

BUILDING CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE: IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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SUMMARY

This article examines recent efforts to establish Community Partnership Grant Programmes (CPG) in six South African communities. CPG programmes provide the financial and organizational infrastructure to support citizen-initiated neighbourhood projects. We review our efforts to disseminate the CPG programme model in three different environments in South Africa—a large metropolitan area, three smaller municipalities and two tribal villages—and analyse why preliminary implementation results were positive in some communities but not others. Our findings form the basis of a model of CPG programme implementation based on the mode of implementation and the breadth of stakeholder involvement. We use this model to make recommendations to increase the likelihood of implementation success for similar programmes. The article concludes with observations about the applicability of the CPG programme idea as a way to develop civic infrastructure, and on the political lessons learned from our implementation experience in South Africa. Copyright © 2002 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

INTRODUCTION

One of the keys for a successful transformation to a democratic system is the development of a vigorous civil society. One mechanism for fostering a dynamic civil society is the creation and diffusion of community partnership grant-making (CPG) programmes. CPG programmes provide the financial and organizational infrastructure to support citizen-initiated neighbourhood projects. The central element of CPG programmes is that small groups of citizens are the prime movers in initiating proposals, organizing work plans, competing for small grants and then carrying out the plan. In this way, citizens begin to make working connections among each other and with municipal officials. As a result they become directly engaged in community governance. These linkages form important building blocks of a strong civil society.

This article examines recent efforts to develop CPG programmes in South Africa. Starting in November 1998, two rounds of CPG exchanges were undertaken with six South African communities.¹ As of November 2001, three of the communities have successfully negotiated the initial stage of developing their own local CPG programmes—winning council support for the creation of such a programme or initiating local CPG demonstration projects with an eye toward longer-term development of financial and organizational support structures. Of the other three communities, progress toward initiating a CPG programme has stalled for lack of critical political leadership in two, and local political interests have rejected the CPG idea in the other one.

Based on an analysis of the causes of success and failure in these communities we present a model of implementation for CPG programmes based on two key factors: whether the principal mode of implementation was bottom-up or top-down, and whether the nature of stakeholder participation was broad-based or concentrated. Our experience in South African suggests that CPG programmes established under conditions of top-down

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coordination are the most likely to succeed over the short run. The findings on the breadth of stakeholder involvement are mixed. However, we suspect that broad-based stakeholder involvement will be required for CPG programmes to grow over the long term.

This article is divided into five sections. In the first section we discuss the basic elements of CPG programmes. In the second section we discuss our efforts to disseminate the CPG programme model in three different environments in South Africa: a large metropolitan area, three smaller municipalities, and two tribal villages. In the third section we analyse why programmes were successfully established in some communities but not others. Our findings form the basis of a model of CPG programme implementation based on the mode of implementation and the breadth of stakeholder involvement. In the fourth section we use this model to make recommendations to increase the likelihood of implementation success for similar programmes. The article concludes with observations about the applicability of the CPG programme idea as a way to develop civic infrastructure, and on the political lessons learned from our implementation experience in South Africa.

THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GRANT-MAKING PROGRAMME MODEL

Nurturing social connections among citizens and linkages between citizens, governments and non-governmental organizations is a critical step in building the social fabric that undergirds public and private institutions in robust democracies and strong economies (Putnam, 1993). Social democratic transformation is predicated on both top-down and bottom-up processes. At the top, strong government institutions must be established to guarantee the rule of law, give formal voice to citizens, and act collectively on behalf of the society to develop and implement policies. From the bottom up, citizens must engage in community activities that fulfil their civic responsibilities as well as build connections with and trust in government institutions.

In terms of the bottom-up dimensions of social democratic transformation, the critical role of citizen participation in community problem solving and service delivery is well recognized in both theory and practice. In the field of economics, for example, the work of Nobel Laureate Ronald Coase (1960) establishes a critical framework in support of direct citizen participation in addressing a variety of local public good issues. Another Nobel Laureate, Anartya Sen (1999), argues that with adequate social opportunities individuals can effectively shape their own destiny and help each other, thereby promoting freedom, effective government institutions and a strong local economy. And in the field of public administration, there is a well-developed literature on 'co-production' and citizenship (see, for example, Levine, 1984). More recently, research on what Denhart and Denhart (2000) have called the *New Public Service* points up the case for government policies that 'encourage citizens to demonstrate their concern for the larger community . . . and their willingness to assume personal responsibility for what happens in their neighborhoods and communities' (Glaser *et al.*, 2002, p. 108).

