

**Development Communication in Disaster Risk Reduction:  
The G.I.R.R.L. (Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership) Project**

Y. Maartens

Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of

**Master of Development and Management**

at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Supervisor: Prof. D. van Niekerk

Co-supervisor: Prof. L.M. Fourie

Potchefstroom

May, 2011

## DECLARATION

I declare that: "***Development Communication in Disaster Risk Reduction: The G.I.R.R.L. (Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership) Project***" is my own work, that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me or any other person for degree purposes at this or any another university.

---

Signed: Y. Maartens

---

Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with much gratitude to many people that I am able to submit this dissertation. Firstly, I would like to thank my Heavenly Father for guiding me, carrying me and providing me with the ability to complete my studies. There is a special verse that helped me reach my goals: *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* Jeremiah 29, verse 11.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Dewald van Niekerk, for providing insightful guidance and a supportive ear to new ideas and for always taking my opinion seriously and then professionally helping me change my mind. My co-supervisor Prof. Lynnette Fourie, thank you for keeping my study on the right track and for helping me merge the two different fields of theory in my study, I sincerely appreciate the time you and Dewald spent on my work.

To my best friend, Kylah Forbes-Biggs, thank you for allowing me to analyse the G.I.R.R.L. Project which has become more than a project, it is our life! I look forward to taking the project to new heights. Thank you for your support and help. To my girls in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme, thank you for your honesty and for helping me improve our project. We have learnt so much from you, you will never know what your insight meant to me. I would also like to thank the rest of the G.I.R.R.L. Project team for providing their input in the research and for supporting me over the past two years.

I need to thank my research assistant Genie van Wyk for all the note-taking and for assisting with the interviews; your help is truly appreciated. Toto Tshona, you are a true asset and have always gone above and beyond your work. As a facilitator you have a gift. Ke a leboga.

To DimTech at the University of the Free State for the financial support, thank you for making this research possible. I appreciate your faith in me.

To my colleagues at the African Centre for Disaster Studies, thank you for your constant motivation and support and for taking on my work while I was on study leave. Thank you also to Gideon Wentink for the translation of my abstract, I appreciate it. My excellent language editor, Kate Goldstone, deserves a big thank you. You are truly a special person and any writing mistakes are my own.

Special thanks to Tanya le Roux for always being there for me. Thanks for all the advice, for always having the tissue box handy and for helping me think clearly at times. And lastly, to my mom, dad, sister and rest of the family. I have the most supportive family and I love you very much. Thank you for believing in me. Your love and prayers carried me. To Charlie, thank you for being there for me every day. You were the one who took over so many things that I could not get to while I was completing this study and for that I am forever grateful.

*I dedicate this dissertation to my grandparents; you have been my inspiration and  
are such excellent role models – Lief vir julle!*

## **ABSTRACT**

South African informal settlement communities are faced with infrastructural challenges such as a lack of proper housing, poor sanitation, poor electrical connections, if any, poor medical facilities and various social health risks such as HIV/Aids, TB and other STDs, as well as high levels of violence and crime. Young girls form a portion of the demographics of such informal settlements. Most adolescent girls, between the ages of 13 and 18 years are at an increased risk merely because they are physically smaller than their male peers, are able to become pregnant and have to compete with multiple siblings and family members. Most of these young girls have to leave school to act as heads of households, to provide an income or because they have become pregnant. These factors form the crux of disaster risk reduction initiatives as such initiatives focus on building up the resiliency of those who are most vulnerable in society.

This study focuses on the aspects of disaster risk, risk reduction and community-based disaster risk awareness. The study is unique in that combines the fields of development communication and disaster risk reduction and the principles of participative development communication form the guidelines throughout the study. The purpose of the study is to determine whether the inclusion of development communication principles could increase stakeholder involvement and whether development communication could address the gaps that have been identified within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative. This community-based initiative is known as the Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project and was designed to implement within a disaster risk reduction capacity. Focus groups were held with the participants of the G.I.R.R.L. Project and semi-structured interviews were held with the project team.

The results of the research indicate the importance of baseline research before implanting a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative. The findings support the principles of development communication within disaster risk reduction and are applied to the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and the respective limitations that were identified by the research.

The study highlights the importance of participation in community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives and places young adolescent girls in the spotlight. Development communication is an important aspect to consider and this study outlines its role in the disaster risk reduction environment.

## **SAMEVATTING**

Gemeenskappe in Suid-Afrikaanse informele nedersettings word gekonfronteer met infrastrukturele uitdagings soos 'n tekort aan ordentlike behuising, swak sanitasiegeriewe, swak elektriese verbindings (indien enige), swak mediese fasiliteite en verskeie gesondheidsrisiko's soos MIV/Vigs, TB en ander seksueel-oordraagbare siektes, asook hoë vlakke van geweld en misdaad. Jong meisies maak deel uit van die demografie van sulke informele nedersettings. Die meeste adolessente meisies, tussen 13 en 18, loop 'n hoë risiko bloot omdat hulle fisies kleiner is as hul manlike eweknieë, dit is moontlik dat hulle swanger kan word en hulle moet meeding met broers, susters en ander familieledede. Die meeste van hierdie jong meisies moet skool verlaat om as die hoof van 'n huishouding op te tree, om 'n inkomste te verdien of omdat hulle swanger geword het. Hierdie faktore vorm die kruks van ramprisikoverminderingsinisiatiewe soos inisiatiewe wat die klem lê op die opbou van die weerbaarheid van daardie lede van 'n gemeenskap wat die kwesbaarste is.

Hierdie studie fokus op die aspekte van ramprisiko, risikovermindering en gemeenskapsgebaseerde ramprisikobewustheid. Hierdie studie is uniek omdat dit die areas van ontwikkelingskommunikasie en ramprisikovermindering kombineer. Die beginsel van deelnemende ontwikkelingskommunikasie het die riglyn vir die studie gevorm. Die doel van die studie sal wees om te bepaal of die insluiting van die

beginsels van ontwikkelingskommunikasie die betrokkenheid van belangegroepes kan verhoog en of ontwikkelingskommunikasie die gapings wat in die G.I.R.R.L.-projek as 'n gemeenskapsgebaseerde risikoverminderingsinisiatief geïdentifiseer is, kan aanspreek. Die gemeenskapsgebaseerde inisiatief staan bekend as die G.I.R.R.L.-projek (Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership) en is ontwerp om binne 'n ramprisikoverminderingskapasiteit geïmplementeer te word. Deelnemers aan die G.I.R.R.L.-projek het aan fokusgroepe deelgeneem en semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is met die projekspan gevoer.

