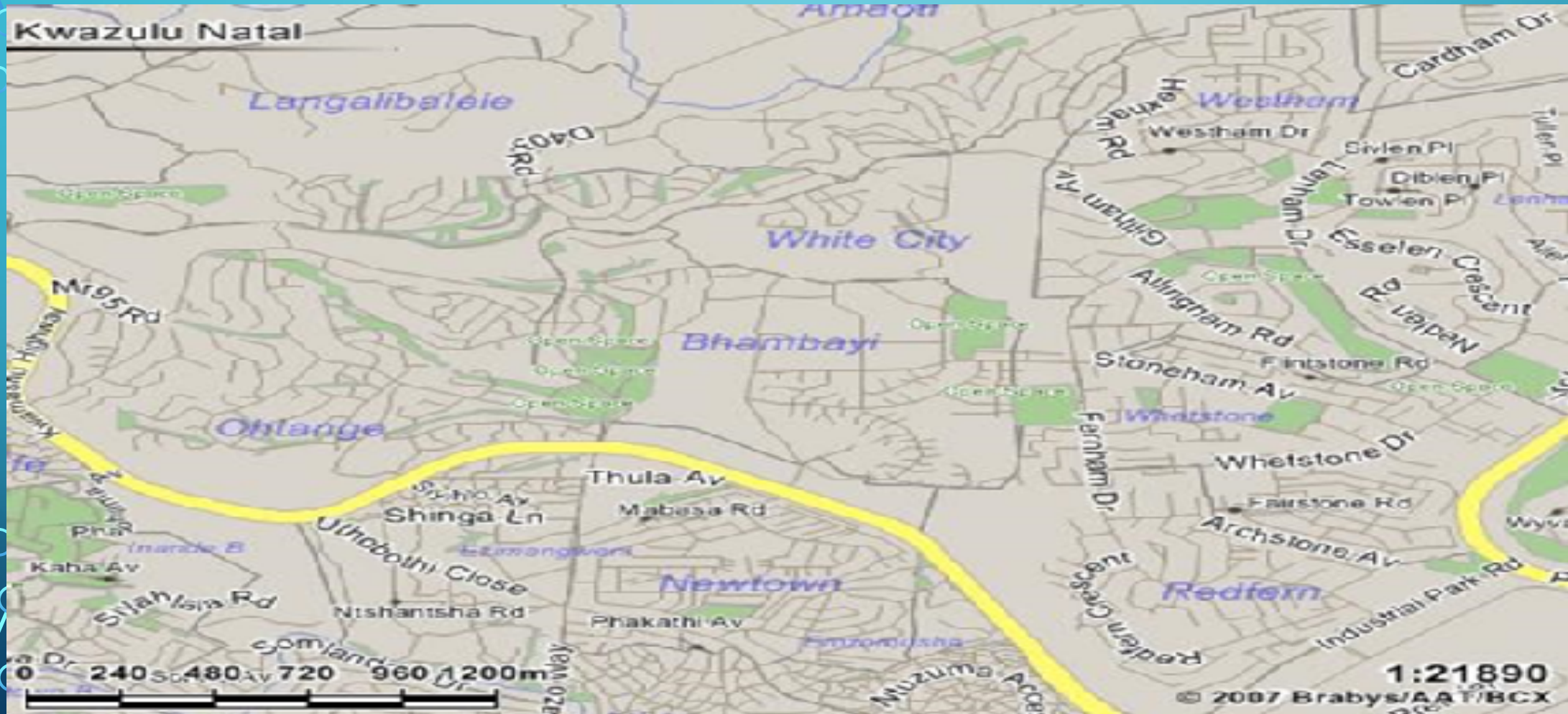
- Conference subthemes - promoting environmental and community sustainability
  - Global agenda on social work (2012) commits itself in aligning activities and programmes to development initiatives that are sustainable and which integrate human dimension
- Qualitatively conducted- Participatory Action Research methodology,
  - sustainable livelihood approach – theoretical framework
  - Availability & purposive sampling, semi structured interviewing schedule
  - Trustworthiness and ethics for research considered



# Location of the Study

- Bhambayi...predominantly informal settlement, in KZN (Raniga & Simpson, 2011).
- 920 formal houses and uncounted informal houses (Raniga & Simpson, 2011: 77).
- Part of Ward 52 at the North of Durban.
- 1.07 km<sup>2</sup>;Population size of 15141 (Census, 2011).
- IsiZulu is the predominantly spoken first language(Raniga & Simpson, 2011).

