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**Trying to Make Democracy Work
A Case Study of Local Government
Reform in Johannesburg**

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TRYING TO MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK A CASE STUDY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM IN JOHANNESBURG

Ursula Scheidegger
(University of the Witwatersrand)

INTRODUCTION

South Africa's first democratic elections in April 1994 marked the formal end of apartheid. However, the social, economic and political transformation was not yet complete. Social segmentation and the unequal distribution of income are still characteristics of the post-apartheid context. Free and fair elections are just the beginning of a process to redesign the state and its institutions, address the legacies of the past and develop a new political culture. This paper discusses the practice of local government reform and popular participation, both central aspects of the democratisation process. It is based on a case study of cooperation, conflict and political participation in three local government wards in Johannesburg that cut across former segregation boundaries and include parts of Alexandra Township and its adjacent formerly white residential areas. In this paper, references to the different racial groups are done in the terminology commonly used in South Africa.

Civil society is an important feature of the political culture in liberal democracies. As a structure of social order, civil society links the state and its citizenry by facilitating communication and interactions while limiting the power of the state. Associations and networks are important structures for the promotion of demands and concerns of individual citizens, public debate is stimulated and civil society potentially exerts pressure on the government (Foley, Edwards 1998:12). In addition, civil society is also involved in public and quasi-public functions such as charity, sports, education or neighbourhood activities. Thus, the success of democratic governments is related to the nature of civil society.

However, societies in modern states include a variety of people, and there are differences between the affluent and the poor, ethnic and racial groups, dominant and marginalized groups and political winners and losers. Perceptions of personal realities depend on socio-economic positions, minority status, religion or age group and they are more pessimistic among disadvantaged groups such as the less educated, low-income earners, marginalized and discriminated groups, crime victims, those in poor health and the unemployed (Foley, Edwards 1999:153). The cooperation between unequal partners is a problem and tends to be dominated by the better equipped. Beneficiaries of a particular political and socio-economic order do not have much in common with less privileged groups (Fried 2002:31).

In segmented societies, different social structures place a variety of demands on the state, the nature of the public good is contested (Foley and Edward 1999:155) and people are affected by public policies in very different ways (Uslaner 2002:255). In this context, social networks might defend particular interests. The competition for scarce resources is divisive and limits incentives for cooperation. Unfavourable conditions are widespread class, gender and ethnic inequalities, the marginalisation of minorities and endemic poverty (Woolcock 1998:182). In addition, social networks often mirror and reproduce societal power relations (Molyneux 2002:181) and networks differ enormously in terms of ties, relations, social positions and resources they are able to access (Foley and Edwards 1999:164).

The apartheid state was constructed on strictly enforced social hierarchies and boundaries. Racial segregation prevented the acknowledgement of an interdependence between the different population groups and the development of a sense of social responsibility and obligation towards the poor across social divisions (Kalati and Manor 1999:122). The political transformation created a climate of uncertainty, an asymmetric distribution of risks and benefits and high emotions (Diani 2001:209). New values and beliefs were shaped and new social

hierarchies and positions of influence and power emerged in response to the new political and social order. However, worldviews and prejudices are more resilient to change. They are shaped by history, state ideology, socialisation and personal experiences, and influence validations of other population groups. In addition, there is still little belief in the effectiveness of the state and its democratic institutions, in particular because of the current imbalance of power and incidences of arrogant leadership. Perceptions of a threatening political and socio-economic environment contribute not only to insecurity but also to rising levels of intolerance (Gibson and Gouws 2003:46). It is easier to accommodate diversity in already reasonably well functioning states and economies, where citizens feel respected and secure and have a reason to identify with the state (Berman, Eyoh, Kymlicka 2005:13).

Furthermore, common experiences of adversity and opposition to mainstream society generate solidarity and are often the result of exclusion and discrimination; anti-social behaviour is a way to contest and substitute for lacking opportunities and social recognition (Portes 1998:17). The moral economy of dissent or ethnicity replaces insufficient state provisions; it is based on shared norms, values and trust in networks that facilitate coordinated actions (Bayart, Ellis, Hibou 1999:39). Subcultures are characterised by normative expectations, group specific forms of behaviour and strong regulations that are rigorously enforced (Hall 2002:44). The number of poor people in South Africa is high and at the periphery, levels of crime and violence are increasingly unbearable. Income concentration and the exclusion of large masses contribute to tensions and undermine social cohesion and stability. The lacking perspective of decent living conditions creates a generation of hopeless young people and they have nothing to lose in a social context with no effective limitations to anti-social behaviour (Dupas 2001:1).