In the world of practice, the growth in recent years of citizen-led efforts to improve conditions at the neighbourhood and community levels demonstrates the central role of citizen participation in governance (Hesselbein *et al.*, 1998). Experience from the United States indicates that one mechanism for fostering these citizen-driven efforts is the creation and diffusion of CPG programmes (Adams and Bell, 1999). Through such programmes, citizens begin to make working connections among each other and become directly engaged in community governance. These linkages form the building blocks of a strong civil society. In order to successfully implement grants, citizens often need to acquire permits from municipal authorities. Consequently, through the process of working collaboratively with municipal authorities, the possibility for increasing citizen trust in government improves. Finally, by identifying a community problem, making partnerships, and developing and implementing a plan to address the problem, citizens become empowered as they gain valuable life skills that translate into success in both educational and work settings.

Another central element of CPG programmes is that citizens and other stakeholders in the community govern them. Typically, a board composed of representatives from funding sources, the municipal authority and the community governs the CPG programme. This board establishes the by-laws and procedures through which the programme operates, as well as playing a prominent role in determining which citizen-initiated proposals are funded. In this way, citizens have a direct stake in the programme and are therefore more likely to respect

the grant decisions. Some CPG programmes are administered and funded primarily by municipalities with citizen involvement through the governance board, while others are administered by a non-profit or private foundation and funded through a partnership between the municipality, private foundations, banks, corporations and individual contributions. In sum, CPG programmes have a flexible design that allows for a wide variety of funding, governance and management structures, although direct citizen participation in governance is a requirement.

IMPLEMENTING THE CPG PROGRAMME MODEL IN SOUTH AFRICA

The bitter history of the apartheid government left many of South Africa's citizens distrustful of government and hesitant to take steps to improve conditions in their communities. In order for South Africa to move forward this legacy must be overcome and citizens must become integrally involved in community governance. Along with the post-apartheid restructuring of local authorities (Pycroft, 1996) and other aspects of government reform in South Africa (Cameron and Tapscott, 2000), citizens need to redefine their roles as active participants in local self-government, rather than as passive recipients of the benefits of various government programmes. In fact, the South African government recognizes as much in the recently passed Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32, 2000). According to Chapter 4, Section 16 (1) (b) (i):

A municipality must develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance, and must for this purpose contribute to building the capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the municipality . . .

We discovered a similar sentiment during a 1995 exchange in which newly elected councillors and local officials from around South Africa met to discuss priorities for ensuring the future of autonomous local self-government in South Africa. In a discussion paper they produced, citizen involvement was recognized as 'essential in identifying basic needs and in creative problem solving with local government.'²

Based on the desire of South African participants in the 1995 exchange to learn more about how developed democracies promote citizens as proactive agents of change, we conducted two additional exchanges in 1998–99 and 2000–01 to introduce citizens, elected councillors and local officials to the CPG programme model.³ To begin, we developed resource manuals and tool kits based on four US CPG programmes: Columbus and Dayton, Ohio; Phoenix, Arizona; and Seattle, Washington. We used these materials to conduct daylong workshops in six South African communities: the Eastern Cape cities of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Council (formerly Port Elizabeth and the surrounding areas) and King William's Town; the North West Province cities of Mafikeng and Vryburg; and two rural villages in the Eastern Cape, Gwali and Kolomana. After strong positive responses to the CPG programme model in each city, we organized delegations from these communities to participate in two-week US study tours to Columbus and Dayton, Ohio; Phoenix, Arizona; and Seattle and the Yakima Nation in Washington State. Through these study tours, the South African representatives met with elected officials, programme administrators and citizen participants in local CPG programmes. Finally we arranged follow-up visits to the six South African communities by delegations of practitioner–experts from US CPG programmes. These delegations advised and consulted with community stakeholders on the formulation of CPG proposals and funding strategies in each community.