Die resultate van die navorsing dui op die belangrikheid van grondlynnavorsing voor die inplanting van 'n gemeenskapsgebaseerde ramprisikoverminderingsinisiatief. Die bevindinge ondersteun die beginsels van ontwikkelingskommunikasie binne ramprisikovermindering en word toegepas op die G.I.R.R.L.-projek en die onderskeie beperkinge wat deur die navorsing geïdentifiseer is.

Die studie beklemtoon die belangrikheid van deelname in gemeenskapsgebaseerde ramprisikoverminderingsinisiatiewe en plaas jong adolessente meisies in die kalklig. Ontwikkelingskommunikasie is 'n belangrike aspek om in ag te neem en hierdie studie sit die rol daarvan in die ramprisikoverminderingsomgewing uiteen.

**Development Communication in Disaster Risk Reduction:  
The G.I.R.R.L. (Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership) Project**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1.1 Introduction .....                              | 1  |
| 1.2 Context .....                                   | 2  |
| Figure 1: Map of the G.I.R.R.L. Project sites ..... | 4  |
| 1.3 Problem statement .....                         | 7  |
| 1.4 Research questions .....                        | 7  |
| 1.5 Research objectives .....                       | 7  |
| 1.6 Theoretical arguments .....                     | 8  |
| 1.7 Research methodology .....                      | 8  |
| 1.7.1 Literature review .....                       | 9  |
| 1.7.2 Focus groups .....                            | 9  |
| 1.7.3 Semi-structured interviews .....              | 11 |
| 1.8 Ethical considerations .....                    | 12 |
| 1.9 Delimitation of the study .....                 | 13 |
| 1.10 Chapter outline .....                          | 13 |
| 1.11 Conclusion .....                               | 14 |

## CHAPTER 2: PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY-BASED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 2.1 Introduction .....  | 15 |
| 2.2 Community-based disaster risk reduction .....   | 16 |
| 2.2.1 Risk .....  | 20 |
| 2.2.2 Disaster .....  | 21 |
| 2.2.3 Disaster risk reduction .....   | 21 |
| Figure 2: A framework for disaster risk reduction.....  | 22 |
| 2.2.4 Hyogo Framework for Action .....  | 26 |
| 2.3 Theoretical approaches underpinning development communication .....   | 28 |
| 2.3.1 The modernisation paradigm .....  | 31 |
| 2.3.1.1 Defining development communication: a modernist view .....  | 33 |
| 2.3.1.2 Critique of the modernisation paradigm .....  | 34 |
| 2.3.2 The participative paradigm .....  | 36 |
| 2.3.2.1 Defining development communication:<br>a participative perspective .....  | 37 |
| 2.3.2.2 Principles of participatory development communication in a<br>community based disaster risk reduction context ..... | 39 |
| Table 1: Important principles of development communication within a<br>disaster risk reduction context .....                | 40 |
| 2.3.2.2.1 Dialogical .....  | 43 |
| 2.3.2.2.2 Inclusive .....   | 46 |
| 2.3.2.2.3 Heuristic .....   | 50 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 2.3.2.2.4 Empowerment .....                             | 50 |
| 2.3.2.2.5 Participatory .....                           | 53 |
| Figure 3: Ladder of social participation .....          | 60 |
| 2.3.2.2.6 Contextual .....                              | 61 |
| 2.3.2.2.7 Interdisciplinary .....                       | 62 |
| 2.3.2.2.8 Strategic .....                               | 63 |
| 2.3.2.2.9 Persuasive .....                              | 63 |
| 2.3.2.3 Limitations of the participative approach ..... | 65 |
| 2.4 Conclusion .....                                    | 68 |

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 3.1 Introduction .....                              | 70 |
| 3.2 Research approach .....                         | 70 |
| 3.3 Research method .....                           | 71 |
| 3.3.1 Research methods explained .....              | 73 |
| 3.3.2 Sample .....                                  | 75 |
| 3.3.3 Procedure .....                               | 77 |
| 3.3.3.1 Objectivity of the researcher .....         | 79 |
| 3.3.4 Data capturing .....                          | 80 |
| 3.3.5 Thematic data analysis .....                  | 81 |
| 3.3.6 Reliability, validity and triangulation ..... | 82 |
| 3.3.7 Ethical considerations .....                  | 84 |

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| 3.4 Conclusion ..... | 85 |
|----------------------|----|

## **CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS**

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| 4.1 Introduction ..... | 86 |
|------------------------|----|

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 4.2 Research findings grouped thematically ..... | 86 |
|--|----|

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 2: Thematic grouping of research themes according to principles of development communication ..... | 86 |
|--|----|

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| 4.4.1 Dialogical ..... | 88 |
|------------------------|----|

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| 4.4.2 Inclusive ..... | 99 |
|-----------------------|----|

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 4.4.3 Heuristic ..... | 103 |
|-----------------------|-----|

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 4.4.4 Empowerment ..... | 106 |
|-------------------------|-----|

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 4.4.5 Participatory ..... | 109 |
|---------------------------|-----|

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| 4.4.6 Contextual ..... | 112 |
|------------------------|-----|

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| 4.4.7 Interdisciplinary ..... | 117 |
|-------------------------------|-----|

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 4.4.8 Strategic ..... | 120 |
|-----------------------|-----|

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| 4.4.9 Persuasive ..... | 124 |
|------------------------|-----|

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| 4.5 Conclusion ..... | 126 |
|----------------------|-----|

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| 5.1 Introduction ..... | 127 |
|------------------------|-----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 5.2 Limitations of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme ..... | 127 |
|---|-----|

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 5.3 Recommendations ..... | 128 |
|---------------------------|-----|

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| 5.4 Future research .....   | 130        |
| 5.5 Conclusion .....  | 131        |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>Annexure A to Chapter 1: Session outline of the G.I.R.R.L. Project .....</b> | <b>134</b> |
| <b>Annexure B to Chapter 3: Focus group questions .....</b>                     | <b>135</b> |
| <b>Annexure C to Chapter 3: Focus group consent forms .....</b>                 | <b>140</b> |
| <b>Annexure D to Chapter 3: Semi-structured interview questions .....</b>       | <b>142</b> |
| <br>  |            |
| <b>REFERENCES .....</b>   | <b>143</b> |

