

Gendered Analysis of the Working for Water Programme: A Case Study of the Tsitsikama Working for Water Project Mastoera Sadan¹

Section One: Introduction

There are numerous government programmes that seek to address poverty, among these are social grants, provision of basic services such as education, health, housing, water and sanitation and provision of infrastructure (National Treasury, 2004a). Complementing these programmes are targeted interventions such as public works programmes. Public works programmes generally have the following characteristics (Goldin and Adato, 2000):

1. Provide short-term jobs using labour intensive methods
2. Create or upgrade infrastructure or improve the environment, and
3. Wages are set below market rates to avoid attracting people who are in formal or informal jobs

In 2003, government introduced the Expanded Public Works Programme² (EPWP) which aims to address unemployment by creating labour intensive jobs through government expenditure (National Treasury 2004a). Conventionally, public works programmes are implemented to mitigate economic shocks or natural disasters such as drought and is therefore, largely short-term in nature. However, in South Africa, public works programmes are being used to address the employment deficit and McCord (2002) argues that it should ideally be of a longer term nature. Furthermore, research conducted by McCord (2003) has found that at their current level, public works programmes are not a significant response to the high levels of unemployment in South Africa.

The increased emphasis by government on the EPWP and the scepticism within broader society about what realistically can be achieved has led to a renewed interest in public works programmes as a poverty alleviation strategy. It is therefore an opportune time to examine these programmes in more depth.

As public works programmes are a poverty alleviation strategy, the various dimensions of poverty need to be considered when examining the efficiency and effectiveness of such a strategy. Poverty in South Africa continues to have gender, race and spatial dimensions. Of the number of poor people, 11.9 million (54.4%) are female, compared to 10 million poor males (UNDP 2003). In September 2004 (Stats SA, 2004, Table 2.3.2), the unemployment rate for women was 48.6% and for men 33.9%³. The

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² The Expanded Public Works Programme is comprised of six national poverty relief programmes and portions of the infrastructure grants and aims to create a million new jobs over a five year period.

³ The figures refer to the expanded definition of unemployment

unemployment rate for African women was 55.9% and for African men 40.1%, while for white women and men, the unemployment rates were 9.5% and 7% respectively. According to the official definition of unemployment in September 2004 (Stats SA, 2004, Table 2.3.1), the unemployment rate for women was 30.2% and 23.1% for men. For African women and men, the unemployment rate was 36% and 27.6% respectively, while 5.8% for white women and 5.1% for white men. Both expanded and official definitions of unemployment indicate that women face higher levels of unemployment than men. Women who are employed are more likely to find lower paying employment. Moreover women have less time available for employment, as they spend time on unpaid care work.

The Working for Water (WfW) programme is one of the EPWP and is housed within the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. This paper pays specific attention to a project of the WfW programme, namely the Tsitsikama project. As the EPWP and more especially the WfW programme focuses strongly on the employment of women and given the reality of women's position within South Africa, this paper conducts a gender analysis of this WfW project. A gender analysis is concerned with the social roles and interactions of men and women in society, their access to resources, remuneration for work, exercise of authority and power, and participation in cultural, political and religious activity (Pearson 2000). It is widely accepted in the discourse on development that the needs of poor women must receive particular attention, i.e. development must be informed by a gender analysis (Pearson 2000). An added level of importance for such analysis of the WfW programme is linked to the uniqueness of this programme in the South African landscape, as it provides an intersection between the environment, poverty and gender.

In conducting a gender analysis of the Tsitsikama project, the paper is structured as follows:

- Section two provides an overview of the Working for Water programme
- Section three outlines the framework for analysing the gender dimensions of a WfW project
- Section four introduces the WfW Tsitsikama project as a case study and applies the gender analysis framework to determine the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed at project level
- Section five highlights critical issues for consideration through brief concluding remarks

Section Two: An overview of the Working for Water programme

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) launched the Working for Water Programme in 1995 as a multi-departmental initiative including the Departments of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) and Agriculture, led by DWAF. The main goal of the programme is to control alien vegetation to increase water resources; a secondary goal of the programme is to address economic empowerment through job creation, which in turn addresses poverty alleviation⁴. The WfW programme aims to create short to medium term jobs for unskilled workers through clearing alien vegetation. Through this process, the programme aims to build the skills and asset base of workers and prepare them for longer-term jobs. In 2002 the programme aimed to create 18 000 jobs per annum. Moreover the programme aims to address social development through child and healthcare interventions amongst others. In the year 2000 the programme had implemented 313 projects across the nine provinces. The WfW programme has a very good profile both domestically and internationally and has won many prestigious local and international awards. The programme has raised awareness of invasive alien species and ways of combating the spread of invasive alien plants. The WfW programme has been marketed effectively and has a high media profile. This does however raise expectations of what the programme can deliver.

⁴ See the Working for Water Mission Statement

This programme differs from traditional public works programmes in that it does not provide infrastructure to communities and as such there are no direct tangible benefits for the communities, other than the jobs created. However, the programme does have ecological benefits in the long term i.e. increased water run-off. The WfW programme also differs substantially from conventional public works programmes in that it introduced two innovative aspects to the programme. Firstly, the WfW programme has introduced a contractor development programme which aims to bring economic and social empowerment to local communities through the creation of micro-enterprises. In the contractor development programme individuals who have worked in the programme can set up their own small businesses in the project. They assemble their own team and then tender for piece work in a closed-contract system⁵. The contractors have to follow certain criteria when recruiting workers: they have to target women, youth and people with disabilities from poor communities. Secondly, the WfW programme has also introduced a social development aspect to the programme. Social development is broadly seen as covering the social aspects of development; issues of poverty, equity and gender (Green 2000:61) and would include participatory approaches. The WfW programme has introduced several social development aspects into the programme which makes it innovative. The WfW programme, however reflects a narrow conception of social development by perceiving it as particular interventions. The following social development interventions are included in the WfW programme: reproductive health and sexuality, HIV/AIDS education and awareness, provision of childcare.

The programme received initial funding from the new democratic government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), R25m in 1995/96 and R50m in 1996/97. This source of funding shaped the design and implementation of the WfW programme. While it is essentially an environmental programme i.e. clears alien vegetation, the focus of the RDP on fostering a developmental approach dictated that the programme had a poverty alleviation and social development focus. The imperatives of the RDP, job creation, targeting of vulnerable groups, with an emphasis on women, and participation reflect a broad social development approach and became key features of the WfW programme (RDP 1994). Since its inception the programme has had other sources of income, amongst others donor funding and private sector funding. However the main source of funding has been targeted poverty alleviation funds through government channels.

The Working for Water programme was set up in the Minister of Water Affairs' office and therefore had political support, and while nominally part of DWAF it was also separate from the DWAF bureaucracy. Where the programme is placed institutionally is an issue that has not been completely resolved and to some extent remains a constraint for the programme.

Since 1994 the government has instituted different mechanisms to channel funding to targeted poverty alleviation programmes. The RDP office was set up in 1994 and closed in 1996 and a new Fund, the Poverty Alleviation Fund⁶ was set up in the National Treasury⁷ during the 1997/98 financial year and the WfW programme received an allocation of R150m. Funding from the Poverty Alleviation Fund continued until 2003/04. The Poverty Alleviation Fund was reviewed in 2003 and a decision was made to close this fund and programmes that met certain criteria became part of the Expanded Public Works Programme.

A key feature of the implementation of the programme since its inception has been the urgency to spend allocated funding within a financial year. The WfW programme has been one of a few poverty alleviation programmes which has been able to spend a significant percentage of its allocated funds within required timeframes (Parenee 2003). This success has resulted in large increases in its

⁵ The closed contract system is where only contractors within the project tender for jobs.

⁶ This fund was named the Poverty Relief Allocation and is also known as Special Poverty Relief Allocation.