The apartheid state abused culture, race and ethnicity in order to enforce social boundaries within its system of domination, discrimination and exploitation

(Chidester, Dexter, James 2003:302). It resulted in a political economy that disproportionately privileged one group at the expense of others. Today, the legacies of the past are an enormous challenge to the democratically elected government, and it has to address three patterns of fragmentation with different expressions of inequality: racial segregation, socio-economic divisions and intercultural disparities resulting from distinctive traditions and ways of life (Smith 2003:18). Change and transition occur in a competitive economic environment. Due to the magnitude of inequality and high unemployment combined with slow economic growth and hence scarcity of resources, gains by one group are made at the expense of another. Furthermore, in a political, socio-economic and cultural context of transition that aims at overcoming racially defined privileges and burdens, the competition for scarce resources and opportunities and the necessity for redress emphasise and politicise race and ethnicity; identity is a powerful tool to claim entitlements and defend privileges.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

Local government reform and popular participation became central to South Africa's democratisation processes. The African National Congress (ANC) promoted decentralisation. However, while favouring strong local authority, the ANC also defended a highly centralised national political system in order to manage ethnic tensions and violent confrontations during the negotiation process (Beall et al. 2002:17). In addition, not only popular participation was encouraged, but also an outspoken and powerful civil society that challenged the state successfully had to be demobilised. These transformation processes occurred and continue in a context where people have high expectations of change and where enormous socio-economic inequalities are divisive. Two strategies were devised in order to enhance the relationship and build trust between the state and its citizens: The *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP)

intending to accelerate development and redistribution and the provision for people's participation through local government reform.

Local government is closest to the people and participation in the local government ward is considered to give people a sense of empowerment and agency. Popular participation provides for the positive application of people's power and through participation in political processes people have more access to information, which allows for better control of the government and enhances accountability (Clapper 1996:75ff). Thus, the benefits of cooperation and collective processes are directly experienced and participation is a process of social learning potentially empowering marginalized and disadvantaged population groups (Pieterse 2002:12). However, popular participation also has disadvantages. There is a considerable potential for conflicts and delays; it can be difficult to find a compromise, and there are always unhappy people who might obstruct or undermine programmes and development efforts. Marginalized and weak groups lack a forceful lobby to promote their welfare (Clapper 1996:71ff). Furthermore, the government's vision of an active and participatory civil society is increasingly unclear and the current relationship between the government and civil society is ambiguous. The government is committed to development and redistribution, but there are constraints, in particular the lacking capacity to implement policies and projects. In addition, incidences of corruption and nepotism undermine credibility and the government has difficulty dealing with criticism.

A further challenge to local government is the imperative to integrate former segregated areas because decentralisation and the importance assigned to local government structures in a context of inherited spatial segregation potentially conflict with integration. In this context, the allocation of resources and infrastructural investment in order to eliminate disparities in development and standards of living inevitably leads to conflicting interests between the different communities (Lodge 2002:86). As long as economic inequalities are increasing,

civil society is a space of contestation rather than cooperation (Fine 1999:14). In this context, state capacity influences political arrangements and the space for popular participation. Institutions are important agents to regulate social relations in a transparent, consistent and unbiased way enabling cooperation and trust within complex societies (Levi 1996:51). Social cohesion and stability depend on the capacity of the state to mediate between competing social structures in order to lessen disparities and to strengthen social interactions and cooperation.

The ward is the most decentralised structure within government, its councillor is elected during local government elections; the size varies according to the population density. The ward committee has ten members, which are elected at a public meeting by the residents of the ward. The ward committee should represent the different population groups in the community and its members are in charge of different sectors such as education, security, infrastructure and economic development. The ward committee is the structure linking the local community to the state.