## **CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **1.1 Introduction**

South African informal settlement communities are faced with infrastructural challenges such as a lack of proper housing, poor sanitation, poor electrical connections if any, poor medical facilities and various social health risks such as HIV/Aids, TB and other STDs, as well as high levels of violence and crime (UNICEF, 2008). Young girls form a portion of the demographics of such informal settlements. Most adolescent girls, between the ages of 13 and 18 years (UN, 1991) are at an increased risk merely because they are physically smaller than their male peers, are able to become pregnant and have to compete with multiple siblings and family members (Forbes-Biggs & Van Niekerk, 2010). Most of these young girls have to leave school to act as heads of households, to provide an income or because they have become pregnant (UNICEF, 2008; Forbes-Biggs, 2010). These factors form the crux of disaster risk reduction initiatives as such initiatives focus on building up the resiliency of those who are most vulnerable in society (UNISDR, 2008).

The disaster risk reduction environment is thus a dynamic environment, which consists of numerous interlinking factors impacting on the disaster risk of communities and individuals alike. Against this background this study focused on the aspects of disaster risk, risk reduction and community-based disaster risk awareness. A community-based initiative within the field of disaster risk reduction will be used as the case study for the research. This community-based initiative is known as the Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project and was designed to implement within a disaster risk reduction capacity.

This study however, will not solely focus on the disaster risk reduction context within which the G.I.R.R.L. Programme functions, but will include aspects of development communication and utilise the principles of participatory development communication to measure the successes and failures of the implementation of communication within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

The participants of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme consisted of adolescent girls and the research will also focus on adolescent girls as the main contributing group. Thus, the research will take place within the disaster risk reduction environment from the perspective of adolescent girls in the various communities using development communication principles as guidelines to evaluate the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative. Focus will be placed on whether the inclusion of development communication principles could increase stakeholder involvement and whether development communication could address the gaps that have been identified within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

## **1.2 Context**

The general portrayal of children, young people and women in disasters is one where they exist only as helpless victims. However, adolescent girls as a distinct sub-group have been able to take on a leading role as agents of change within the context of disaster risk reduction. A Participatory Action Research (PAR) study, known as the G.I.R.R.L. (Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership) Project was designed to increase knowledge about empowerment, to encourage leadership development and to improve the resilience of marginalised, black, South African adolescent girls while helping to integrate them into disaster risk reduction initiatives (Forbes-Biggs and Van Niekerk, 2011).

Disaster risk reduction initiatives that focus on girls within the community are vital because they target the most vulnerable and often most neglected segment of society (UNICEF, 2008). It is crucial that more understanding is gained about the challenges these girls face on a daily basis and how developmental disaster risk reduction initiatives can improve their lives and the lives of those around them.

The G.I.R.R.L. Programme is a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative designed to facilitate dialogue amongst adolescent girls from a variety of backgrounds about the issues they face, risks in their community and to assist these young girls to become aware of their strengths and to use the information provided in the project to increase their resilience.

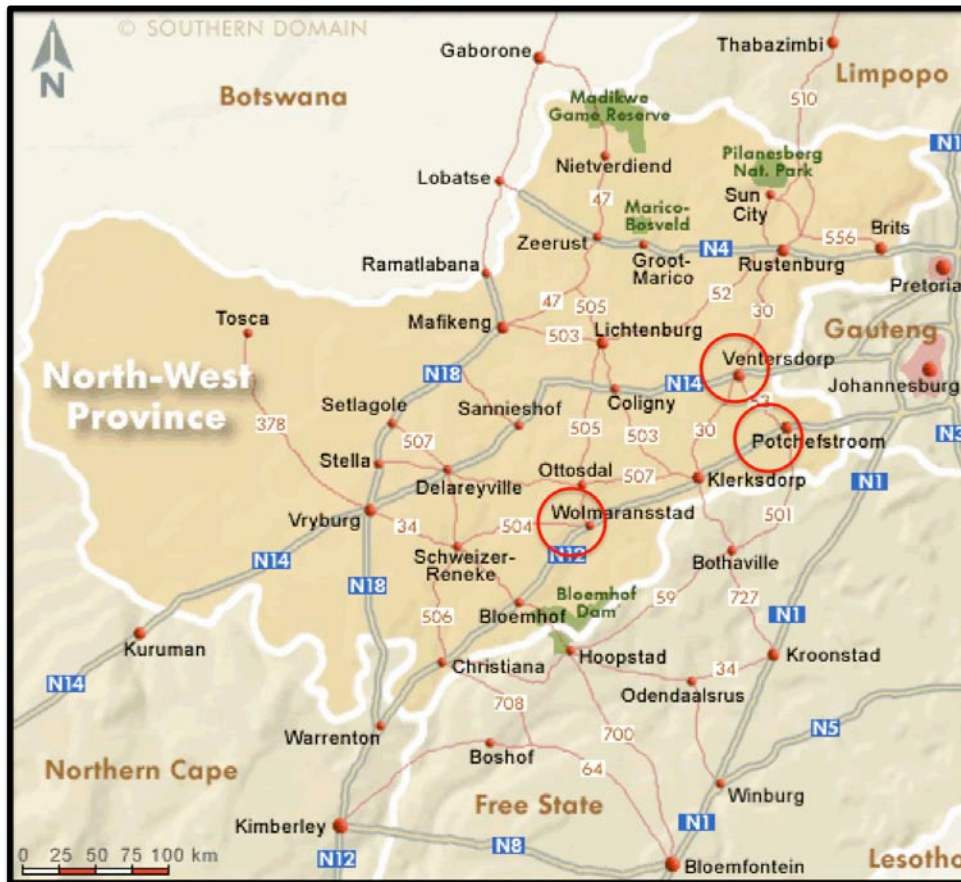
The participants of the three projects partook in various training sessions during the implementation of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and were provided with much needed information relating to disaster risk, sexual health, personal safety and wellbeing to name but a few. (For a detailed list of sessions presented in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme see Annexure A – Session outline of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme).