# MAP OF INANDA



# Aim of the study

- The main aim of this study was to understand the participatory experiences of women involved in the implementation of an art and craft economic co-operative project using the sustainable livelihood approach.
- Objectives:
  - To examine the participatory experiences of women involved in the implementation of an art and craft economic co-operative project using the sustainable livelihood approach.
  - Gain insight into how the practices of SL has contributed to enhancing human capital, economic capital, physical capacity and social capital of the women involved in the art and craft economic cooperative project
  - To make suggestions about how social workers can apply SL strategies to community economic cooperative projects.



# Main Themes

- a positive contribution of art and craft economic co-operative in sustaining human capacity development;
- Hindering factors in sustaining cooperative projects
  - political influences on enhancing economic development;
  - lack of project management skills
  - Dependency
  - Lack of commitment
- Recommendations for social work practice in community economic development

# Literature review

## POVERTY

- **Poverty as injustice (Brand, De Beer, De Villiers and Van Marle, 2013).**
  - The understanding of poverty as a practical social problem in the first place rather than as a manifestation of injustice results in an approach to poverty that is focused solely on technical and managerial solutions to poverty.
  - Such approaches to poverty- problematic
    - lose sight of the political dimensions of poverty, the fact that poverty is embedded in a particular ideology.
    - “poverty” as inadequate access to basic living resources, such as, food, water, housing and health care, surfaces the political dimensions of poverty
      - determined access to these basic resources is economic and political power.



## **Literature review cont...**

### Extent of Poverty in South Africa

- South African population: 51,7 million; 26 581 769 females and 25 188 791 males (Community survey, 2016).
- High levels of poverty and inequality.
- Causes: high unemployment, inadequate safety nets, insufficient capital or access to land, and less power (The National Department of Social Development (DSD) Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and RSA Women, 2015).

# Feminisation of poverty

- Ngcobo and Raniga, (2014, p. 517)
  - female headed households were the rapid increasing family forms;
  - increased poverty was evident in the growing number of women and children who were poor.
  - Poverty is a widespread problem in S A, the burden is borne by black women
- Female-headed households are more likely to be poor than men-headed
- Females headed 41,2% in SA, and Limpopo (49,2%), Eastern Cape (44,7%), and most female-headed households were without a single employed member compared to nearly one-fifth (19,7%) of male-headed households (DSD Strategic Plan, 2015-2020)

## Literature review

- The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and National Development Plan Vision 2030 (RSA, 2016) propose investment in human capital development to increase productivity and move people out of poverty.
- Implementation of income-generating activities is one of the poverty-alleviation strategies to improve economic development in the country (Raniga and Simpson, 2011).
- Identified cooperatives...to empower the poor as reflected in a range of international development initiatives (Satgar, 2007).



# Cooperatives

- A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise (Cooperatives act 14 of 2005).
- Cooperatives can be distinguished by:
- degree of formality-
  - Stokvels or registered with (Companies Intellectual Property Commission) CIPC
- Ownership
  - Worker owned or user owned




## **COOPERATIVES cont...**

### **Policies that guide the implementation of cooperatives**

- Cooperatives Development Policy of South Africa (2004),
- The Cooperatives Act No 14 of 2005,
- The National Development Plan Vision 2030,
- Draft of EThekweni Co-operative Development Strategy (2015),
- The Department of Social Development Strategic Plan 2015-2020,
- The Integrated Strategy on the Development and Promotion of Co-operatives 2012-2022
- The strategy and policies target both existing and emerging co-operatives



## • Decolonization

- Opportunities for improving women's position and the potential for co-operatives to contribute to such processes, when looking at available policies and development strategies on cooperatives (Cooperatives Development Policy, 2004).
  - Increase of women participation in cooperative projects which were previously largely dominated by men (Theron, 2010).
  - Role – downgraded to passive responsibilities of domestic tasks
    - Caring for the sick, house maintenance, child producing and rearing
  - Women's involvement in poverty alleviation programmes is important for the balanced utilization of development resources which has remained under estimated and neglected (Maleko and Masuya, 2015).
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# Types of cooperatives

- Primary Co-op Structure - Individuals are direct members
- Secondary Co-op Structure- Primary co-ops are direct members
- Tertiary Co-op Structure – Secondary and/or primary are both are direct members

# Co-operative Principles and Practices

## Principles

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training and information
- Co-operation among members
- Concern for community

## Practices

- Member recruitment policy, rules of admission, equal opportunities,
- Constitution, voting rights, role of the board, members and management
- Economic performance, rewards to members, capitalization and how surplus is used
- Relations with government, other organisations and institutions and market position
- Member, board and management training and public relations
- Federation, networks, joint enterprises, movement building
- Policy on community development, environment and networking

# Values of Cooperatives

- Self-help,
- self-responsibility,
- democracy,
- equality, equity and solidarity.
- In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others



# Cooperatives cont...

- The S.A. government and its structures such as the DTI and the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) have encouraged conferences on the topic and recognised the importance of establishing co-operatives as a strategy to deal with poverty in the country (Davies, 2006).
  - The deputy general of broadening participation at the Department of Trade and Industry (Sipho Zikode) in his address (September 2016) announced that, “the South African government recognizes the importance of cooperatives in assisting the country to achieve economic development, reduce poverty and to improve rural livelihoods” (<http://www.sanews.gov.za>).