⁷ Formerly the Department of Finance

allocations, and the programme reflects considerable growth over a short period of time. The programme started off with one office in the Western Cape and grew to nine regions implementing 313 projects over the period 1995 to 2000 (Annual Report 2000/01). This rapid growth of the programme within a short time period has led to some programme design limitations, such as minimal strategic planning and insufficient management capacity. This has had negative consequences on management and staffing capacity and has resulted in a rapid turnover of staff and staff burnout as a result of a stressful work environment. While the source of funding has contributed to its success it has also contributed significantly to the institutional limitations of the programme.

Section Three: A Critical Framework for Analysing Gender Dynamics within a Working for Water Project

The WfW programme has an explicit focus on targeting women and the programme includes the provision of services such as child care facilities that enable women to take up jobs. This programme can therefore be seen to translate government's policies targeting gender inequality into a programme that attempts to change the gender relations between women and men by providing jobs for women thereby challenging traditional roles and discriminatory practices.

There usually is a weak link between poverty alleviation programmes and gender (UNDP 2000) as policies and programmes often overlook the differential impacts of programmes on women and men (UNDP 2000:85). Therefore some forms of intervention such as targeted programmes are better at addressing women's poverty than other's (UNDP 2000) and the WfW programme could be seen as an example of such an intervention. What needs to be guarded against, however, is a narrow definition of gender that only looks at the number of women employed and does not apply a gender perspective to all aspects of the programme, for example by looking at the types of jobs women work in, and does not give recognition to factors that exacerbate women's vulnerability, for example race, class and geographical location.

Gender analysis is about understanding social relations and being aware of the inequalities that are infused within these relationships. The analysis uses a critical framework which recognises that inequalities exist among women themselves and these factors also need careful consideration.

The framework described below is specifically for project level issues and structured to examine the gender implications when implementing a programme such as the WfW programme which targets women. Although the framework is designed to raise many questions, the availability and quality of data at present is such that we are only able to answer some of the questions raised. There is thus value in using the questions format as they not only provide an explanatory base to describe the workings of the project and at the same time raise critical considerations regarding whether policy objectives are being met, but the questions also alert us to the present data constraints. The framework outlines the questions that should be asked when designing a project that integrates gender.

The Working for Water programme has six thematic focus areas: **Institutional issues; Funding; Poverty Alleviation; Contract Development; Social Development**, and **Training**. The following framework to conduct a gender analysis of the Working for Water programme's Tsitsikama project is applied to these thematic focus areas. Also, an additional category has been included in the analysis, namely **Experience of work** which deals with work experiences prior to worker involvement in the project, and also how workers feel about working in the Tsitsikama project.

A Critical Framework for Analysing Gender Dynamics within a Working for Water Project Project Level Issues

The key question here is: to what extent is gender mainstreamed i.e. taken into consideration at all levels, in the project?

(i) Institutional Issues

Structure

- How is the project structured?
- What is the gender disaggregation of staff in the WfW programme at project level (including disability and age)?
- Who are the Implementing Agents?
- Who constitutes the Advisory Committee?
- How are community representatives chosen?
- What is the gender of the community representatives?

Partnerships

- To what extent has gender been mainstreamed in the services provided by partners?

Exit Strategy

- Has the exit strategy been implemented?
- Prior to the exit strategy being implemented, what is the average length of time of workers employed by contractors?

(ii) Funding

- What is the total budget allocated to the project?
- Budget disaggregation – operational budget and management and overhead costs.
- What proportion of the project budget reaches the most vulnerable?

(iii) Poverty Alleviation

Poverty targeting

- Which communities have been targeted?

Vulnerable groups

- Which mechanisms are used to target vulnerable groups?
- What is the gender disaggregation of the vulnerable groups targeted?

Worker selection

- What is the mechanism for worker selection?

(iv) Contractor Development Programme

Contractor selection

- How are the contractor teams constituted? Are they disaggregated?
- Which contractors have been selected – what selection criteria were used?
- To what extent does the contractor selection procedure advantage or disadvantage women, youth and people with disabilities?
- How is payment made? When is payment made?
- How much work is unpaid and who is mostly involved in the unpaid work – is this disaggregated?

Tendering procedure

Contractors tender for contracts within a closed contract system, where only contractors within the project are allowed to tender for jobs. It is therefore important to look at:

- What is the gender disaggregated information of contractors tendering for jobs?
- Who are the contractors that are tendering for the jobs?
- Which contractors are awarded the jobs?

Worker selection

- What is the gender disaggregation of all workers on the project i.e. including for categories of youth and people with disabilities?
- What is the selection procedure and how does it ensure that those most vulnerable are selected?

Labour relations

- At what rate are wages paid for the different jobs?
- What is the payment procedure?
- Is the number of unpaid work days monitored?
- What are the working conditions like?
- What are the health and safety issues?
- Are there regular health and safety talks?
- What is the maternity leave policy?
- Are workers aware of the maternity leave policy?

(v) Experience of work

Work Experience prior to working in the project

- What is the gender breakdown (including age and disability) of jobs, types of previous jobs held and reasons for leaving?

Availability of work

- Prior to working in the project
- After working in the project

Experience of working in the project

- What is their experience of the job?

Degree of difficulty for women

- Is the work difficult for women?
- Does the fact that women and men do the same jobs, challenge stereotypes?

Community perception of the project

What do the workers think the community perception of the project is?

How workers spend their wages

- On what do workers spend their wages?
- Do workers purchase goods on credit?

Specific gender issues

- What is the policy on sexual harassment, rape and domestic violence?
- What procedures are in place at project level to deal with sexual harassment, rape and domestic violence?
- Safety aspects – where are facilities such as toilets in relation to clearing sites or sleeping quarters?
- Is the work clothing appropriate for both women and men?

(vi) Social Development

Community participation

- What is the mechanism for community participation?
- Which factors promote or limit participation and how has this been addressed?

Health interventions

- Which specific health interventions have been undertaken at the project level?
- What are the gender dimensions of the health interventions?

Child Care

- How has child care provision been operationalised at project level?
- What have been some of challenges experienced at project level?

(vii) Training

- What training has taken place at the project level?
- Has the training programme been running consistently?
- Does the training programme include skills or knowledge that is required by the main economic drivers in the specific region that could assist workers to find jobs after they have exited from the programme?

Section Four: The Case Study ‘Tsitsikama Working for Water Project’

The case study is guided by the gender framework introduced in section three above and the findings of the interviews – highlighting the experiences of those involved in the project – are also included.

The case study of the Tsitsikama Working for Water Project is based on data collected on a site visit in August 2004. Workers and Contractors from three teams were interviewed. In addition, the assistant manager was interviewed. In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire. The project manager was away during this period and a set of questions were sent to him via email to which he responded. Follow-up interviews were held with women workers to explore issues that directly affected the women, for example maternity leave policy and sexual harassment amongst others.

4.1. Background of the Project

The Tsitsikama Working for Water Project has been operating for the past nine years and is based at the Bloukrans Forest Station in the Tsitsikama National Park. The South African National Parks (SANParks) is the implementing agent for the Working for Water Programme. The Tsitsikama Working for Water Project borders the provincial boundary and falls within the Eastern Cape Province, in an area of great natural biodiversity and beauty.

The sites that are being cleared of alien vegetation are in or borders on the Tsitsikama National Park. The sites presently being cleared are in Soetkraal inside the boundaries of the Tsitsikama National Park, Kovie in Nature's Valley and Forest Hall. In each of these sites the total area that has to be cleared is broken down into units and prioritised for clearing.