While our long-term goal was to establish robust CPG programmes with deep institutional roots in each community, our short-term implementation objectives were focused on taking a series of positive first steps. We defined 'success' over the short term in the sense that some documented action had been taken locally signaling both understanding of and commitment to the CPG concept within the community. This could be demonstrated by

²'Reinventing Local Government in South Africa'. A final report by the Survival Strategy Group on the Future of Local Government, 1996, Institute of Policy Studies, Johns Hopkins University.

³For another example of how South African public servants have benefited from the experience of North American democracies see Proctor's (2000) discussion of the South Africa/Canada Programme on Governance.

the enactment of legislation providing for a CPG programme, the creation of a section 21 company (a trust under South African law) to govern a CPG programme, or the funding of a pilot CPG programme. Again, these are only preliminary indications of commitment to building a CPG programme. Many additional steps are required for full implementation, including sustainable funding and the creation of governance and administrative support structures.

We believe that two key factors help explain why implementation efforts succeeded in three of these cases but not the others: whether the principal mode of implementation was bottom-up or top-down, and whether the nature of stakeholder participation was broad-based or concentrated. Below, we discuss how each of these factors potentially influences implementation success in the case of South Africa.

Mode of implementation: top-down versus bottom-up

Research demonstrates that successful programme implementation is contingent on both top-down and bottom-up factors (see, for example, Elmore, 1985; Cline, 2000; Sinclair, 2001). Research that focuses on top-down factors highlights the importance of clearly framed statutes, directives and mandates (Ingram and Schneider, 1990), the appropriate choice of implementation programme structure and policy instruments (Linder and Peters, 1987), and the presence of a stable coalition of central actors to oversee and monitor the implementation process in order to coordinate the actions of other participants (see, for example, Sabatier, 1986). Research that focuses on bottom-up factors highlights the importance of the preferences, resource endowments and capabilities of both the intended recipients and street-level programme deliverers (see, for example, Hull and Hjern, 1987). More recent scholarship synthesizes the two approaches in an attempt to construct models of implementation that identify the relative importance of top-down and bottom-up factors in different situations and contexts (see, for example, Matland, 1995).

Most of the research referenced above is done in developed countries with stable policy contexts in which key stakeholders are identifiable, basic programme elements have been in place for some time and programme resources are relatively stable. Transitioning contexts are different. Key stakeholders are often difficult to identify and frequently shifting, programmes are new, programme resources are typically scarce and exigencies abound (Werlin, 1998). The combination of these factors often forces programme implementers to pursue one approach over the other even though a synthesized approach is ultimately the most desirable. In the case of CPG programmes in transitioning contexts, the top-down approach argues for a centrally driven process in which the programme is the result of a mandate or directive, typically by some government entity, and then a single organization is tasked with administering the programme. Alternatively, the bottom-up approach argues for allowing the ultimate recipients of the grants—the citizens—to design the programme and construct the arrangement for administering the programme in order to meet their needs more closely.

To varying degrees, South Africa is a hierarchical system of government. Accordingly, our prior expectation was that implementation success would be contingent on support and direction from a central authority in each community, either the city council, the mayor, or the tribal leader. In the majority of cases, we focused our implementation efforts in a top-down fashion by attempting to attain support from the key political leader in the community. We pursued a bottom-up approach in only one case: King William's Town. This occurred because our lead in-country partner in King William's Town—whom we cultivated from our 1995 exchange—failed in his bid to be re-elected as mayor. In the other five communities, our hope was that the targeted political authority, or a subordinate with significant authority, would take the lead on establishing the programme in the community. The risk we ran by ceding responsibility to a single individual within the government was that the responsible party might be perceived as establishing the programme for their self-promotion. Given the African context of broad community participation, we feared that this might undercut the legitimacy and acceptance of the programme at the grassroots level. Accordingly, extensive outreach activities were conducted early on in the various communities, including meetings in community centres, churches, schools, and in development forum offices in the townships and villages. Participation in the workshops to introduce the CPG idea was high and open to wide community participation, and in some instances enjoyed radio and newspaper coverage.