TRYING TO MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK – THE PRACTICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The three local government wards discussed in this paper belong to the administrative Region 7 of Johannesburg's Metropolitan area; at the time of the fieldwork, Ward 81 and Ward 109 had Democratic Alliance (DA) councillors and Ward 92 had an African National Congress (ANC) councillor. In order to assess levels of social capital, different social structures and networks have been examined and interviews have been conducted with the three Ward Councillors and three Proportional Representative Councillors (PRs) assigned to the wards. Both parties, the ANC and DA, have local ward branches, and interviews were conducted with the respective representatives. In addition, administrative support structures from the regional administration and the Alexandra Renewal Project

(ARP) have been approached. Community organisations included churches, Community Policing Forums (CPFs) and participatory structures in schools, institutions that potentially provide for integration. The interviews for this paper were qualitative, semi-structured and were based on open questions, which allowed interview partners to include whatever they considered important. All interviews were conducted in English. The study did not seek to obtain a representative sample.

The destructive and unjust nature of apartheid policies is reflected in detrimental economic and social consequences. More than 18 million South Africans, or 45 per cent of the population, live below the poverty line. Income distribution between different income groups has changed to the disadvantage of the poorest 40 per cent of households (Terreblanche 2002:31). In 1995, the Gini coefficient was 0.596; it rose to 0.635 in 2001, an indication that income inequality has worsened (UNDP 2003:43). The extent of poverty is frightening: The poorest quintile shares 1.5 per cent of total income compared to the richest quintile aggregating 65 per cent (Marais 2001:193).

Living conditions are difficult in Alexandra Township, a historic neighbourhood of African freehold settlement in northern Johannesburg. The end of pass laws brought an influx of people to Alexandra, exacerbating the already precarious shortage of houses. At the end of apartheid, there were fifty times more people per square hectare in Alexandra than in neighbouring affluent Sandton and four times more than in Soweto (Mayekiso 1996:157). Unemployment, violence and crime levels are high and the infrastructure is inadequate and service delivery a problem. Local government has a critical role of rebuilding the local community as the democratic and non-discriminatory society's basic unit (WP Local Gov. 1998:15). However, local government structures critically depend on the commitment, effort and participation of incumbents of office and the population. In this context, the quality of social relations and the ability to cooperate depend on tolerance, a sense of community and respect for people who are different

from oneself. This is a difficult requirement for population groups that were once forced not to interact at all and that are still spatially segregated, economically divided and come from different cultural backgrounds.

It is difficult to overcome racial segregation and its resulting spatial segmentation, because the violence at the beginning of the 1990s and high levels of crime contribute to the negative image of Alexandra and the reluctance of outsiders to enter the township. However, the Spatial Development Framework of the Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP) promotes integration because the geographical separation still translates into racial segregation. Improved road linkages through Alexandra aim at opening the township to the wider community for public and private transport routes (Letter 2003). Nobody moves from former white areas into Alexandra. In contrast, areas bordering the township have an increasing number of former Alexandra residents and the number of black residents is high, in some areas between 80 to 90 per cent. It seems that white residents tend to leave the area as the number of black residents increases. David Mills, a DA member argues “problems arise because black house owners rent their houses to many residents, one family per room, which results in overcrowded one family houses and the value of houses in the neighbourhood drops. Also street trading is taking over, and it affects shopping centres because parking space is used for informal structures (Mills 2003).

In general, the administration of Region 7 considers demographically mixed neighbourhoods relaxed and integration seems unproblematic. However, communities outside Alexandra are more reserved, and communication is different than in Alexandra, people outside have less time to socialise in their neighbourhood (Nxumalo 2003). Contacts with neighbours are less personal and more instrumental, for example, to borrow something. The trend is for people, who can afford it, to move out of Alexandra into adjacent areas. There is still a considerable influx of urban migrants into Alexandra. Migrants and residents of Alexandra are black and many are unemployed and poor (Madondo 2003).

In wards cutting across former segregation boundaries cooperation is difficult, not all groups within the ward attend meetings; the areas are still separated, and it takes time to develop a culture of visiting each other, between groups that were forced not to interact at all. Alexandra residents do not attend meetings outside the township and outside residents are not coming to the township. It will take time for people to see themselves as a community (Chuene 2003).

Many people consider churches places of integration. During apartheid churches were locations where people of all races and from different backgrounds could meet. Various South African denominations participated in the liberation struggle and their proclaimed ideals such as freedom, dignity and human rights applied to everybody; church congregations and their ideals cut across social boundaries. According to Father Makhalemele from the Anglican Church in Alexandra, white people came to worship in the township until the violence erupted at the beginning of the 1990s (Makhalemele 2003). However, in post-apartheid South Africa parish boundaries are still along former segregation boundaries; in addition, for example services of the Methodist Church are in indigenous languages (Madibo 2003).