In Soetkraal there are two camps, camp one is a permanent camp for the workers to stay in when they are clearing sites in the mountains and a second camp, camp two which is further into the mountains and has tents and is more basic. The teams are based at the respective camps for ten days at a time and walk to the sites that they are clearing. The main site at Soetkraal is a remote and mountainous area which is only accessible with a 4x4 vehicle or a truck along an 18km gravel road. The Tsitsikama region is a high rainfall area and inclement weather can make this road very dangerous. In summer there is the danger of mountain fires. Workers are also exposed to natural dangers such as snakes, and have to walk long distances through rugged terrain and cross rivers to get to some of the clearing sites, some of which are remote and steep. When it rains the workers are unable to clear the sites. The Nature's Valley and Forest Hall sites are more accessible and workers are transported to these sites on a daily basis.

Presently there are six contractor teams made up of twelve workers each working in the Tsitsikama WfW project, a total of seventy-two workers. The project has potential to expand by one team and therefore increase the total number of workers to eighty-four.

4.2. Institutional Issues

4.2.1. Structure of the project

The Tsitsikama WfW project reflects the institutional complexities of the WfW programme. The South African National Parks (SANParks) is the implementing agent for the Tsitsikama Working for Water Project. The project manager who is appointed by SANParks reports to the Senior Section Ranger in the Tsitsikama National Park on a weekly and monthly basis. In addition he reports to the SANParks Implementation Manager who in turn reports to the WfW National Office. As such the Tsitsikama WfW Project does not communicate directly with the WfW National Office other than through the reporting structures (J Brady 2004).

SANParks, the Implementing Agent, submits a business plan which includes a budget to the WfW National Office once a year. This business plan goes through a process of revision before approval is granted. The individual projects also submit to WfW National Office an Annual Plan of Operations (APO) as well as a Management Unit Clearing Plan (MUCP). The WfW National Office either approves the budget, APO and MUCP or requests that it be revised and re-submitted and once it is satisfied with the plans approval is granted (J Brady 2004).

The staff complement of the Tsitsikama Working for Water Project consists of a project manager, assistant project manager, an administrator, a person who is responsible for the stores, a person

responsible for the workshop and a worker who is responsible for the up-keep of the camps in Soetkraal. Those persons responsible for the stores and the workshop serve as drivers on the project as well.

Project team	Name	Gender
Project Manager	J Brady	Male
Assistant Project Manager	A Alexander	Male
Admin person	H Halela	Female
Stores Manager	A Keets	Male
Driver/workshop	S Kurt	Male
Camp (worker)	K Ngwali	Male

Source: Information supplied by Assistant Project Manager A Alexander 2004

The project management positions require persons that have a combination of skills and experience, technical expertise as well as social and economic development skills. Moreover the person has to have well developed interpersonal skills. The assistant project manager previously worked for Coast Care and brings a wealth of experience in terms of targeted poverty alleviation projects.

While the targets set for women, youth and people with disabilities do not apply to the project staff, the majority of the team is male and the gender imbalance in the current staff needs to be addressed.

The advisory committee in this project is functional and meets once a month. All the different role players are represented on this committee. This forum is used to communicate to the committee members the progress in the project. There are representatives from the two communities on the committee as well as a representative from SANParks. The advisory committee plays a role in contractor selection, but seems to have less of a role with regard to worker selection. In table 2 below, we also see that with regards to the advisory committee, the majority of the team is male.

Name	Position held	Community	Gender
D Malgas	Community leader	The Craggs	Female
J Gelant	Community leader	The Craggs	Male
D Pluim	Community leader	Coldstream	Female
I Barnado	Community leader	Kovie	Female
E Fisher	Community leader	Storms river	Female
P Mzalwane	Community leader	Sandrift	Male
D-Boy	Community leader	Woodlands	Male
N O'Connel	Mayor	Koukamma	Male
R Gewers	Social ecologist	Tsitsikama	Male
A Riley	Senior Conservation Manager	Tsitsikama	Male

Source: Information supplied by Assistant Project Manager A Alexander 2004

4.2.2. Partnerships

The Tsitsikama WfW project has developed good working relationships with NGO's such as the Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (PPASA) and FAMSA and some government Departments such as Education and Health, at the local level. The project has worked closely with the Department of Health

on HIV/AIDS awareness and condom distribution at the workplace and in the community. Furthermore the partnership with the PPASA worked well in terms of education on sexual and reproductive health and awareness raising on HIV/AIDS. Previously there was a dedicated staff member, a social development officer that was responsible for the Garden Route cluster of projects and was based at the Tsitsikama WfW project office. There has however been a restructuring process and one social development officer covers three clusters one of which the Tsitsikama project falls under. Therefore a social development officer is not based at this project any longer. This has had a negative impact on the project as the current social development officer has less time to dedicate to a particular project.

4.2.3. Exit Strategy

The exit strategy is being implemented and workers are employed for five hundred person days over a two year period, then they have to exit the project. They can return after a five year period. They have to exit the programme because the work is of a temporary nature and the public works programme has a legal limitation of two years. Moreover the government aims to reach the maximum number of people with targeted poverty alleviation programmes and give other unemployed people the opportunity to work in the project. There is also an assumption within government that the training the workers receive will equip them to start their own small businesses or find other jobs. However, these assumptions are unrealistic given the state of structural unemployment (See work by Anna McCord, 2003). Also, the training that workers receive is limited and does not enable them to start their own businesses. In the Tsitsikama WfW Project the exit strategy has been implemented recently and workers are aware that they have a limited period to work in the project. It is necessary to monitor whether workers do find employment beyond the WfW project, and if so, how many workers find work and how soon after their involvement in the WfW project has come to an end.

4.3. Funding: Project Budget

The initial budget allocation for the Tsitsikama Working for Water project for 2004/05 was R2,1 million. A further allocation of R300 000 has been granted to the project, bringing the total allocation to R2,4 million. Table 3 below reflects the project budget for 2004/05 excluding the additional allocation.

Table 3. Tsitsikama WfW Project Budget 2004/05		
Line Item	Amount Allocated	% of total
Basic salary	244 800	11.2%
Admin costs	636 188	29.3%
Inventory	27 636	1.2%
Equipment	21 684	0.1%
Building (rental)	1 500	0.06%
Professional services	1 238 248	57%
Total	2 170 056	

Source: Information supplied by J Brady 2004

Table 3 above shows that the largest proportion, 57% of the total budget allocation of R2.1 m for 2004/05 is allocated to professional services, which includes the allocation for contractors and workers wages. The second largest proportion 29% is allocated to administration costs and the third largest proportion, 11% is allocated to project staff salaries.

Professional Services Budget Allocation

Line Item	Amount Allocated	% of Total
Running costs	2 000	0.16%
Equipment maintenance (management)	43 850	3.5%
Equipment maintenance (contractors)	38 602	3.1%
Service providers	373 039	30%
Contracts (labour)	702 986	56.7%
Contractors and workers (training days)	77 769	6.2%
Sub total	1 238 246	

Source: Information supplied by J Brady 2004

Table 4 reflects a disaggregation for the professional services line item for 2004/05. From table 4 we see that within the professional services line item the largest amount, R702 986 is allocated to contracts, which is 56%. The second largest proportion, 30% is allocated to the service provider's line item, which includes training and social development. The line item contractors and workers (training days) is the funding allocated to pay workers and contractors for the days that they attend training programmes.

When one examines the allocation to contracts as a percentage of the total budget of R2.1m, then it translates into 32%. However if one adds the additional allocation of R300 000 then the percentage increases to 41%, of the total budget of R2.4m. This is a good reflection on the project, as it follows that nearly half of the total budget flows to the contractors and workers. As women comprise 60% of the workers this is significant, as it would follow that poor women are benefiting from the project. Furthermore the allocation to service providers of the total allocation of R2.1m is 17%. This shows that training and social development is a relatively significant proportion of the budget.

4.4. Poverty Alleviation

The WfW programme is a public works programme which provides jobs to poor unemployed people and recognises that when it comes to poverty alleviation consideration must be given to the fact that some people are more vulnerable. Targets are therefore set to ensure that those most vulnerable are prioritised within the programme. These targets are as follows: 60% women, 20% youth and 2% people with disabilities. In ascertaining the extent to which vulnerable groups were targeted on the Tsitsikama project, workers were interviewed and their responses are interspersed in the sections that follow.