Breadth of stakeholder involvement: concentrated versus diffuse

There is resolute consensus that implementation success is contingent upon the support of key stakeholders. In the absence of support from key actors, there are numerous veto points in the implementation process where those opposed to the programme can stifle or halt its progress. Where there is considerable disagreement is how broad the pool of stakeholders should be. Recent work on participation argues that stakeholder involvement should be comprehensive and broad (see, for example, Campbell and Marshall, 2000, for a review of the literature). In democratic societies, the number of individuals and groups that have a vested interest in a community programme is typically great. Such is clearly the case with the CPG programme model. The fundamental premise of the CPG programme is to expand the process of governance beyond institutional elites—either at the top or the bottom of the programme implementation chain—to include citizens, non-governmental organizations and other representatives of the community. Consequently, it is logical to assume that in the process of establishing the programme broad participation by a variety of actors and groups is necessary to achieve implementation success.

However, other implementation scholars note that broadening the level of participation increases the complexity of the implementation process (O'Toole, 1996). Acquiring agreement on programme goals and objectives among stakeholders is more difficult when there are more of them. Furthermore, Pressman and Wildavsky's (1973) seminal work demonstrates how initial programme goals and objectives can be subverted throughout the implementation chain as the number of stakeholders involved increases. Given the community-governance premise of the CPG model, our primary inclination was to be more inclusive rather than less with regard to stakeholders regardless of whether we approached implementation from the top-down or the bottom-up. This was particularly the case in large communities that were highly politicized, like the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Council and King William's Town; we feared that our programme would become the ox that some stakeholder might gore if we courted one element of the community exclusively. However, in smaller communities with more homogeneous populations we could focus our efforts on a concentrated group of stakeholders since the risk that an excluded stakeholder might sabotage the programme was low. Furthermore, in tribal communities most decision-making ran through elites who consulted with community members, so we were left with little choice but to tailor our approach to the context at hand.

EXPLAINING IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS AND FAILURE

All six communities showed strong initial interest in moving forward to establish a CPG programme in their community. In response, we focused our efforts on the process of creating an administrative structure to manage a CPG grant-making process, generating grant funds, and possibly commencing the first round of grants. Our long-term implementation goals were for each community to institutionalize the programme by creating a more permanent grant-making organization, establishing stable funding and building strong connections to the communities to be served.

Table 1 presents the early results of our efforts. We categorized each of the communities based on whether the implementation mode was top-down or bottom-up and whether the degree of stakeholder involvement was

Table 1. Preliminary CPG programme implementation results

Mode of implementation	Breadth of stakeholder involvement	
	Broad-based	Concentrated
Top-down	Nelson Mandela Municipal Council (Success) Gwali (Success) Kolomana (Emerging)	Vryburg (Success) Mafikeng (Emerging)
Bottom-up	King William's Town (Failure)	

concentrated or broad. We also indicate in each cell whether or not the community successfully took steps to initiate a CPG programme. We achieved successful programme initiation in three of the communities: Nelson Mandela Municipal Council, Gwali and Vryburg. There have been positive developments in two of the other communities—Kolomana and Mafikeng—but key hurdles still must be overcome before programme initiation can be called a success. Finally, programme initiation failed in King William's Town. The remainder of this section discusses the cases in more detail.

Top-down, broad-based

We pursued a top-down approach with broad stakeholder involvement in three of the cases: Nelson Mandela Municipal Council, Gwali and Kolomana. The case of Nelson Mandela Municipality was top-down in terms of the mode of implementation because we had a 'champion' of the programme on the City Council in the chair of the Budget Committee. This person took the lead in drafting legislation to create a CPG programme in the municipality and then working it through the legislative process. However, in terms of stakeholder involvement, we reached out to a wide variety of stakeholders in the community in order to bring together the various programme elements. For example, during our first visit, we conducted a three-day workshop about the CPG programme with representatives from all neighbourhoods in the community. For the US study tour we recruited participants from each neighbourhood and we developed strong ties with the Civic Forum in the municipality, which enjoyed strong grassroots support throughout the community.