The G.I.R.R.L. Programme places young adolescent girls in the disaster risk reduction spotlight. The G.I.R.R.L. Programme aims to reduce the vulnerability of adolescent girls by means of capacity building initiatives and by empowering a team of young girls to become more resilient to hazards and to reduce their related vulnerability. The G.I.R.R.L. Programme has been implemented in three different locations (referred to as projects) across the North-West province of South Africa through the African Centre for Disaster Studies based at the North-West University, Potchefstroom campus (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Forbes-Biggs, 2009; Forbes-Biggs, 2010).

Although the initial G.I.R.R.L. Project in 2008 and the subsequent two projects from 2009 and 2010 have been completed, the G.I.R.R.L. Programme is an ongoing project and initiative based at the African Centre for Disaster Studies. For the purpose of this study the first three projects were included in the research.

All three implementation sites were within the North-West province of South Africa and fell within the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. The initial G.I.R.R.L. project was implemented in Ikageng a township outside Potchefstroom at Boitshoko High School in 2008, the second project took place in Tsweleng outside Womaransstad at Reabona Secondary during 2009 and the third project was held in Tching Township outside Ventersdorp at Thuto Boswa Secondary throughout 2009 and 2010.

**Figure 1: Map of the G.I.R.R.L. Project sites in the North-West province of South Africa**



Source: [http://www.suedafrika.net/samaps/nw\\_navigator.html](http://www.suedafrika.net/samaps/nw_navigator.html)

Each project focused on a group of socially vulnerable adolescent girls who are at risk due to a variety of external variables, social vulnerabilities and hazards and unsuspected factors within their communities, which worsen their already poor and difficult circumstances. Although their living conditions may not have provided them with sufficient opportunities to better their lives, the importance of the role of young girls in communities cannot be overlooked. The capacity building sessions presented throughout the projects were presented within the disaster risk reduction context (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Forbes-Biggs, 2009; Forbes-Biggs, 2010).

Due to the diversity and large variety of stakeholders of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme, many different activities had to be coordinated and executed, often simultaneously. This was not always an easy task and required effective project management and coordination.

Stakeholders came into the project with their own expectations and preconceived ideas, which often made it difficult to satisfy all their needs.

This is where effective communication becomes relevant. In order for both project team and participants to gain an understanding of what both parties' intentions were, good and effective communication was required. The most important aspect of communication is that it needs to be participatory and include all parties (Servaes, 1995). Communication should occur in such a manner that it allows feedback and contributions from participants, stakeholders and the project team (Bessette and Rajasunderam, 1996). However, focus should not only be on communication but on participatory development communication which should be viewed as a total process that includes understanding the audience and its needs, communication planning around selected strategies, message production, dissemination, reception and feedback (Bessette, 2004; Servaes, 2008), rather than just a one-way, direct, communicator-to-passive-receiver activity (Thomas, 1994; Mody, 1997).

Development communication aims to investigate the interrelationships among components as well as the relevant information in which the communication system is embedded (Rogers, 2004). From the above definition of development communication it is clear that true insight into the effectiveness of project communication requires contributions and input from various role players and stakeholders. This leads to the establishing of participatory development communication within the project parameters.

Bessette (2004) asserts that participatory development communication can be utilised to allow project teams to facilitate community self-organisation and putting people first. Bessette (2004) and Servaes (2008) clarify the concept of participatory development communication as the use of communication to facilitate community participation in a development initiative. This definition can then be drawn into the disaster risk reduction domain in that participatory development communication should be used to facilitate dialogue among the project stakeholders in order to address a disaster risk issue with a developmental approach.

The objectives of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme tie in with the activities of participatory development communication in that both the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and participatory development communication rely on a number of principles as highlighted by Bessette (2004), namely:

- Establishing contact with a local community or group within the targeted community; and
- Understanding the local setting within which this group/the participants function.

The planning of the intended disaster risk reduction initiative involves bringing the stakeholders together to identify disaster risk problems and jointly decide on actions that can be taken to work towards a solution for each of the identified problems.

Finally the G.I.R.R.L. Programme tied in with the final objective of participatory development communication as explained by Bessette (2004) in that all parties need to contribute in the development of a communication strategy. This can involve some or all of the following elements: building partnerships and facilitating the relationships built with stakeholders and lastly planning the utilisation and sharing of results as this is ultimately the goal of research, to come to certain conclusions and make relevant recommendations (Servaes, 2008).

Implementation of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme has highlighted various deficiencies within the implementation of the project as a disaster risk reduction initiative. In theory disaster risk reduction initiatives are designed within the context of sustainable development (UNISDR, 2004). However, after the implementation of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme at the three respective sites, the handover to stakeholders did not adhere to the expectations of the original project design (Forbes-Biggs, 2009).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The problem under investigation in this research is that the failure of the implementation of development communication strategies within community-based disaster risk reduction projects (such as the G.I.R.R.L. Programme) could lead to non-participation of stakeholders and impact on the sustainability of the project as a disaster risk reduction initiative in the long run.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following key research questions will be answered by the research:

- 1.4.1. Were the principles of participatory development communication adhered to within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as an example of a disaster risk reduction community-based project?
- 1.4.2. Can the inclusion of development principles contribute to the successful implementation of a disaster risk reduction community-based project?
- 1.4.3. How can development communication strategies improve stakeholder relationships in a community-based project?
- 1.4.4. To what extent could development communication principles be able to address the gaps identified by the G.I.R.R.L. Programme?

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The research objectives derived from the research questions are:

- 1.5.1. To determine whether the principles of participatory development communication were adhered to within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as an example of a disaster risk reduction community-based project?
- 1.5.2. To establish whether the inclusion of development principles contribute to the successful implementation of a disaster risk reduction community-based project?
- 1.5.3. To ascertain how development communication strategies could improve stakeholder relationships in a community-based project?
- 1.5.4. To determine to what extent development communication principles could be able to address the gaps identified by the G.I.R.R.L. Programme?

## **1.6 Theoretical arguments**

The main theoretical arguments of the study will be based on theories within development communication including the modernisation paradigm and the participative paradigm. Much emphasis will be placed on the principles of participative development communication and on disaster risk reduction as interlinking disciplines.

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

Due to the unique nature of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and the combination of disaster risk reduction and participative development communication both a literature and an empirical study was utilised.