4.4.1. Poverty targeting

Public works programmes are usually located in the poorest geographical areas using poverty indicators as a measure to target (Goldin and Adato 2000). Contrary to the norm, the location of the WfW projects is largely dictated by the level of alien vegetation infestation in specific geographical areas.

The workers of the Tsitsikama WfW project are drawn from two communities in the Tsitsikama area, The Crags and Coldstream, which are among the poorest in the region. These communities are coloured⁸ communities which have become mixed since 1994. During the apartheid era the Western Cape Province⁹

⁸ In the apartheid era people were classified according to race groups, coloured, black, white.

⁹ Prior to 1994 South Africa had four provinces.

was a coloured¹⁰ labour preference area which meant that black people were excluded from the labour market and were restricted from seeking work outside the Bantustans¹¹. In terms of demographics, therefore, there are mainly coloured people living in the Tsitsikama area.

4.4.2. Vulnerable groups

As stated above, the vulnerable groups targeted by the WfW programme are: women 60%, youth 20% and people with disabilities 2%. It is important to note in the targeting of these vulnerable groups, that the categories of youth and people with disabilities are targeted without consideration of the fact that these categories have gender dimensions as well i.e. consist of males and females. This is of concern because it means that unless there is disaggregated information on each of these categories, gender dimensions are not taken into consideration when targeting youth and people with disabilities, and it inevitably means that there is double-counting when reporting on the vulnerable groups targeted.

According to the Assistant Project Manager of the Tsitsiakama WfW project, the project has been very successful in reaching the targets for women and youth workers. Of the total number of 74 workers, the project on average employed 52% women and 40% youth. One of the main reasons for the success in reaching its targets in respect of women and youth has been a very clear commitment, together with a monitoring process that was put in place. However, the project has been less successful in targeting people with disabilities. On average the project has employed 0.5% disabled persons.

Women

The WfW programme increases access to job opportunities for women by setting the target of 60% women employees. The motivation for doing this is that there are fewer job opportunities for women in the labour market and women tend to be poorer than men.

On the Tsitsikama project, contractors are very clear that they have to employ 60% women. As a result the project has been very successful in reaching this target. Some of the women who have worked in the project subsequently became contractors.

Whilst providing jobs for women is commendable, the types of job as well as the level of job are important factors, both in terms of skills level and remuneration. In a study conducted by Mullagee and Nyman (2000), it was shown that women account for a smaller proportion of the 34% semi-skilled, 32% supervisory and 40% managerial positions in the WfW programme. Women make up the majority of unskilled workers, and thus fall within the lowest wage bracket. What this reflects is that while 60% target is commendable, it is not enough. The type of job and the level of job as well as whether it is unskilled or skilled, at supervisory or management level are important indicators to monitor. To address this imbalance, the WfW programme has identified a target of having 60% of the wages going to women because there is an imbalance in the gender composition in higher paid positions (WfW Annual Report 2001/02).

With specific focus on the Tsitsikama project, table 5 below reflects the gender of the workers of three contractor teams and shows that at a senior level, women do hold contractor and foreman positions. In the team itself though, women hold the least skilled jobs, as herbicide applicators and labourers, even though they are in the majority. This is an area that needs serious attention. The teams were using a manual

¹⁰ A labour preference area, was an area where a specific race group was allowed to work to the exclusion of others.

¹¹ Areas designated by the apartheid government where black people could live and have limited independence.

method of clearing the alien vegetation viz. ring-barking which is cheaper than using a chainsaw as the expense for petrol has to be included. As such more unskilled than semi-skilled workers are on the team.

Job title	Men	Women
Contractors	3	3
Foreman	1	1
Chain-saw Operator	3	0
Brush cutter	2	0
Herbicide Applicator	1	8
Labourer	3	10

Source: Workers interviewed 2004

The workers interviewed expressed their views on employing women in the project. There was a clear awareness of the multiple roles women play and the importance of their income into these households.

Sometimes it is good for the women...to provide work for women, because they help us a lot¹³

As I understand it, women work because they have to provide for things in the home...and the children and other things even if the man is there in the house. And women must work, because they cannot simply stay at home. Women also want to earn their own money and so forth. That is why I say that women must work¹⁴

People with disabilities

A 2% target has been set for people with disabilities. However, meeting this target remains a challenge within the WfW programme generally. In interviews with workers on the Tsitsikama, the lack of success in meeting this 2% target was also identified (on average 0.5% of disabled persons was employed on the project). Within the Tsitsikama project it would seem that there is very little or no understanding of how people with disabilities could participate or work in the project i.e. the kind of jobs they are able to do. As stated earlier, it is necessary that gender disaggregated information is provided on people with disabilities, as women who are disabled are more vulnerable than men who are disabled. Within the Tsitsikama project, table 6 below indicates that more disabled men were employed in the project than disabled women. This is of concern because disabled women are more vulnerable than disabled men, thus targeting that has occurred has not reached the most vulnerable.

Male	80%
Female	20%

Source: Tsitsikama Working for Water Project

¹² This table reflects a disaggregation for three teams interviewed. One of the workers was double counted as he was the foreman as well as a chain-saw operator.

¹³ 'Partykeer is dit nogals goed nogals vir vrouens... Om werk te skep vir die vroumense. Want hulle help ons darem baie.' Worker 12

¹⁴ 'Volgens my soos ek verstaan het, vrouens werk want die vrou moet sorg vir die huis... En die kinders en die en wat al is die man nou by haar. En vrouens moet werk, hulle kan darem nie by die huis sit nie. Want jy wil ook mos jou eie geld ontvang en so aan. Want dis hoekom ek sê dat die vrouens moet werk.' Contractor 1

Youth

The WfW programme set a target of 20% for youth under the age of 25 years to be employed in the project. This gives young people the experience of a job and the opportunity of skills training as well as prepares them for the labour market (Goldin and Adato, 2000). Moreover, the experience of work teaches them the responsibility of going to work everyday and getting to work on time. The Tsitsikama project has been relatively successful in reaching its target of 20% youth. In fact, this project reports to have employed on average 40% youth. For a number of the young people interviewed working in this project is their first experience of work.

The vulnerabilities young women face differs to that of young men, it is therefore imperative that the information for youth is also disaggregated. In the Tsitsikama project, the disaggregation of youth employed, as reflected in Table 7 below, indicates that more male youth were employed in comparison to female youth. This is an area that the project needs to carefully examine because once again the targeting of the most vulnerable has not been effective.

Male	80%
Female	20%
Disabled persons	1%

Source: Tsitsikama Working for Water Project

4.5. Contractor Development Programme

At the project level it would seem as though the Tsitsikama WfW project has managed the shift from the daily task-based system to the contractor system relatively well. Leaders have emerged from amongst the workers and have become contractors over the period that the project has been in operation. These individuals have to write a test and are selected by the advisory committee. The contractor sets up a small business whereby s/he recruits workers in consultation with the project manager. The teams are comprised of twelve team members, made up of a foreman, chain-saw operators, brush-cutter operators, herbicide applicators, health and safety officer and labourers. Once the contractor has a team of workers s/he tenders for piece-work in the project. The contractor has to manage and complete the job within a specified time period and pay the workers once a job has been completed. There are presently six contractors working in the Tsitsikama WfW project. Within the current business plan of the Tsitsikama project they should have seven contractors. They are however short of one team. As indicated in table 7 above, of the six contractors, three are women and three are men.