As a result of this top-down broad-based approach, the city has taken many steps to initiate a CPG programme. In May 2000, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Council passed legislation that called for the city to take responsibility for the start-up and initial funding of the programme with an allocation of 250,000 rand; a governance structure based on the creation of a section 21 company with 10 directors—five from city council and five from organizations in civil society and business; and a long-term funding strategy based on collaboration among the business, government and foundation sectors. With South African local elections in December 2000 and the restructuring of Port Elizabeth into one of South Africa's six newly created metro areas, implementation of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Council CPG programme stalled for a while, but was back on track by November 2001. Responsibility for the CPG initiative has been taken up by a newly elected councillor who is strategically well placed as a member of the Mayor's Executive Committee and who has responsibility for community development and the mobilization of the newly restructured ward system. In addition, the Port Elizabeth Technikon (local community college) and its Institute for Sustainable Governance and Development has joined in to provide administrative and managerial support as well as taking the lead in creating short training courses (along the lines of those observed during the US study tour) in support of full and fair participation by all citizens in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Council CPG programme.

Our experience in the two traditional villages of Gwali and Kolomana were more complicated, although still within the top-down, broad-based model. First, these villages are part of a tribal governance structure—each village has a headman who reports to a Chief. Gwali is composed of three villages and Kolomana is composed of eight villages. In each case, we met with the Chief and his senior advisors. If any programme were to develop in either set of villages the Chief would be the primary facilitator. However, in a traditional tribal setting like these villages, the Chief does not act unilaterally. There is extensive consultation with his senior advisors and with the villagers themselves. Initial visits with these tribal communities included introductory meetings in the community halls of each village, followed by a day-long workshop with about 30 participants from the two villages, including each of the village Chiefs and their senior advisors. Each Chief, with input from the villagers, selected the delegations for the US study tour. The Chiefs' advisors dominated these delegations. So while the mode of implementation was clearly top-down, the breadth of stakeholder involvement within this top-down framework was broad.

Under the leadership of the local Gwali Chief and through the efforts of one of his advisors who participated in the US study tour, the village is now in the process of creating a section 21 company—the Gwali Foundation of Life—to oversee the governance and management of the Gwali CPG programme. Plans call for an initial community project whereby citizens will be provided with wheelbarrows and stone for purposes of improving the roadways within the village. This project is seen as a natural follow-up to recent improvements made to the main access

road to the village. These improvements reportedly followed directly from the initial CPG community meetings in Gwali at which a representative from the Amatola Development District participated.

Progress has proceeded more slowly in the village of Kolomana. While there were clear indications of community support and interest on the part of the Chief, a key advisor to the chief who participated in the US study tour has taken less of a leadership role in promoting the idea both within the village and with key political interests in the Nkonkobe municipality. In addition, Kolomana consists of eight villages, whereas Gwali only has three. This poses a challenge for creating a section 21 company that adequately reflects the interests of all eight villages. In this initial phase, the wide breadth of stakeholder involvement makes it difficult to create consensus. While it is still too early to evaluate the overall outcome, it is clear that without strong leadership from within the community, including not only that provided by the Chief, but also by those in a position to move the idea forward through the various political and practical aspects of implementation, success is more problematic.

Top-down, concentrated

In Mafikeng and Vryburg, both in the North West Province, we once again worked in a top-down fashion to introduce a CPG programme. More specifically, we first approached the provincial government's Member of the Executive Committee for Local Government and Housing and then moved directly to each community's mayor and city council. In both cases, we succeeded in attaining the support of the political hierarchy. However, unlike our approach in the previously discussed communities, we had more limited involvement of community stakeholders in the delegations formed from each city to participate in the US study tour and in our subsequent implementation efforts. Hence, a more concentrated approach was taken in Mafikeng and Vryburg.

As of November 2001, there had been significant positive developments around the CPG initiative in Vryburg. The community was approached by a group of young people about volunteering some community service. At first, the Vryburg council was unclear about how best to respond. But after the study tour and observations of how the CPG concept can be used to provide the financial and organization infrastructure in support of such citizen-driven initiatives, action was taken by the council to support the youth by donating overalls to those who participated in a street-cleaning project. Initial participation consisted of 10 young people and reportedly grew to include 48 youth volunteers. It was also reported that a new youth-led volunteer initiative involving the patching of potholes was underway and that the Vryburg Council was discussing the formation of a skills training programme as a way to organize the Vryburg CPG programme. According to an official from the Provincial Executive Committee office, she had seen a recent story about the Vryburg CPG initiative reported on the local television news. An important factor in the early progress in Vryburg was the enthusiastic support of a member of the Mayor's Executive Committee who was part of the US study tour. This representative has taken it as his responsibility to oversee and coordinate programme initiation.