As researcher and author of this dissertation, it is important to note the following in order to understand the involvement of the researcher in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. The researcher was also facilitator in the initial project and project coordinator of the two subsequent project sites. The researcher has thus been involved in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme for over three years. The advantage of this is that the researcher can provide added insight regarding the implementation of the project, the expected outcomes and show understanding towards the different contexts of each of the project sites.

All the additional observations and interactions with participants and stakeholders are documented in the researcher's field notes, which served as additional material to substantiate the researcher's findings and formed the basis from which the problems within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme were ultimately identified. The researcher thus presides over much additional knowledge regarding the G.I.R.R.L. Programme, which can be very valuable for the rest of the study.

It also needs to be noted however, that the researcher realises that the close involvement with the project may influence objectivity; the researcher will base the research conclusions solely on the findings of the research deduced from the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews.

### **1.7.1 Literature review**

An in-depth literature review was conducted in order to construct the necessary theoretical basis to prove the validity of both disaster risk reduction and development communication principles and the roles both play within various community interventions. The literature review was mainly based on the works of Twigg whose focus is on disaster risk reduction. The disaster risk reduction framework by Twigg (2004) served as the context for the research and highlighted a “systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing risks of all kinds associated with hazards and human activities”. The aspects of participatory development communication were used to respond to the deep-rooted problems that must be accounted for within disaster risk reduction planning and implementation.

The works of Bessette (2004), Servaes (1995), Rogers (2004) and Thomas (1994) were also vital in forming the theoretical basis for this investigation and outlined development communication strategies, participative communication and participative development communication principles, respectively.

### **1.7.2 Focus groups**

The empirical study included the three sites where the G.I.R.R.L. Programme has been implemented over the past two years, as indicated above (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Forbes-Biggs, 2009; Forbes-Biggs, 2010). This allowed an overall view of the problems and successes of each individual project site but also provided information regarding the overall implementation of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

The empirical study will be qualitative, as this will allow an in-depth analysis of the elements to be evaluated. A qualitative approach allows participants to voice their opinions and give reasons for their specific opinions. As described by Du Plooy (2002), qualitative research designs are inductive, based on specific assumptions, starting with observations and ending with descriptions of what has been observed.

In the case of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme the reactions of the participants to various statements and questions will be observed and described within the context of the research questions and objectives. The most relevant aspect of qualitative research relating to the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as explained by Du Plooy (2002) is that it allows the researcher to explore areas where limited or no prior information exists.

Purposive sampling was used as the relevant respondents fit the context of the specific research and were participants of the G.I.R.R.L. Programmes respectively (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Forbes-Biggs, 2009; Forbes-Biggs, 2010). The participants from each site were invited to participate in focus groups as they fit within the parameters of the original G.I.R.R.L. Programme participant selection criteria.

Patton (1990) explains that purposive sampling allows subjects to be selected because of a certain characteristic and is a popular sampling method in qualitative research. In the case of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and the individual sites, the participants of each of the projects have specific knowledge and characteristics that sets them apart from other adolescent girls in the respective communities. Trochim (2006) argues that purposive sampling falls within non-probability sampling, which does not involve random selection of participants. For this reason, the researcher decided on purposive sampling, as it will allow the participants of the various G.I.R.R.L. Programme sites to form part of the sample for the research. Purposive sampling, as the name suggests, allows one to sample with a purpose in mind (Trochim, 2006), which directly relates to the fact that the research is focused on a very specific respondent, the various participants of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

Focus groups were held with the G.I.R.R.L. Programme participants at each of the three project sites, in order to provide a fair and equal insight into the perspectives of the participants at all three project sites.

The anticipated difficulties that may arise during focus groups with the G.I.R.R.L. participants include the fact that some of the terminology may be very technical, translation or explanation in Setswana may be necessary, not all terms will be available in Setswana and thus alternative terms may have to be considered which may break down the initial meaning of the question. If a focus group is to take place in Setswana, translation and transcribing into English will be necessary, which is time consuming and costly.

### **1.7.3 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were scheduled with the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team as coordinators of the programme and as managers of the three project sites, but semi-structured interviews were not scheduled with the G.I.R.R.L. Programme participants as their input was gathered through the focus groups. In semi-structured interviews the questions are formulated beforehand and as Du Plooy (2002) suggests can be displayed in a checklist or table format to make conducting the interview easier. Further motivation for the use of a semi-structured interview is that it will be less time consuming, can be recorded to refer to in the future and can be scheduled with each interviewee (Du Plooy, 2002). A semi-structured interview allows more flexibility for follow up questions and will allow the researcher to adapt the approach to each respondent's interview needs.

The semi-structured interviews were directed at the expectations of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team and whether through implementation these expectations have been met. The initial project set-up phase was also evaluated in order to gain insight into areas that may need improvement or increased stakeholder input. The three semi-structured interviews should provide enough insight into the inner workings of the project, decision-making and project approach.

The project founder was interviewed, one project coordinator and a facilitator. The researcher's input, as explained above also needs to be categorised here as the researcher was interviewed by the research assistant in order to formally document the researcher's contribution to the study based on the same interview questions posed to the other three interview respondents during the semi-structured interviews.

### **1.8 Ethical considerations**

Due to the nature of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme parameters and the sensitivity of some of the aspects of the research, it was imperative to keep in mind that most respondents were young, adolescent girls who came from very testing backgrounds and who functioned within often harsh and challenging circumstances. The safety, confidentiality and anonymity of each participant needed to be guaranteed and constantly kept in mind throughout the research. The consent form was necessary to protect both the researcher and the rights of the minor/participants as stated by the South African Child Act (South Africa, 1994).

A further consideration is the fact that most respondents are vulnerable and susceptible to manipulation and the research aspect of this dissertation may create false hope in providing solutions to their problematic situations. It was of the essence that participants understood that although the research aimed at improving the content of disaster risk reduction initiatives and bringing it closer to their needs, it may take a long time before any advances are made in this regard; after all it remains a research study with recommendations that may or may not be considered in future. It in no way guaranteed social change and informed consent was necessary to confirm this realisation.

The final aspect to keep in mind was that the researcher is also a project coordinator for the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and an issue to consider was whether or not the researcher and the research team may be too close to the issue at hand. Objectivity was critical and the researcher had to be able to remain emotionally neutral throughout the research.

## **1.9 Delimitation of the study**

The outcomes of the study and the input provided by the participants cannot be generalised to all adolescent girls in the relevant townships or South Arica. The study will only focus on adolescent girls and not on adolescent boys due to the difference in vulnerability that exists between adolescent girls and adolescent boys in the community. The focus is on the Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership Project and not any other community projects within the respective communities.