The core aspects examined below within the contractor development programme are:

- Contractor selection procedure
- Tendering procedure
- Worker selection procedure
- Labour relations

4.5.1. Contractor Selection Procedure

Everyone working in the teams is eligible to become contractors and those who are interested apply to become contractors. The contractor positions are advertised in the project. The contractors are selected by the Advisory Committee. Becoming a contractor involves writing a test, for example being able to tender for a job and fill in time sheets. The Tsitsikama Project has developed its own test which is set mainly in Afrikaans and isiXhosa. Those workers who are unable to read or write are disadvantaged through this process. It is necessary that the project keep gender disaggregated records of who is participating in the

procedure, as this information can assist in better planning how to create opportunities for those excluded as a result of their vulnerabilities.

4.5.2. Tendering procedure

The tendering process is as follows: first, the area that must be cleared is mapped; a person is employed to conduct this mapping exercise. A distinction is made between an ‘initial piece’ and a ‘follow-up piece’. The mapping exercise includes an assessment of the number of hectares that must be cleared, an examination of the density of the vegetation and an identification of the alien species that must be cleared. All these factors are taken into consideration and a calculation is made of the number of days it should take to clear the site. Secondly, after the area to be cleared has been assessed and depending on whether it is in Soetkraal or in Nature’s Valley or Forest Hall¹⁵, those contractors who work on the inside (the national park) or outside will tender for the job. Thirdly, those contractors who propose tendering for the job accompany the Project Manager and conduct a site inspection, after which they submit a quote. Fourthly, once all the quotes have been submitted and assessed, a decision is made. The criteria used to award the tender are based on the quote that is closest to the assessment of the piece and the job is awarded to the contractor.

A problem that has been experienced by the contractors and the workers is one where a contract has been awarded and the piece that is being cleared takes longer than the number of days allocated for clearing, for example where eighteen days were allocated and it takes twenty-three days to clear. Both the contractor and the workers are not paid for the additional days worked. There are a number of reasons why this happens. According to the Assistant Project Manager, A Alexander, one of the reasons for this could be poor planning on the part of the contractor. The contractor has to plan for the number of days s/he has to clear a site and then measure the area so that s/he can identify a section that needs to be cleared everyday. For example, if seventeen days has been allocated then the contractor needs to have identified seventeen sections, so that s/he can complete the job in the allotted time period. Another reason could be that an area which is identified on the map as a follow-up area could have become re-infested so that it is equivalent to an initial area. According to the contract engineer’s maps the area reflects on the database as a follow-up area, and therefore a certain number of days are allocated. However, it may take longer because of the level of alien re-infestation. The result is that workers may have to work extra days which is unpaid. The Assistant Project Manager says that there is a capacity problem as there is only one contract engineer that lays out the maps for all the projects in the country. As a result it takes a long time for the contract engineer to get back to each project and follow-up pieces that become re-infested, and thus revert to initial pieces. However if the contractor and his or her team manage to clear the area in less days than has been allocated the contractor receives the full amount allocated to the contract. The money is then given as a bonus to workers, half of which is included in their wages and the other half is set aside for a Christmas bonus.

4.5.3. Worker Selection Procedure

Ideally worker selection should be conducted in consultation with the Advisory Committee using the criteria set by the WfW programme. The main criteria used is targeting identified vulnerable groups according to the percentage targets of 60% women, 20% youth and 2% people with disabilities. Additional criteria are women-headed households, ex-offenders and households affected by HIV/AIDS.

In practice the mechanism used is largely a process of self-selection, with prospective workers approaching the contractor for a job. The contractor appoints workers in consultation with the Project Manager. This puts contractors in a very powerful position – given that the selection mechanism of the

¹⁵ The areas currently being cleared

Advisory Committee vetting workers does not operate. This can lead to nepotism as there are no checks and balances in place to temper the power of the contractor. Two of the respondents interviewed were the girlfriends of the contractor whom they were working for. What this means is that in one household there were two incomes from the WfW project. Moreover the contractors benefit most in terms of the project as they earn the highest wages, however, they also carry most of the responsibility. In addition, a number of the respondents live in households where there is more than one income and/or they receive a social grant, mainly the child support grant.

*A friend and I went on Saturday to ask her if she is not looking for people to work, and she said 'yes'*¹⁶

*I heard the contractor is looking for workers, so I went to her house. I asked her for work*¹⁷

Workers are also required to have ID documentation and a bank account, so that their wages can be paid directly into their bank account. This is a very positive development as it is a mechanism that can be used to monitor workers as well as follow-up those workers who exited the project.

4.5.3. Labour Relations

The workers are employed by the contractor and not by the WfW project or programme. Therefore the Contractors are employers and are responsible for their employees.

Wages

The level of the wages for the WfW programme is set nationally, however some contractors pay more than the minimum recommended. The contractor is paid the highest rate of R120 per day and labourers, who are the majority of the workers, receive the lowest rate of pay, R35 per day.

Job category	Rate of pay
Labourer	R35 /day
Herbicide Applicator	R40 /day
Chainsaw operator	R50 /day
Foreman	R60 /day
Contractor	R120 /day

Source: Tsitsikama WfW project 2004

Most of the workers interviewed said that the level of wages was low, but were resigned to this fact.

*It is really too little. One cannot really see what one does with the money*¹⁸.

*The money is very little. But, it helps a bit with things one needs for the house*¹⁹

¹⁶ 'Ek en n tjommie van my, ons het na haar Saterdag gaan vra of sy nie mense soek nie, en toe se sy, ja.' Worker no 11

¹⁷ 'Ek het gehoor die kontrakteur soek mense, toe't ek tot by haar huis gegaan. Toe vra ek vir haar vir 'n joppie.' Worker no 14

¹⁸ 'Is rêrig te min. Mens kan nie rêrig eers sien wat maak jy met dit nie.' Worker no 13

¹⁹ 'Dit is so, maar die sentjies is 'n bietjie skraps. Maar dit help darem wat 'n mens so by die huis moet sit en so.' Worker no 14

I don't know, the wages are okay. For me, it is okay²⁰

It has to all go towards food. I can buy nothing further with it²¹

For the majority of the workers, however, the wages from WfW was their only source of income. Some of the workers had an additional income from social assistance, mainly the child support grant. In some of the worker households other members of the family were employed.

All the workers interviewed said that they spent most of their wages on buying food. Other than buying food, money was spent on child care, school fees, paying for municipal services – water and electricity and buying clothes. In those households with other members that were employed, they were able to spend more money on clothes.

Well, all you can do is maybe buy some food...you cannot even buy something for yourself, or for your child²²

The majority of workers interviewed said that they did not buy goods such as clothes and furniture on credit. The reasons cited were that they did not have a regular income as they did not know when they will get paid. A minority of the workers had bought household items such as a carpet on a lay-buy²³ purchase. One worker had bought a TV, a washing machine and a cell-phone. There was however another income in the household. One of the contractors had built on rooms to her parent's house for her family.

No, we cannot afford much with the money we earn²⁴.

The payment procedure

Once the contractors complete a job they have to fill in a form to receive payment from SANParks. The forms are sent by courier to the SANParks offices in Pretoria, a process that takes about two weeks. Once the forms have been processed SANParks transfers the money into the Contractors account. The Contractor then comes into the Tsitsikama Project office and transfers the wages into the workers accounts through internet banking. However, if there is a mistake on the forms submitted SANParks returns it to the Tsitsikama project and the process starts all over again. This has happened frequently. This delay in payment has a negative impact on the workers, as it is not fair labour practice for workers to wait for their wages for weeks or longer if there are any delays. It also affects worker morale and has negative consequences for the Tsitsikama project and the programme as a whole. It has resulted in the community having a negative perception of the project. Most importantly this inefficient system can and does undermine the poverty alleviation objective of the programme. The implications for the workers are that they are not sure when they will get paid, so they cannot plan on how they will spend their money. While most workers interviewed said that they do not buy goods on credit a number of them buy food on credit. Furthermore, if workers were to have access to credit to buy goods such as furniture, they could default on their credit agreements if they do not get paid on time. While the majority of workers felt positive about their jobs, all workers who were interviewed complained about the late payment of wages.

