

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING



PLANNING FOR SELF-SERVICE LIVING IN RURAL AND URBAN-TRANSITIONAL AREAS

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INTRODUCTION



- A context-specific approach is the cornerstone of sustainable development
- To understand context, it is important to understand the people
- Options and solutions will not make a difference if people are not willing and able to accept and implement it

Key concepts



- Community-based planning
- Sustainable development
- Place commitment
- Traditional community environment

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING



- Recognition of diversity of interests and expectations as determined by social context
- CBP integrates these with planning through “communicative action”
- In SA, community-based planning is epitomised by IDP process
- It aims to co-ordinate the work of local and other spheres of government in a coherent plan to improve the quality of life for all the people living in an area
- Two of the major shortcomings
 - networks in communities not yet utilised
 - communities not empowered to meaningfully participate

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



- Principles of CBP and sustainable development in sync
- Both posit that people in communities need to participate in decision-making and implementation processes at all levels to achieve sustainable development
- SD a complex interaction among at least three environments: the socio-political, the economic and the ecological, with humankind at the centre

PLACE COMMITMENT



- One of the most important concepts of SD
- Value of local context when defining sustainable development
- Several constructs in development theory
 - Localism
 - New Urbanism
 - Territorialism
 - Micro-development

TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT



- Authors such as Goldsmith (1972) defined traditional community environments as:
 - Small, human scale communities
 - Low-impact technologies
 - Successful population controls
 - Sustainable resource management
 - Holistic and ecologically integrated world views
 - High degree of social cohesion, physical health, psychological well-being and spiritual fulfilment of their members

TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT



- Tribes are powerful living and working communities that know how to transform a shared vision into reality of sustainable living
- However, while in the First World such “tribes” are usually elective, in the Third World it is a means of personal and familial survival
- The African philosophy of *ubuntu* is based on the notion that our personal survival and salvation lie in our shared destiny with others
- Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2004) describes *ubuntu* as “...the essence of being a person. It means that we are, we are made for family. When you have *ubuntu*, you embrace others.”
- The meaning of *ubuntu* can be construed as being a person through other people; not being fully human alone as we are made for interdependence

TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT



- Applying *ubuntu* to sustainable development
- Respect local knowledge
- Use and adapt existing in tribal culture
- Acknowledge that sustainable living is taught through practice
- Specific aspects in traditional African cultures
 - Socio-political aspects: collaborative leadership and community-based systems
 - Ecological aspects: view of land
 - Economical aspects: economy of affection and agriculture

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Basic requirements

Tribe (community or social organisation),

- Ubuntu approach
- Taking ownership of self-service living

Tenure (security of land rights)

- Key factor for stability and growth
- Resolve particulars on a project-specific basis

Training

- Suited to specific community
- Respect community members and value local knowledge
- Purpose: empowerment, awareness and capacity (skills) building

Village-based IDP

Vision and principles of the community;

Minimum plan with short and long term goals for survival

- built environment
- bio-system services
- food security
- basic education

Comprehensive plan for thriving

- local (economic) development
- additional bio-system services
- built environment

Implementation

Ensuring enabling frameworks (legal and otherwise)

Continuous process of learning and adaptation

- Iterative process
- Monitoring

Exit strategy for the support agencies