Results have been mixed in Mafikeng. On the positive side, toward the end of 2001, over 200 citizens participated in a massive 'clean up the city' campaign. The Premier's wife, who is on the Mafikeng city council, participated and based on the successful turnout of citizen volunteers, a decision has been made to repeat the project on a monthly basis. The project will be used as the basis for motivating the formal structuring of a Mafikeng CPG programme and it has been assigned to the Public Participation portfolio within the Mayor's Executive Committee. However, unlike in Vryburg, no champion has surfaced within the city council or mayor's administration. Hence, despite strong support from the Mafikeng mayor herself, further progress on the CPG initiative awaits active participation by the appropriate councillor to take charge of the political and organization aspects of implementation.

Bottom-up, broad-based

In contrast to the other five communities, our entry to and development work in King William's Town was focused at the grassroots level. As noted earlier, we had selected the mayor of King William's Town during our 1995 study trip as our lead in-country partner. Unfortunately, the mayor (King William's Town's first appointed black mayor) failed in his bid for re-election. However, because the former mayor was highly committed to the project and had some background from the 1995 exchange, we continued to work with him to take a lead role as our principal in-country partner from King William's Town. With his help we organized visits to all nine townships in

King William's Town, meeting with key stakeholders in each community. However, the King William's Town CPG initiative did not succeed beyond the initial exploratory phase. The current mayor reportedly saw the CPG initiative as a source of support for the former mayor and declined to participate in what was a very successful CPG workshop (over 30 participants and coverage in the local paper and radio) and refused to allow one of his officials to participate in the US study tour. Hence, while support for the idea was strong at the grassroots level, the absence of a 'champion' for the programme from within the formal local government crippled our ability to move forward. The mayor would not support the initiative and nothing developed in King William's Town beyond the initial exploratory phase.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

We draw several lessons about programme implementation in transitioning contexts from our experience in South Africa. With only six cases, we are cautious about applying these lessons to other contexts and other types of programmes. Nonetheless, with in-depth implementation efforts in a wide variety of communities, we believe that there is a partial degree of generalizability to our findings.

First, a top-down approach appears to increase the likelihood of initial programme implementation success. In the five communities where we pursued a top-down approach, three of the communities have successfully begun programme implementation by either conducting a small first round of grant making or taking substantive steps to establish an administrative structure and to generate funding. While there are roadblocks to continued implementation in the other two communities—both relating to identifying an entrepreneurial and dynamic 'champion' within the government—there are initial positive developments. The one instance where our efforts have failed—King William's Town—is largely because we lacked the support of government authorities. In sum, our initial expectation that a single individual within the government hierarchy is needed to push the programme forward and oversee its implementation in order to achieve success has largely been confirmed. This is not to say that programmes cannot succeed if implemented from the bottom up, but rather that in transitioning contexts in which stakeholders are fluid, the tradition is more hierarchical and resources are scarce, progress is more likely by moving from the top down.

Second, the results of our activities do not indicate whether broad-based stakeholder involvement is preferable to concentrated stakeholder involvement, at least in terms of initial programme implementation. Of the five communities where initial programme implementation has been successful or where there has been progress despite roadblocks, we pursued broad-based stakeholder involvement in three and concentrated stakeholder involvement in two. However, given the cultural traditions and recent developments in South Africa, we suspect that broad-based stakeholder involvement will be required for CPG programmes to take root over the long term.

Culturally, there is a long tradition of community consultation in South Africa. In a traditional tribal village the entire community may attend a daylong meeting to discuss issues of importance to the village. The Chief will listen, and ultimately makes a decision about how to proceed, but it typically reflects the will of the community. If a Chief is out of step with the community he/she could be removed, or individual members of the community may migrate to other communities. Thus, the relationship between the Chief and the community is not strictly a paternal one, but rather a dynamic relationship where the Chief's decisions typically reflect the will of the community and the community is engaged in carrying out the decision.

There is a similar emphasis placed on consultation in urban areas as well. In fact, the White Paper on Local Government mandates that municipalities encourage active citizen participation across four areas:

- as voters—to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote;
- as citizens—to express, via different stakeholder associations, their views before, during and after the policy development process in order to ensure that policies reflect community preferences as far as possible;
- as consumers and end-users, who expect value-for-money, affordable services, and courteous and responsive service; and

- as organized partners involved in the mobilization of resources for development via for-profit businesses, non-governmental organizations and community-based institutions.