²⁰ 'Ek weet nie, die wages is oraait. Vir my is dit oraait.' Worker no 14

²¹ 'Dit moet maar net so gaan vir kos. Verder kan ek amper niks meer verder self koop.' Worker no 15

²² 'Wel... wat jy kan doen, jy kan miskien net paar kossetjies koop en... Jy kan nie eers vir jouself partymaal iets koop nie, of vir jou kind of so nie.' Worker no 11

²³ A lay-buy is a system whereby one pays a deposit for an item, which is set aside by the shop. Regular payments are made until the full amount has been paid and, then you can take ownership of the item.

²⁴ 'Nee. Mens kan nie bekostig met die geldtjies wat jy pay nie.' Worker no 11

Yes, it is like that, if you must buy food or things, maybe you sign for them and owe money,...then you must pay over all your money, you cannot buy anything for yourself²⁵.

Now you must work here, now you have to wait for a month or so...²⁶

So, it is here that you have to finish the work and then you have to wait long for your pay. We are used to waiting like this. We will have to wait now. We wait long for our money²⁷

People leave the work because they have to wait for their money²⁸

According to the Assistant Project Manager in the Tsitsikama WfW Project there is a capacity problem at the SANParks offices in Pretoria and they do not have enough staff to deal with all the Contractor claims timeously.

Yes, I think at that stage when people had to wait so long for their money and even now...after they have already finished with the work, that definitely causes a lot of damage to the project's image²⁹

As a result of wage payments taking so long, it is difficult to buy things in this project. Because people are uncertain about whether they will have to wait long for their money again and then have to go into debt³⁰

Another problem raised by workers was the issue of unpaid work days, when they have not completed a contract within the allotted number of days. The implication of the unpaid work days is that workers are paid less than the wage rate if one divides their wages by the total number of days they have worked.

Working conditions

The work in this project is physical in nature, in rough terrain workers use potentially dangerous equipment and use herbicides that are poisonous. Health and safety issues are therefore very important. Issues such as toilet facilities particularly in relation to sleeping quarters are equally important with regard to women's safety and need to be taken into consideration. For example the toilet and showers in the Soetkraal Camp are a few metres away from the sleeping quarters and could make women vulnerable to being raped. These kinds of issues need to be taken into consideration when planning and developing facilities.

A number of women, mainly herbicide applicators cited an improvement in their working conditions. Previously they used large herbicide cans that were very heavy and hurt their backs. They have now changed to smaller cans which are much lighter; however they have to constantly refill these cans. This

²⁵ 'Ja, dit is so (Unclear) as jy moet, as jy moet kos koop, of goed, miskien, miskien jy sign nou, jy skuld op die boek, miskien...Dan moet jy al daai geld net so betaal, jy kan niks koop vir jou nie.' Worker no 12

²⁶ 'Nou moet jy werk hier, nou moet jy wag nog vir 'n maand of so...' Worker no 13

²⁷ 'So dis nou hier waar jy moet die goete moet klaarmaak hier en dan gaan jy nog lank wag vir jou pay. Ons is maar gewoont so wag. Ons sal nou moet wag. Wag lank vir die geld, ja.' Worker no 14

²⁸ 'Omdat die geld so lank wegbly, die mense los hulle, die mense ...(oor) die geldstorie.' Contractor worker no 16

²⁹ 'Ja ek dink die feit dat die mense op daai stadium so lank gewag het vir die geld en selfs nou nog ... na hulle alreeds klaar gemaak het doen definitief skade aan die projek se image'. Die mense begin n ander uitkyk eintlik n negetiewe uiky te kry.' A Alexander

³⁰ 'As gevolg van die uitbetalings wat so oor n lank tydperk geskiet, so ja dis maar moeilik vir mense om goete aan te koop. Hy twyful of hy nou betyds weer betaal gaan word en dan skulde te vereffen.' A Alexander

does not seem to be a problem and is much easier. A number of women have raised this as an improvement which has made their jobs easier.

Safety on the job

According to the workers interviewed there are regular Health and Safety talks. The assistant project manager also monitors the safety aspects of the teams and checks that workers wear the appropriate clothing and that protocol in terms of herbicide use is followed.

If someone is injured on the job, First Aid is administered. If the injury is serious, the person is taken to the doctor. Most respondents thought that the contractor or project would pay the medical costs. However, one worker who had been injured on the job said that she had to pay for her own medical expenses.

Maternity leave

The WfW programme has a maternity leave policy where women workers get four months maternity leave at half pay. This is quite generous for a public works project as workers are not covered by the Labour Relations Act. In this respect the programme is progressive in terms of gender. Because workers are paid at half the rate, they tend to work late into their pregnancy with the associated risks. All the women interviewed who were asked this specific question were quite clear that they could return to work after having the baby. However, they were not clear whether they would be paid and if so, how much.

While the programme has a relatively progressive policy on maternity leave, women need to be informed about the policy regularly as there is a high turnover with new workers starting all the time.

4.6. Experiences of work

Workers interviewed were asked specifically regarding their work experiences prior to the project and also their experiences whilst working on the project. The information gathered included the views held regarding women's involvement in the work and the community perception of the project.

4.6.1. Work experiences prior to project

A number of the workers interviewed had worked prior to working in the WfW project. However these jobs were mainly casual and/or seasonal jobs, in the timber, agricultural and tourism sectors. Those who had permanent jobs were either retrenched or left their jobs because of pregnancy.

Most of the workers interviewed said that there weren't many jobs in the area. A number of them had been retrenched from the timber industry and stated that jobs are largely seasonal in both the tourism and agricultural sectors.

As I said, work is scarce here³¹

4.6.2. Experience of working in the project

For most workers working in the project is a positive experience. Workers interviewed feel very good about having a job even though they said that the money they were being paid is very little and they complained about the late payment of wages. It would seem that a contributing factor to workers' positive

³¹ 'Soos ek sê, die werk is rereg skaars hierso by ons.' Worker no 13

experience is the relationship they have with their fellow team members, the foreman, contractor and the Project staff. In general they get along well and are treated with respect.

I feel good about the work, because where else could I have worked. I would have sat at home³²

Look, there is lots to do, lots of training and chatting about things³³

Oh yes, I like the people and I like the work. Oh yes I do. At work, we understand each other very well. I mean, much better than when I worked on the farm. You see, there one is always a bit afraid. I think here I work better than I did on the farm. It is very different from when I worked for the farmer (white man). Here we have to motivate ourselves³⁴.

4.6.3. Degree of difficulty for women

In response to the question of whether women find the work difficult, there was a distinctive gender perspective on whether women find the work difficult. Most women said that they do not find the work difficult. The men said that some of the work is difficult for women. However, men were quite accepting of women working in the project and were not against it. Some did comment that the work is sometimes difficult for women and they do assist the women. In general the men seemed quite accepting of female authority both in respect of women project leaders and contractors.

For me, it is not really difficult because we are on flat, flat ground. Then we go down, I mean when the ground is very steep, then the men always go down. Then we only go to the front parts³⁵.

There are some things that a woman cannot always do, work with very heavy trees for example³⁶

It's not a problem for them. It's not so difficult. Sometimes it is difficult, especially for the women. If they must work with the axe. If they cannot chop a tree, then we help them³⁷.

They help us sometimes. Sometimes they complain, but they must come help. Yes, they help us³⁸

Yes, sometimes it is difficult, a bit difficult for them...then we help them. Where they struggle a bit, it's not a big problem. Look, sometimes there are many trees that are very heavy for the women, and they cannot handle it³⁹.