St. Catherine's in Bramley is a parish of the Anglican Church in the vicinity of Alexandra and according to Reverend Lynn Wyngaard, the number of black worshippers is increasing; however, they are people who moved into the area. Alexandra residents are working class and would have problems with a middle class, literate congregation. St. Catherine's has outreach programs in the township and the soup kitchen attracts many people from Alexandra (Wyngaard 2003).

Schools in Alexandra only have an insignificant number of learners coming from the township's surroundings. They are all children of domestic workers. In contrast, schools located outside of Alexandra have a considerable number of learners from Alexandra. There are no barriers between learners, and they

socialise with each other irrespective of race and religion. Learners visit their friends at home or invite them for afternoon activities or for sleepovers. Alexandra learners visit homes of friends outside the township; however, learners living outside Alexandra usually do not visit their friends in the township, unless they have family connections and know the environment. For birthday parties, some learners from Alexandra invite their friends to a location outside the township, for example to Mc Donald's or to watch a movie (De Oliveira, Fargher, Rocky, Smith 2003).

Crime affects everyone irrespective of race, and all populations groups are concerned with security and crime prevention. Community Policing Forums (CPF's) are based on the cooperation between the police and the population, so they help to improve the still historically strained relationship between the people and the police. People from different social backgrounds can get involved and proactively contribute to a safe and productive social environment. However, perceptions of crime have a spatial dimension and CPF boundaries run along old segregation lines separating Alexandra and its adjacent areas. Furthermore, crime affects trust. The general assumption is that the vicinity of Alexandra is heavily affected by crime and that perpetrators come from the township. Perceptions of crime are false because the kingpins of organised criminals related to syndicates are usually not black. It is important to reduce these racially based prejudices because they prevent social integration (Stein 2003).

Beside the spatial segregation, a further challenge is to overcome socio-economic disparities and Edwin Mokgwatsana, Strategic Advisor of the Regional Director, states "everyone agrees upon the necessity to catch up with development deficits in Alexandra but in reality nobody is willing to contribute. People in former white areas complain about the Region's resource distribution. They argue that only Alexandra benefits and that the infrastructure is decaying in adjacent areas. There are widespread prejudices such as the assumption that all administrative personnel or at least Blacks in the administration are African

National Congress (ANC) members favouring their constituency. As a matter of fact, more than 85 per cent of the region's population lives in Alexandra. People continue to challenge the administration and government in stereotypical ways, they are still trapped in the old order and, for example, local government is considered to be corrupt" (Mokgwatsana 2003). This perception cuts across racial boundaries.

Income distribution is a primary factor of social segmentation. For example, according to Councillor Chuene, there are extreme differences in living standards in Ward 92 and the past still affects relations; there are concerns about vulnerable population groups. However, the sharing of wealth is a difficult issue (Chuene 2003). Resources are limited and wealthier groups are reluctant to give up their privileges. There are also differences in living standards between black communities in the ward. The settlement in Klippfontein contains Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) low-cost houses, which were provided to the poor, whereas Mayibuye has "bond houses" for wealthier people. As a result, Mayibuye residents put up a fence to prevent negative externalities of the RDP settlement in their vicinity (Madondo 2003).

The churches in Alexandra received donations from more affluent outside communities but the Reverends from the Methodist Church and the Rhema Ministries claim that charity is declining. However, in both churches activities concentrate around and are dominated by the respective clerics. The resultant lack of transparency might be a reason for declining donations from outside. In contrast, the Anglican Church in the diocese of Johannesburg has five parishes, one of them Alexandra with the only black cleric. The other parishes involve wealthy communities and "they donate a lot". The church in Alexandra works also together with the state's welfare services. Five social workers are based at the Anglican Church Community Centre and are paid by the Department of Welfare (Makhalemele 2003).

Socio-cultural integration is a further challenge in wards, where boundaries cut through former social networks and as DA councillors argue, it cuts them apart. Human beings do not work like that; they need time to adapt. Because of the different cultural background, there is a lack of integration. On the other hand, there are also common concerns affecting everyone, for example crime, safety, the economy, job creation and education. To raise standards of living is a necessary condition for true social integration; currently, there is still a lot of distrust and no common caring and tolerance between the different population groups (R. Wolder, P. Heim 2003). For example, residents' organisations outside Alexandra are mainly concerned with road closures, which polarises the population. Whites are mistrustful because they think that Blacks commit most violent crimes. Whites tend to see Blacks as "all being the same". They do not differentiate between good and bad people. There is a need for the white and black population to be assisted with integration and trust building; it would be a major social engineering project (Topic 2003).