As a result of this tradition of community consultation, we believe that if these CPG programmes are to become fully institutionalized within the community, stakeholders from all segments of a community must become involved in the next phases of implementation.

In sum, the top-down approach can lead to successful initial programme implementation regardless of whether stakeholder involvement is broad-based or concentrated. But the likelihood of institutionalizing the programme will increase with broad-based stakeholder involvement. Without broad-based community involvement, the potential for longer-term growth is more limited. Two examples from the United States illustrate this point. The Seattle, Washington Neighborhood Matching Fund is a very successful programme today, but it barely passed by a 5 to 4 vote in city council when it was initially proposed 14 years ago. Strong opposition reportedly came from established social service groups and provider agencies who saw their particular interests threatened by a programme to distribute money broadly across citizens and neighbourhoods rather than to target any new funding on unmet needs in their programme areas. But having withstood this political challenge initially, the programme, which is funded out of the city's General Fund, has succeeded and grown from an initial annual allocation of \$150,000 to \$4.5 million today because the initiators of the programme have aggressively reached out to build community support.

By contrast, the Neighborhood Partnership Programme in Columbus, Ohio, a highly regarded and successful programme created by a collaboration of community leaders including two banks, a community foundation, the city, a restaurant chain and the local newspaper, has an annual allocation of \$500,000 and has not grown significantly over the years. Hence, while the Seattle programme sought broad community participation and faced stiff opposition early on, it has perhaps benefited in the long term as community and political support for the programme increased with the programme's demonstrated success. In Columbus, a more closely held model may have helped get the programme launched initially, but the lack of broad-based community buy-in may have limited its potential growth.

We expect to see a similar pattern across the communities in South Africa where we have achieved initial implementation success. While we expect all five communities to move forward in further developing and institutionalizing their CPG programmes, we think it is more likely that the communities where we have pursued a top-down, broad-based approach will grow to be robust. Because we have earlier broad-based community buy-in and participation in the Nelson Mandela Municipal Council, Gwali and Kolomana, we are confident these programmes will establish roots and grow. The same could also happen in Vryburg and Mafikeng, where we also pursued a top-down approach but had concentrated stakeholder involvement. However, in order to achieve similar degree of growth we believe they will need to expand the participation of stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

After two rounds of exchanges, positive developments toward the creation of local CPG programmes can be reported in at least three of the six communities, with hopeful signs in two more. Initial programme success spans a range of types of communities including a newly created urban metropolitan government and a rural village operating within the framework of traditional tribal authority. Citizens and many officials in each of the communities immediately welcomed the idea of a citizen-initiated CPG programme. Based on our visits to various townships and villages, the potential for citizen engagement in neighbourhood or community service initiatives is clearly evident—a group of mothers building a community park in one township, community volunteers organizing student art projects in another, one or two women here and there starting community gardens, a group of fathers rebuilding the foundation for the local school, and volunteers engaged in senior citizen sewing and daycare activities. What this clearly demonstrates is a universal willingness of citizen leaders to take just the sort of initiative that the CPG idea is intended to support—small grants to cover basic material and equipment costs coupled with labour volunteered by the citizens themselves. What the CPG idea creates is a financial and administrative infrastructure that allows the potential for such citizen initiatives to be fully realized.

It is also apparent that even with the support of citizens and the backing of municipal mayors and tribal chiefs, the CPG idea will not take root without strong leadership from key councillors and advisors who are in a position to marshal the political support necessary for the implementation of local CPG initiatives. 'All politics are local' and no more so than in matters involving the distribution of resources under a new grant-making initiative. It is a very fine balancing act to get political support without giving over control to established political interests and turning a citizen-initiated grant programme into an elite-driven political distribution scheme. Empowering citizens to proactively engage in newly created local democracies is fundamentally a matter of experiential learning—for citizens, local officials and elected councilors.⁴ For such learning to take hold requires a measure of trust both among the citizens themselves and between citizens and local officials.

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⁴See Schutte and Silverman (1996) for a discussion of how experiential learning has also been adapted in the training of public sector managers in South Africa.