## **1.10 Chapter outline**

### **CHAPTER 2 – Participatory development communication in the context of community-based disaster risk reduction**

This chapter will explore the foundations that exist within both the field of development communication and disaster risk reduction with emphasis on disaster risk, community-based disaster risk reduction, development communication, the modernisation paradigm, the participative paradigm and participative development communication. The principles taken from the literature will form the basis for the methodology used in the research and the analysis of the findings.

### **CHAPTER 3 – Research methodology**

This chapter is rooted in the principles identified in the literature and explains the methods followed to conduct the research. The use of focus groups and semi-structured interviews will be explored within the parameters of the study.

### **CHAPTER 4 – Empirical findings**

This chapter provides a summative overview of the findings of the study based on the objectives of the research. Themes based on the principles highlighted in the literature will be used to analyse the results of the research and draw the link between disaster risk reduction and development communication initiatives.

## **CHAPTER 5 – Conclusions and recommendations**

The key findings of the research will be drawn into recommendations within the fields of disaster risk reduction and development communication. The main themes used to outline the findings will be used as the basis for the formulation of recommendations and future research opportunities.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

The aims of the Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership Project have now been provided within the context of disaster risk reduction and development communication. An in depth literature review needs to be conducted to understand the foundations of disaster risk reduction and the principles of development communication in order to show insight into the guiding thoughts within both fields. The key elements of the literature review will be to establish understanding in the fields of risk, disaster risk reduction, explaining the importance of the use of a disaster risk reduction framework, exploring the theoretical approaches of modernisation and participation from a development communication point of view. The literature review as part of the research is highlighted in Chapter Two.

## **CHAPTER 2: PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY-BASED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In working with local communities and driving disaster risk reduction projects at community level there are various aspects that need to be regarded as necessary when approaching and working in those local communities. The literature reviewed in this study focuses on disaster risk reduction and development communication in order to highlight the importance of development communication in community-based disaster risk reduction projects with specific reference to the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. There are numerous development communication principles that tie up with participatory actions, which in turn relate to awareness and information sharing in the disaster risk reduction context. This correlation is what will be looked at throughout the literature in order to substantiate the claim that development communication forms an important element of disaster risk reduction in the multi-sectoral environment.

This chapter will explore the field of development communication by highlighting the two underlying theoretical approaches of development communication, namely the modernisation and the participatory paradigms. The participatory paradigm, currently the normative approach, will then be critically discussed and explored within the context of disaster risk reduction. Finally the principles of participatory development communication will be outlined as necessary keys in unlocking the potential of participatory development communication within disaster risk reduction. These principles will form the foundation for the investigation of the communication of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as a community-based disaster risk reduction project.

## **2.2 Community-based disaster risk reduction**

In order to understand the need for community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives the context of disaster risk reduction needs to be briefly presented. Twigg (2004:51) explains that the disaster risk reduction environment recognises that poor people live and work within the context of vulnerability. Vulnerability is seen as the human dimension of disasters, which shapes people's lives and places pressure on communities (Buckle *et al.*, 2001; Twigg, 2004).

This vulnerability surrounds every part of their existence and is responsible for many of the problems and hardships communities face. Vulnerability within the community impacts on every individual's assets and the livelihood options available to them. These pressures can be released by initiating measures to reduce vulnerability such as community-based disaster risk reduction projects.

The definition of disaster risk reduction used by Twigg (2004:13), which is accepted by the United Nations Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, includes the broad application of policies, strategies and practices to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout society, through prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

This raises the next issue, defining a community-based disaster risk reduction project. Firstly, as in any project, the problem needs to be analysed. As Twigg (2004) and Chambers and Conway (1992) explain, these problems that need to be analysed are rooted within the nature of the risks faced by the people living under the threat of natural hazards and by their vulnerability to disaster.

Understanding individuals or communities' vulnerability is vital in implementing a community-based disaster risk reduction programme or project (Twigg, 2004) and should focus on capacity development to increase knowledge and awareness of the risks people face and their ability to deal with these risks (Nomdo & Coetzee, 2002; Twigg, 2004; Hagelsteen, 2009).

Once vulnerability has been defined and characterised within the relevant community, the responsibility for action lies with the community. The UNISDR (1998) refers to the mobilisation of a community and argues that disaster risk reduction is most effective at the community level because it is at local level that the specific needs of the community can be met. Community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives need to pay attention to addressing community dynamics, perceptions and needs and cannot ignore the potential of local resources and capacities.

The UNISDR (1998) as well as Wisner *et al.* (2004) stress the fact that when community-based disaster risk reduction projects fail to consider the abovementioned factors, the very projects designed to mitigate disaster risk may contribute to increased vulnerability at community level. Community-based disaster risk reduction projects thus need to focus on activities which strengthen capacities and assist communities in coping with hazards (UNISDR, 1998; Keve & Mohanty, 2003; Hagelsteen, 2009).

Although these community-based disaster risk reduction projects need to be rooted in communities themselves, communities cannot stand alone when it comes to the implementation of these community-based disaster risk reduction projects (UNISDR, 1998); various sectors and partners within communities need to come together in order to establish the mechanisms for risk reduction initiatives (Van Niekerk, 2005; Van Riet & Van Niekerk, 2011).

True understanding of the nature of community-based disaster risk reduction projects can only be gained when looking at a few case studies. One case study to consider is that of the Bangladesh Red Crescent focused on building women's confidence (taken from Twigg, 2004). For many years the Bangladesh Red Crescent has managed a cyclone preparedness programme that has only recently taken on a community-based focus. Local women have been trained to participate in local disaster preparedness committees. Such a disaster preparedness committee supports the women in their everyday lives through education and training in reproductive health, organising self-help groups and running small enterprises.

As a result of these supplementary opportunities, more women are actively involved in the disaster preparedness committees, maintaining shelters and transmitting cyclone warnings. This increased level of involvement as indicated by one woman has given them increased confidence. "Women can teach other women, men are not teaching women! In general, women can transport messages better, because they have access to more people than men. The preparation for a cyclone at household level is the woman's responsibility. Women are more practical" (Twigg, 2004). This case study emphasises not only the importance of involving women in community-based disaster risk reduction projects but also emphasises the importance of empowering community members through awareness which allows them to take action themselves.