People tend to look after their own interest in a context of limited resources and opportunities and uncertainty enforces imaginary boundaries. Mr. Heim argues, "the less one knows about others the less one trusts each other. Despite more interactions between different social groups, people are still suspicious about the unknown, in particular because of the high incidence of crime" (Heim 2003). There are also doubts that integration is possible, because the history of the different social groups is "utterly different" and questions the possibility of bridging these cultural divides. For example there are a lot of complaints along the former segregation line. In particular, the residents of an Old Age Home often feel intimidated by music and other noise from the nearby recreation area, where black residents are celebrating in their ways. There are concerns about traditional festivities such as marriages and the preparation of traditional meals, including the slaughter of animals. People don't mind if neighbours belong to another population group, but there are expectations that they have to adapt to

the existing way of life and customs of the neighbourhood. It is difficult to find a compromise, and this conflict contributes to further polarisation (Topic 2003).

The councillor in Ward 109 considered it an opportunity that the ward boundaries cut across former segregated areas and tried to encourage the cooperation between different population groups under the motto “Breaking Down Barriers”, but this initiative was a disappointing experience. Apparently Whites disengage from political processes and are not willing to give time or resources to disadvantaged areas. The main organisational problem is that people from outside do not go into the township, even if transport is provided. Planned activities were boycotted; for example, visits from schools outside Alexandra to schools in the township or from Alexandra to schools outside. The ward has two structures: Alexandra residents and those from outside (Fuchs 2003).

The relationship between the government, the administration and the population is important and it depends on institutional arrangements that provide space for political agency and regulate social relations in a transparent, unbiased and consistent way. This is difficult in a situation where people are still trapped in stereotypical perceptions and prejudices. Participation is stimulated by politics that are relevant for people, and the perception that agency and community involvement can make a difference.

DA members claim since they have little common ground with the ANC that they are sidelined and practically all their suggestions are dismissed. In addition, due to the ratio between ANC and DA members of roughly 2/3 to 1/3 there is no space for contributions or suggestions by the DA. It is today more difficult to be in the opposition than during the National Party years. Differences are not clear, because before, there was a tremendous ideological divide; today many aims are the same. There is only dispute about how to do it. For the ANC, it becomes a question of pride not to give in to the opposition’s proposals. In addition, DA members claim that “the structure of the ANC was never democratic; it was

communist, based on authoritarian principles. However, many Afrikaners have forgotten how they changed everything in 1948 and now the ANC is doing the same” (Heim, Topic, Wolder 2003).

There are DA claims that the administration in Region 7 is notorious for inefficiency and nepotism, favouring friends and family of ANC officials and the council’s resources are used for party requirements. The focus of Region 7 is completely on Alexandra; outside areas are sidelined. The bottom-up, participatory approach does not work because decisions are made before the consultations. In addition, the information available at the People’s Centre in Alexandra and publications of Region 7 is biased and only relevant for the township’s residents. Information booklets but also posters in the People’s Centre and the Region 7 Offices in Wynberg are incomplete and omit some of the councillors and PR councillors of the DA (Fuchs 2003). In contrast, for the ANC councillor in Ward 92, the cooperation between the administration in Region 7 and the City Council is good.

Disparities between legal and organisational frameworks and their effectiveness in practice are common; Region 7 and its local government wards are no exception. There is not only the difficulty of integrating the varying expectations, priorities and development visions of the different populations segments. Local government structures also critically depend on the commitment, effort and participation of incumbents of office, stakeholders and the population, but people are reluctant to get involved in their community (Mokgwatsana 2003).

In particular, ward committee elections are a problem, not only in wards with formerly segregated populations. There is little response to calls for nominations, and the competing political parties manipulate the system. According to administrative staff, the ward committee system is good in theory but does not work in practice. People are not interested in getting involved in the community, and it is questionable if they know at all how local government work. It is already

difficult to find people willing to get involved in their community let alone to find representatives for interest sectors such as youth, religion, business, safety or women. Ward committee elections take place every two years (Mbingeleli 2004). The lack of interest in community affairs affects all racial groups. The high mobility in Alexandra and its adjacent areas is a critical factor reducing participation because new residents need time to settle before they are able to get involved in their community.