³² 'Ek voel dit goed omdat; waar sou ek gewerk het, ek sou healtyd by die huis gesit het.' Worker no 11

³³ 'Want kyk is baie, baie opleiding en gesels meer oor baie dinge en so.' Worker no 14

³⁴ 'Oh! Ja. Ja-nee, ek hou van die mense en ek hou van die werk. Is so ja. Ja. Nee, kyk Erhm! Hoe Okay! ek sê, nee ons verstaan mekaar hier by die werk. Ek meen nog beter as wat ek by die boer gewerk het, kan ek maar sê. Kyk daar is mos maar altyd hoe kan ek sê, bietjie skrikkerig. So hier werk ek miskien beter as wat ek by die witman kan gaan werk. Hierso is bietjie baie verskillendes van die witman af. Kyk hier het ons self om ons aan te jaag' Worker no 15

³⁵ 'Vir my is dit nie eintlik swaar nie, want ons is mos nou eintlik op gelyke, gelyke plek. Dan gaan ons nie daar af wanneer ons... Ek bedoel as dit nou weer groot afgaan, dan gaan die mans mos altyd. En gaan ons maar net so aan die voorkante af en so.' Female Worker no 14

³⁶ 'Maar daar is mos party goete wat n vroumens nie al dae kan doen nie, werk met swaar bome en sulke goete.' Female Worker no 11

³⁷ 'Is nie `n probleem vir hulle nie. Nie te swaar nie. Partykeer is dit swaar, vir die vroumense veral. As hulle nou met die kapmes nou werk. As hulle nie n boom kan deur kap nie dan help ons.' Male Worker 12

³⁸ 'Hulle help ons partykeer_Partykeer kerm hulle maar (Laughs) Nou moet hulle maar kom help ook. (Laughs) Help hulle ons uit, ja.' Female Worker no 13

³⁹ 'Ja, somtyds is dit swaar. Dit is `n bietjie, dit is `n bietjie swaar vir hulle. ...Okay! Dan help ons hulle. Waar hulle bietjie vasdraai. Nee, dus nie `n groot probleem nie. ' Kyk ek sal so sê, dat sometimes is daar baie bome wat bietjie swarerig is vir die vrouens, en hulle kan dit nie hanteer nie. Male Worker no 15

As we know that with this work, as contractors or foreman we will not send women to awkward places in the bush. Nor will we send women...say if the trees are too thick and need to be sorted out...we rather send the men⁴⁰.

In one team, two workers raised the issue that they had a problem with the contractor. They did not like the way he spoke to them, they said that he does not know how to speak to them. This problem was resolved amicably by talking it through. This again raises the point of the power of contractors and that a mechanism should be instituted for workers to raise problems with their contractors. Such mechanisms become critical when looking at power dynamics in relation to female and male contractors and workers.

4.6.4. Community Perception of the project

It would seem that from the perspective of the workers the community has a negative perception of the project. This is largely due to the delays in payment to the workers.

...it is as some people say, I do not want to work for Soetkraal. Now some people say, I don't want to work for Soetkraal because they pay over a three month period. This is why people prefer not to work for Soetkraal for Working for Water. But this is not always the case⁴¹.

the community is not in favour of the work. They complain quite a lot about things, like the pay and so on...⁴²

They do not want to work. Because of the pay. Oh, I don't know⁴³

I don't know how to say this. If this is a bad thing or not, I think this is not actually a good thing...that the women have to work so hard. In the man's place, because look as I have said before, the work is a bit difficult for the women⁴⁴

4.6.5. Specific gender issues

Critical when considering vulnerable groups is to bear in mind the gendered realities that contribute to the vulnerability. Thus, issues of sexual harassment, domestic violence and rape are also explored in relation to the project.

Sexual Harassment

The majority of respondents said that they did not know of sexual harassment in the project, however if it were to happen to them they would speak to the foreman or contractor to address the problem. If such steps did not lead to the problem being resolved, then workers would speak to the project manager before

⁴⁰ 'Maar soos ons nou al weet van die werk, en kontrakteure, voormanne, ons sal nie vrou stuur waar daar baie ongemaklike plekke in die bos is nie. Of die bome is miskien dis te dik, om vir hulle te werk of so, en dan... Sal ons maar die manne stuur en dit...' Female Contractor 1

⁴¹ '...dit is weer soos sekere mense sê, ek wil nie vir Soetkraal werk nie. Nou sekere mense sê... ek wil nie vir Soetkraal werk nie, want hulle paar pay oor drie maande, pay hulle. Dis waarom baie mense verkies om nie vir Soetkraal vir "Werk vir Water" te werk nie. Maar dit is nogal sometimes nie so nie.' Worker no 11

⁴² 'die gemeenskap is net so teen die werk, ek weet nie. Hulle squeal ook oor baie oor die ook oor die betalery en so aan...' Worker no 12

⁴³ 'Jissie, hulle wil nie hier werk nie. Want hulle so lank pay. (Laughs) Oh! Ek weet nie.' Worker no 13

⁴⁴ 'Ek weet nou nie hoe kan ek sê nie. Of dit 'n goeie ding is nie, maar ek sal sê ek glo amper nie dis 'n goeie ding nie... Dat die vroumense so moet hard werk nie. In die man se part, in die man se plek in, want kyk soos ek in die eerste plek gesê het... Werk is 'n bietjie swaar vir die vrou.' Worker no 15

deciding to go to the police. Two women who were interviewed said that they had been sexually harassed by a fellow worker, but they did not report the incident.

Sexual harassment is an issue that leaves many women uncertain about how to respond effectively. This is undoubtedly more frightening when faced with sexual harassment from someone who also resides in your community. While these reporting options expressed by some women are important to acknowledge, it is essential to recognise that often times the reality of being confronted with sexual harassment is so frightening that many do not report the incidence.

Rape

The majority of respondents said that they did not know of anyone being raped in the project. One respondent said that she knew of someone that had been raped, outside of the project and the woman did not report it or lay a complaint.

Domestic Violence

The majority of the women interviewed said that domestic violence is a problem in the community. One interviewee said that she knew of a fellow worker that was experiencing domestic violence, but that she and her husband sorted it out. The workers said that there has been training in the project on domestic violence a long time ago and some suggested that the training should take place again as teams change. One worker that was interviewed relayed a story of leaving her job for a period of time because of an injury that she sustained. She did not raise the issue in the context of domestic violence but relayed the story to explain why she had left the project previously. However, the quote below illustrates the impact that domestic violence has on women's lives and income earning potential.

My boyfriend kicked my knee and it was very swollen so I could not continue with my work. And my knee is still sore. The doctor wanted to operate already. And now my knee is still sore, but only if it is cold⁴⁵

Most of the women interviewed said that they would speak to the project leader, contractor or the project manager. However the nature of sexual harassment or rape is that there is a power dynamic at play and in most cases it is committed by the person who is in a more powerful position. Therefore there needs to be awareness-raising on the rights of women and men as well procedures to follow if any of these offences occur.

4.7. Social Development

The WfW programme is innovative because it attempts to integrate social development aspects into the programme. However, the social development component of the WfW programme reflects a narrow conception which limits social development to mainly health and child care provision interventions. Further, the social development interventions seem to have been ad hoc and not well thought through, both in terms of content as well as the institutional implications with regards to line functions responsibilities of other government departments, such as the departments of Health and Social Development. Social development initiatives need to be contextualised within the broader understanding of social objectives of the WfW programme, namely of poverty reduction, enhancing skills and knowledge and improving health and fostering responsible citizenship.

⁴⁵ '...my outjie het my kneë geskop toe was ek geswel gewees, toe kan ek nie aanhou werk nie. En hy (die kneë) is nou nog seer want hulle (dokter) wou gesny het al. En nou is hy (die kneë) nog seer, net as dit koud is.' Worker no 13

The Tsitsikama WfW project has to a large extent implemented social development interventions successfully. This can largely be ascribed to the commitment of the respective Project Managers to the social objectives of the programme and until recently the social development officer that was based at the project office.