# FINDINGS: outline

- Biographical analysis of the participants;
- Achievements as per the assets of the SLA;
- Challenges experienced by the participants in their cooperative;
- Recommendations of the participants on the role to be played by social workers in economic cooperatives.
- Decolonisation of community development

# Biographical profile

- Six female participants,
- Single parent household heads,
- In receipt of social grant,
- One completed matric
- One didn't finish primary education

Participant	Age	Main source of income	Total grant income	Members in household	Highest level of education
1.	52	1 Foster Care Grant + 1 Child Support Grant	R1240	5	Grade 9
2.	28	1 Child Support Grant	R350	6	Grade 11
3.	48	1 Child Support Grant + 1 Disability Grant	R1850	6	Grade 4
4.	34	1 Child Support Grant	R350	3	Grade 11
5.	34	1 Child Support Grant	R350	3	Grade 12
6.	34	1 Child Support Grant	R350	5	Grade 11



# Positive contribution

- Human capacity building
  - the art and craft economic cooperative gained them life sustaining skills, which they would not have achieved as individuals.

*“the cooperative have made a positive difference in my life even if not monetary way”*

*“I am able to do sawing repairs for my community while waiting for the order for the cooperative, as it helps me to put food in front of my kids”*

*“I am appointed to be the facilitator of the ongoing upholstery training here in Bhambayi”*

# Positive contribution cont...

- All participants stated that the asset based training workshop empowered them to stand up and look for something that will assist them with substitution of social grants.
- Financial capital - the monetary possessions that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives, cash or equivalent asset which empowers individuals to embrace different livelihood strategies.
- Physical capital “comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihoods. This involves the infrastructure of the physical environment that helps people to meet their basic needs and to be more productive.”
  - ‘...gained two sewing machines...’
  - ‘The councillor gave us a space in the BRDF office to do our work there’
  - ‘... given the small office to do our work...’
- Social capital is conceptualised as social bonds, voluntary associations, and quality of relations among people within the community.

## Challenges and hindering factors

- Political influences of community development projects
  - Demarcation of community boundaries
    - *'We lost our area of operation because that venue is left to ward 57 as we are now in ward 52'*
    - *'We are not sure what the people in ward 52 will look at us as we have been competing while we were in different wards'*
    - *"all other cooperative members stay in the same area, this makes me feel like they look down at me and they do not take me serious"*

# Challenges cont...

- Lack of management skills
  - “the secretary is doing both the treasurer and the secretary's jobs...she is more educated than all of the committee members”
- **Lack of cohesion**
  - “we are fragmented “
  - We have cliques
- **Lack of commitment-**”members just don't come to the meeting and they do not bother to apologize”
  - “we haven't sit for meetings and get updated about finance issues of the cooperative in this year”
- **Lack of respect** amongst members- ‘members do not respect each other in our cooperative”



# Recommendations

- Trainings on cooperatives prior registration of such entity
- Focus on women's engagement in cooperatives is on demand
- Social workers can play an important role in cooperatives projects – individual personal counselling, group dynamics resolution, social support system and advocate on behalf of cooperatives
- Theme 3 of the global agenda on social work (2012) entails that there is a need for social work practice to work towards environmental and community sustainability; and strengthen the recognition of the importance of human relationships

# DECOLONISATION

- Ngungi Wa Thiong'oPrinsloo (2015)
  - decolonization is about 'rejecting the centrality of the West in Africa's understanding of itself and its place in the world'
- **Decolonization of cooperatives**
  - Definition (International Cooperative Alliance)
    - Autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

# Decolonising the implementation of cooperatives in communities

- Bottom up approach vs top down approach to be used
  - Community economic development strategies to be discussed with the community not instructed to the community
  - Need for Community involvement to identify the indicators to monitor progress towards sustainable development and environmental management goals (Fraser, Dougill, Mabee, Reed and McAlpine, 2006; and De Beer & Swanepoel, 2006))
- Cooperatives Act No 14 of 2005 ensure the active participation of community members in local development.
- Encouragement of the use of sustainable livelihood approach and PAR during the implementation of cooperatives can have a positive impact on the sustainability of cooperative projects; and also if we want to decolonise the implementation of cooperatives.

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Thank you