The DA claims that rules around ward committee elections are not clear. The administration of Region 7 announces meetings, nomination procedures, an election venue, and dates. However, Mr. Heim, a PR Councillor argues “out of 50000 residents, 200 come and should then represent the community. If one is not a councillor, it is difficult to know about ward committee elections and their meaning. Ward committees work in theory, but practically it is not possible to implement them (Heim 2003). (I think the numbers in this quote are by far too high).

Beside the negative impact of high mobility levels, there is no civic culture of participation and the new local government system is neither as yet consolidated nor a well-known institution. Ward demarcations are relatively new, and besides the ward branches of the ANC and DA, there are barely other groups representing interest sectors on a ward level. The absence of these networks constrains participation.

In Ward 81 the first ward committee elections in 2001 resulted in six out of ten members elect were from Riverpark a small area of the ward in Alexandra. The election procedure was incorrect because there were nominations from the floor and the committee was dissolved before it started working. For the September 2003 ward committee elections, the administration of Region 7 informed voters and residents selectively. Despite interventions by the ward councillor, information about election procedures, nominations, date and venue were

extremely unevenly disseminated. It resulted in a ward committee of 10 people, all from Riverpark and all ANC members. This ward committee neither represents the population of the ward, nor interest groups from the different sectors; besides, only about 30 to 40 people voted (Topic 2003). Nevertheless, the venue was not in Alexandra, taking the reluctance of outsiders to enter the township into consideration. The ANC ward branch believes that the community is represented in this ward committee (Makapela 2003).

Ward 92 has a functioning ward committee, and there were no problems with the elections of the new committee in July 2003. The councillor does not know, how people deal with the elections and whether they nominate themselves, are asked to stand for elections, or suggest someone. Region 7 facilitates and supports ward committee elections. There are guidelines, such as that nominated people have to be resident in the ward, have to be up to date with their service payments, they cannot have a criminal record and must have a sound mind. The challenge is to get a decent representation in terms that there is choice and that all interest sectors such as youth, health or sports and all areas of the ward are represented. Most committee members are from the Eastbank in Alexandra; however, residents from other areas were encouraged to participate. The councillor does not know the political party affiliation of ward committee members (Chuene 2003). In contrast, DA members claim that they were not informed about the ward committee elections and that all committee members are ANC (Mkhonto 2003).

In Ward 109, the first ward committee in 2001 had two members from Kelvin outside the township, while the rest of the members were all from Alexandra and all ANC supporters. However, four members never came to meetings and one member died. They were replaced, and the ward committee then had four ANC and four DA members. According to the DA chairperson, the 2003 elections for the ward committee were competitive. From an organisational point of view, the DA approached people to stand for election and managed to get ten people for

the ten interest sectors. For the elections, the DA constituency was mobilised. The ANC also handed nominations in; however, the DA had the larger crowd and nine of ten ward committee members are DA, only one is ANC. There is one white DA member from Wendywood in the committee, the rest are Alexandra residents (Mijambo 2003).

Mr. Ebrahim, the only ANC ward committee member claims that the ANC had a list of nominated people, all valid candidates, to represent a certain interest sector. About 60 people attended the election meeting; the DA brought Alexandra residents in by taxi, because the meeting was outside Alexandra. The DA had a majority by two or three votes. This ward committee is not representative, neither in terms of interest sector nor in terms of residents, because all members come from Alexandra. A huge problem is that ward committee members are not paid, because a paid job is probably taken more seriously. In addition, people lack the confidence and the knowledge to get involved. (Ebrahim 2004).

Finally, there are common interests around which people can socialise; however, there are not many established structures that cut across former segregation boundaries. Schools are considered to promote integration. In addition there is a widespread assumption that children born in the 1990s have no experience with apartheid and no exposure to racially based ideologies; therefore they approach other individuals without racial prejudice.