The second case study is from the UNISDR (1998) and looks at local communities at work in Cambodia. The project targets communities in flood-prone provinces along the Mekong River. Community volunteers have motivated involvement by carrying out risk assessments, developing preparedness plans and implementing small-scale solutions that minimise the risk of flooding. The solutions that were suggested by community members also included their contribution either in labour, materials or cash.

This initiative allowed communities to take responsibility for their own situation and demonstrates that communities have the resources to successfully undertake community-based risk reduction initiatives, no matter how small the scale of implementation may be. It highlights that community investment and ownership can be achieved.

These two case studies provide insight into the application of community-based disaster risk reduction projects and highlight the fact that these initiatives are as varied as the risks they address, the communities they are based in and the hazards they are faced with. Understanding has now been given about the context within which community-based disaster risk reduction takes place, which has been emphasised in the case studies by underlying the importance of communication and participation within disaster risk reduction.

Twigg (2004) and Anderson and Woodrow (1998) show the need for communication in disaster risk reduction by explaining that disasters demand a holistic response from various disciplines and institutional groups. The affected community often has no dialogue with these various disciplines functioning within the respective community, which leads to a host of problems (Buckle *et al.*, 2001; Twigg, 2004). Some of these problems include: fragmentation, lack of understanding, cultural competitiveness and insufficient humility in the face of a disaster problem. However, the focus of this study is not on these problems but on the key to addressing them, which lies within participatory communication.

Community-based disaster risk reduction projects have to be implemented in communities where numerous external factors can impact their success, not to mention the actual problems related to ensuring participation, promoting involvement of community members and finding relevant solutions and strategies to the growing level of needs and problems within communities which are facing risk,

which are vulnerable and may have been neglected in the past. It is important to now look at disaster risk reduction as the context within which the suggested development communication strategies are to function and to include the role of the participative approach as the foundation within development communication. Together with understanding disaster as a concept one needs to understand the concept of risk in order to apply development communication strategies to the concept of disaster risk reduction. Firstly attention will be given to risk.

### **2.2.1 Risk**

Communities are exposed to various hazards that may impact their lives and force them to live in vulnerable conditions. This situation places communities at risk, which is defined as “the probability of harmful consequences or expected losses resulting from interactions between natural or human induced hazards within vulnerable conditions” (UNISDR, 2004). Being at risk affects all aspects of communities and not all community members are as resilient as the rest (UNISDR, 2004; DFID, 2004; Chiwaka, 2005; Pelling, 2007).

The UNISDR (2004:36) make an important argument that risk awareness depends on the quality and quantity of information and on the difference in people’s perceptions of risk. It is exactly within this space that development communication can play a key role in understanding risk and people’s perceptions of risk. Participation at ground level as one of the key elements of development communication will enable communities to share the knowledge that they do have relating to risk and local risk reduction techniques. By allowing communities to provide input in developing a risk reduction initiative, the chances of them getting involved and driving this initiative goes up significantly (Carley *et al.*, 2001; Cannon *et al.*, 2003; Twigg, 2007).

Risk has now been explained and therefore the term disaster needs to be defined in order to indicate the correlation yet contrast between risk and disasters and how both form part of disaster risk reduction.

### **2.2.2 Disaster**

Benson and Twigg (2007:32) look at disasters as a source of hardship and distress, which may force certain groups below the poverty threshold. Disasters result in the loss of lives, homes and assets; they disrupt livelihood opportunities, schooling and provision of social services, erode savings and create health problems, sometimes with long-term consequences (Buckle *et al*, 2001; UNISDR, 2004; Benson & Twigg, 2007).

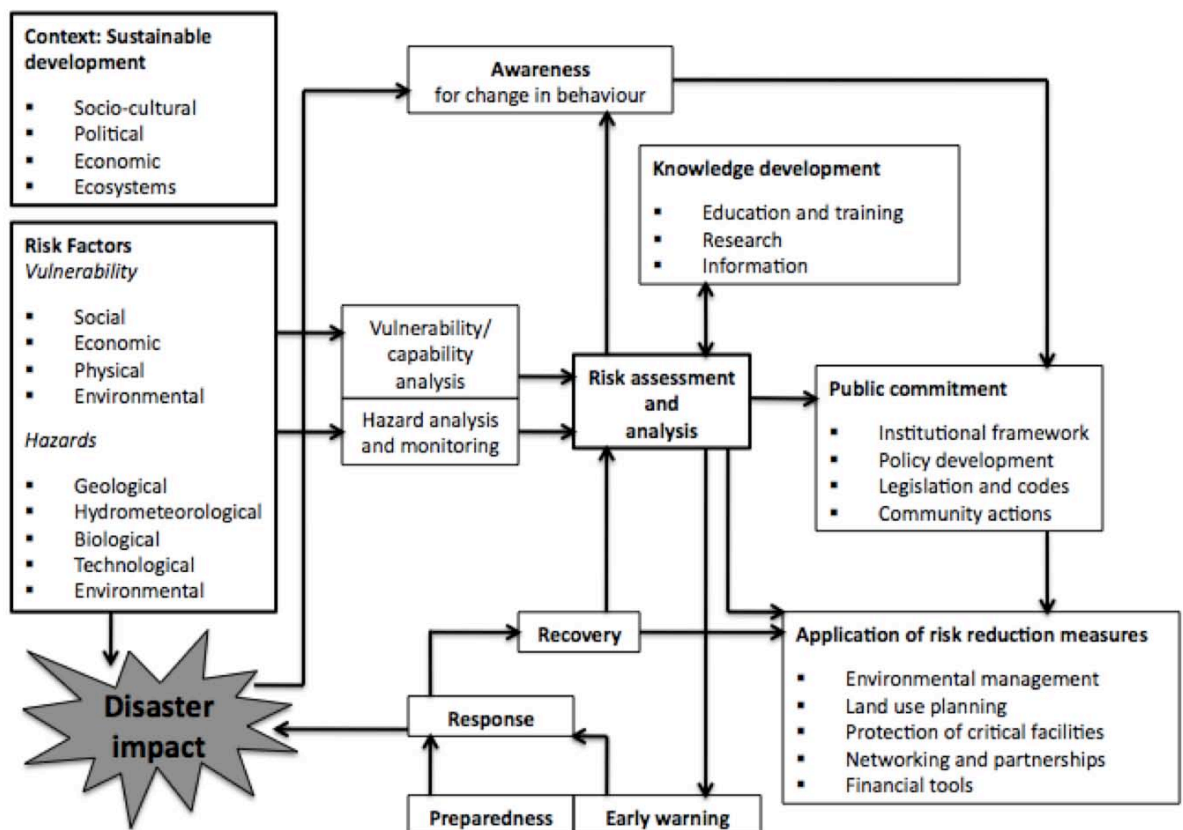
It is important to take account of the definition in the South African Disaster Management Act No 57 of 2002 which indicates that a disaster is a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing or threatening to cause widespread human, material, or environmental losses that exceed the ability of the affected community to cope using only its own resources (South Africa, 2002).