4.7.1. Community Participation

With regard to community participation the project has a functioning Advisory Committee that meets once a month. Communication between the Committee and the Project plays an important role in community 'buy-in' for the project. The Committee plays a role in contractor selection, but it would seem that it no longer plays a role in worker selection.

4.7.2. Health Interventions

Most workers interviewed were aware of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, safe sex and condoms. A number of the workers are peer educators and speak to their fellow workers regularly about HIV/AIDS.

The Tsitsikama WfW project has worked closely with the Department of Health on HIV/AIDS awareness and condom distribution at the workplace and in the community. The project has also worked with the Department of Education, which has trained HIV/AIDS peer educators. The project also had a partnership with PPASA which was innovative in terms of its sexual and reproductive health training.

A review of the reproductive health and social development interventions by Cooper et al (2001) found that there was a reduction in the number of pregnancies in the project. At the start of the project there were 16 (13%) women employed among the 120 workers and 9 (56%) became pregnant. Health interventions were introduced and over the period the number of women in the project has increased dramatically and make up 75 (61%) out of 123 workers – there were 11 (14%) pregnancies, none of which were teenage pregnancies.

4.7.3. Child Care

The Tsitsikama WfW project addresses women's child care needs to some extent as there are child care facilities in the respective communities. The majority of the women who have children or younger siblings generally used a family member to look after their children, a mother or grandmother and or another member of the family. They would pay the family member to look after the children at a higher rate than the fees at the crèche. Those interviewed had a negative perception of the crèche, saying that the children do not want to go to the crèche because the children fight a lot at the crèche. They are willing to pay more money for a better quality service; for example, one respondent was paying R100 a month for child care, while the crèche costs R40 per month. It would seem that providing the service is not enough and that the quality of the service provided is crucial for it to benefit the target community. Furthermore it is the line function responsibility of the Provincial Department of Social Development to provide child care for children under five years and when projects are set up these institutional aspects need to be part of the programme and project design.

4.8. Training

Training is a key component of the WfW programme and is an important aspect of the South African public works approach. The training programme covers both work related skills, namely technical skills,

and life skills training. The training is meant to equip workers with skills so that they can perform their current job and acquire skills that could be used when they exit the programme.

The Tsitsikama WfW project has had an extensive training programme in place which covered both the technical and the social development aspects of the programme. The main reason for this was that the social development officer was responsible for organizing the training programme. However since there has been structural changes, a social development officer is not based at the project any longer. This has meant that even though there is money for training, the training has not taken place. This shows that in addition to funds, projects also require dedicated staff to implement plans. The training programme was one of the strengths of the Tsitsikama WfW project. The project had developed good working relationships with service providers such as PPASA, FAMSA and the Departments of Health and Education. The training programme has also addressed a number of social aspects, in particular the life-skills and sexuality training, HIV/AIDS awareness and domestic violence.

Table 9 below shows the training which the workers interviewed received. While the majority of the workers interviewed had received technical training there has been a shift in emphasis on contractor training. Moreover a constraint that the project has to deal with is the lack of literacy and numeracy among the workers which limits the impact of training, and inevitably influences the expectations regarding what the training can achieve. Therefore the content, quality and impact of the training need to be explored further.

Table 9. Technical training
Induction training
Chain-saw operator
Brush-cutter
Fire fighting
Health and Safety – first aid

Source: Tsitsikama Working for Water Project

Section Five: Conclusion

The Working for Water programme is a unique poverty alleviation programme in that it provides an intersection between the environment, poverty and gender. While the WfW programme has been very successful in targeting women workers, it does however reflect a very narrow conception of gender. A much broader conceptualisation of gender needs to be applied at all levels when poverty programmes of this nature are designed. In terms of programme design the particular challenges women and men face should be addressed in a holistic manner, thereby mainstreaming gender. The gender framework developed for this Brief illustrates the type of questions that need to be raised when mainstreaming gender in a project aimed at poverty alleviation and job creation. A starting point is to incorporate gendered questions into existing frameworks. Thus in the WfW programme, gender mainstreaming is examined with regard to the thematic focus areas of the WfW programme: institutional issues, funding, poverty alleviation, contractor development, social development and training. A glaring factor is that the many questions posed in the framework do not yield many answers when conducting the gender analysis of the project. The dearth of information is attributed to the fact that the information has never been gathered and that ultimately, gender issues have been overlooked. It is important therefore to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to actively gather this information.

Conceptualising gender – more than numbers

The WfW programme has attempted to integrate social development aspects which are gender sensitive into a public works programme. The programme has provided health care and child care interventions which addresses women's needs. It could therefore be argued that the programme has mainstreamed gender to some extent. There is however much room for improvement. An issue that needs to be looked at is the type of jobs women hold in the projects. In the Tsitsikama case study examined in this Brief, it was shown that while some women hold senior positions such as contractors and foreman, the majority of women hold the unskilled lower paying jobs. To shift this present scenario the WfW programme has set itself the objective of paying 60% of the wages to women. This would mean that a quota should also be instituted for contractors as this is where a large proportion of the wage bill goes. To address this imbalance, women should be shifted towards the semi-skilled jobs. For this to happen the training programme should be in place and provide quality accredited training.

Institutional Considerations – who is the money reaching?

The WfW programme also reflects a complex institutional make-up both in terms of the Departmental location of the programme as well as the WfW programme's relationships with the Implementing Agents (IA's). In some respects this complex institutional make-up seems to have worked well in respect of the WfW programmes ability to scale up and to spend its budget allocations. With regard programme expenditure at aggregate level, the WfW programme has significantly increased its expenditure in the poorer provinces, the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu and Limpopo, and it would follow that through targeting poor women are benefiting from the programme. At the project level, the Tsitsikama project spends 46% of its total budget on wages for contractors and workers. As 60% women are targeted, it follows that poor women benefit from the project. However, it is not always the case that the money is reaching the most vulnerable, particularly when considering the gender breakdown of work with regards to youth and persons with disabilities in the Tsitsikama project.

Prioritising payment of wages

Through its relationship with the IA's the WfW Programme has managed to leverage the infrastructure and human resources of the respective IA's. However the human resource capacity as well the administrative constraints can undermine the objectives of the WfW programme. The programme is often hailed as one of the most successful targeted poverty alleviation interventions. However, what the case study reveals is that all of these laudable achievements can be undermined by inefficient administrative systems. All the workers interviewed complained about the late payment of their wages. Workers are not assured of a regular income and in some cases have to buy food on credit. This places workers in an even more precarious financial position. This has impacted negatively on worker morale and goodwill. It undermines the poverty alleviation objective. Ultimately it undermines gender mainstreaming in the programme as it could result in women being put in a far more vulnerable position.

At project level, as shown through an examination of the Tsitsikama WfW Project, a number of areas require some attention:

1. Administrative systems need to become more effective and efficient;
2. Poverty targeting mechanisms need to operate to ensure that there are checks and balances in the worker selection procedure;
3. When targeting vulnerable groups, consideration should be given to the vulnerabilities that young women and disabled women face
4. Community participation with regard to Advisory Committees requires capacity building for community members; and
5. For the social development component to be implemented at project level there is a requirement for dedicated staffing.

The lessons from the WfW programme for the Expanded Public Works Programme are the following:

- The objectives of the programme should be clear and limited. Where there are multiple objectives they should be placed within a hierarchy.
- There should be a clear understanding of current capacity as well as the capacity constraints. A plan should be developed to address capacity constraints.
- Institutional location is important as well as efficient systems to facilitate the implementation of the programme.
- Short term public works should have a good quality, accredited training programme.
- Long term public works programme might be a better option to maximise impact on poverty, the two year limit should be revisited.
- The social development component of the programme should be well thought through and there must be capacity to implement this objective.

Successful gender mainstreaming has to be premised on a programme and projects that are well managed and that have systems that work well within a gender framework.

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Interviews

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Contractor Teams

Contractor Team 1

Contractor Team 2

Contractor Team 3

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