All schools contacted during fieldwork have a high number of black learners; in contrast, all schools have predominantly white teachers. Similar to moving behaviour in residential areas, white parents tend to withdraw their children from schools where black learners exceed a critical number; some schools around Alexandra have one hundred per cent black learners. Children from Alexandra are exposed to a different and difficult social environment compared to those living outside of the township. Transport is a problem for learners coming from

Alexandra; they often arrive late, which is disruptive, and they are not fetched in time after school. Education is highly valued in a competitive economic environment; parents are concerned about standards of education. Poor children tend to struggle more with problems, come from a less stimulating background and sometimes lack fundamental skills, which are considered to negatively affect the learning environment. It contributes to prejudices that, for example, educational standards drop if too many disadvantaged learners are together. In addition, children come from as far away as Krugersdorp, Soweto or Midrand, increasingly schools are not rooted any more in the local community. Because of the distance between homes and schools and transport problems, parental involvement is declining and it seems that schools are again increasingly segregated.

In churches outside Alexandra the trend of class structures continues and is vindicated by more recent fieldwork. Domestic personal tends to attend services in indigenous languages, however, clerics also argue that the vibe in these services is different, there is more action, more singing and dancing and the audience is more involved. In contrast, services in English attract a more literate, middle class community and include people from different population groups.

Community Policing Forums (CPF) are based on the cooperation between the police and the population, crime prevention affects everyone. Unfortunately, CPF boundaries run along old segregation lines and do not provide for integration. According to Lionel Stein and Thomas Sithole, CPF chairpersons, alcohol and social crimes are the biggest problem for the police, and the CPFs are involved in awareness campaigns and assistance to prevent alcohol related offences. The second biggest problem is the high number of gun owners in a socio-cultural context that sanctions the possession of a gun as a means of self-defence. It is easy to get a gun; however, weapons influence the nature and consequences of crime. Types of crime in Alexandra include assault, murder, robbery, car hijacking and, in particular, domestic violence, assaults and rape incidences are

high compared to outside areas. Often crime happens between people known to each other; in many cases, the settling of personal disputes involves violence. It seems that the better accessibility to grants and pensions reduces interpersonal violence, because economic strains are a trigger of violence. Young people, in particular young women, are affected most by crime. Outside Alexandra, patterns of crime differ significantly. Robbery, housebreaking and car hijacking are the most common crimes; levels of violence and incidences of rape are significantly lower than in Alexandra (Stein, Sithole 2003).

Crime prevention offers opportunity for integration across social boundaries, if the emphasis is on community participation and not based on clichés regarding perpetrators and victims. A defensive approach to crime prevention, aims at removing potential facilitators such as taxi ranks, cardboard collectors, hawkers or the closure of areas with fences and booms. Groups addressing the problem of crime reactively are not concerned if the reduction of crime in one area comes at the expense of another area, an attitude entrenching divisions. In contrast, a participatory approach to crime prevention stresses the responsibility for one's neighbourhood and provides a sense of agency. One of the first steps of a participatory approach to crime prevention aims at getting to know the people, who live in your neighbourhood in order to overcome the isolation among people. Community activities include cleaning up of parks and recreational areas, the cutting of bushes and grass to improve visibility and to replace dysfunctional street signs and house numbers. This approach includes different social actors and vindicates the interdependence of all social groups.

CONCLUSION

In South Africa the negotiated transition resulted in a widely accepted new social, economic and political order based on a democratic constitution and represented by a democratically elected government. However, values, beliefs and prejudices

are more resilient to change and remain a latent source of contention. It is more difficult to overcome perceptions of other demographic groups and social barriers that were shaped by history, state ideologies, worldviews, socialisation, personal experiences and emotional aspects. Civil society structures emanate from these conditions and in a context of limited resources and opportunities, the adoption of cooperative values and the generation of trust cutting across social divisions are a challenge.

In segmented societies, expectations and development priorities are not the same for all population groups and public policies affect them in very different ways. Within these competing social structures, different groups place a variety of demands on the state. As an unbiased mediator between alienated populations, the state can encourage the strengthening of social relations and the reduction of disparities, but due to the magnitude of inequality, the empowerment of one group comes at the expense of another. Inevitable biases in resource allocation and different expectations and priorities often enforce prejudices and the resort to clichés. The past still affects relations and it will take time to develop a culture of working together. Administrative boundaries cut across social networks that have not been replaced by more integrated social structures that cut across racial, socio-economic and cultural divisions. There are modest beginnings of more integrated structures for example around common concerns such as crime prevention and education. However, the cooperation is difficult between groups once forced not to interact with each other and it is a challenge to make democracy work.

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