### **2.2.3 Disaster risk reduction**

Van Niekerk (2005:6) explains that disaster risk reduction aims to implement certain strategic initiatives (policies, strategies and practices) that will ultimately reduce or eliminate conditions of hazard and vulnerability at the local level. Reducing risk requires that all stakeholders change their perception and behaviour to place a high priority on safety in planning and development. From this definition it is clear that input at local level is needed to formulate community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives and that the principles of development communication need to be adapted to aid the implementation of disaster risk reduction initiatives.

Twigg (2004) bases his reasoning and definitions on a framework for disaster risk reduction, which is made up of various aspects, which are however not all relevant to this study. The relevant aspects will be highlighted and briefly discussed in order to show the importance of communication and participation in disaster risk reduction.

**Figure 2 – A framework for disaster risk reduction as adapted from the UNISDR framework for disaster risk reduction**



Source: Adapted from the UNISDR framework for disaster risk reduction (UNISDR, 2004)

The aspects of communication and participation can be seen in the following areas of the framework presented by Twigg (2004) as adapted from the UNISDR and now discussed: awareness to initiate change in behaviour, knowledge development that includes education, training, research and information and finally public commitment.

All these aspects are individually as important as the next but the framework suggests a flow from one to the next, which almost forms a system. First comes awareness; individuals need to be aware of their situations and be aware of the opportunities that exist out there. Once they have realised that there is an ideal that can be set as a goal, behaviour change can be motivated and individuals will be willing to adopt small changes at a time in order to achieve a much bigger collective goal (McKee *et al.*, 2000).

Secondly, knowledge development is aimed at empowering individuals and facilitating capacity development in order to improve knowledge and decision making skills (Lopes *et al.*, 2002). Finally, public commitment is the foundation for not only participation to take place but also the basis for the success of any disaster risk reduction initiative as individuals need to buy into the activities and need to understand their role in improving their situations and improving their resilience (Lopes & Theisohn, 2003).

Local context is now needed in order to compare the South African priorities with other academics and their suggested disaster risk reduction frameworks. The South African National Disaster Management Framework has been adopted by the South African government and stipulates how South Africa as a country, disaster risk management specialists and individuals working in the field of disaster risk reduction need to deal with disaster risk management in South Africa.

The framework consists of components, which are known as key performance areas (KPA's), which group the various focus areas of the framework in a logical manner, and secondly enablers, which support the implementation of each of the key performance areas (South Africa, 2005).

The four key performance areas of the National Disaster Management Framework are: Integrated institutional capacity for disaster risk management, Disaster risk assessment, Disaster risk reduction and Response and recovery. The four KPA's allow one to clearly see the objectives of the National Disaster Management Framework and indicate the priority areas that have been identified by the South African government. The three enablers supporting the KPA's, which are provided for in the National Disaster Management Framework, are: Information management and communication, Education, training, public awareness and research, and Funding arrangements for disaster risk management.

Together with the KPA's, each of the enablers has specific key performance indicators against which progress and implementation can be measured. The first enabler of the framework is directed at information management and communication and consists of the following imperatives (South Africa, 2005): creating awareness, promoting a culture of risk avoidance and establishing good media relations. The key performance indicators that need to be achieved in order to attain the imperatives consist of information dissemination programmes and channels of communication between all spheres of government, organs of state, communities and the media which need to be established (South Africa, 2005) and finally disaster risk management information which needs to be easily accessible to all at no additional charge (South Africa, 2005).

Enabler 1, Information management and communication, addresses the need for communication under which participation and development communication can be categorised. It is thus clear that the National Disaster Management Framework has provided room for the role of communication and understands the importance of participation within both the disaster risk reduction and disaster management spheres (South Africa, 2005).

The National Disaster Management Framework provides the South African scope of participation and communication within community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives. Although this framework provides the South African overview as stipulated by the legislation, emphasis needs to be placed on the multifaceted nature of disaster risk reduction.

Van Niekerk (2005) focused his doctoral study on this very aspect of disaster risk reduction and integrates much of the South African framework and streamlines it into an in-depth view of multi-sphere disaster risk reduction. By means of integrating various aspects of the framework and looking at numerous aspects of risk reduction, Van Niekerk (2005) suggests an integrated approach to disaster risk reduction by means of a revised framework indicating how the different frameworks need to come together. This suggested framework consists of themes and relevant variables. The two themes that are the most relevant to this study will be stated briefly.

The first is knowledge production and management consisting of the following variables: education and training, research, public awareness, public participation, traditional knowledge and regional linkages, while the second is practice which consists of the following variables: early warning systems, information management and communication. Van Niekerk's (2005) suggested framework places emphasis on various aspects, which exist within participation and communication alike.

Both the South African disaster risk reduction framework and Van Niekerk's (2005) framework now need to be placed in a global context in order to establish what is being prioritised globally for disaster risk reduction initiatives and activities. In order to do this the Hyogo Framework for Action needed to be consulted and has been summarised according to the topics relevant to this study.

#### **2.2.4 Hyogo Framework for Action**

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held from 18 to 22 January 2005 in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, and adopted the present "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters". The Conference provided a unique opportunity to promote a strategic and systematic approach to reducing vulnerabilities and risks to hazards. It underscored the need for, and identified ways of, building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters (UNISDR, 2005).

The Hyogo Framework for Action's (HFA) priorities for action that tie in with participation and communication within disaster risk reduction, have been extracted from the full framework in order to highlight only those priorities that focus on communication and participation for disaster risk reduction. The relevant priorities state that a gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training (UNISDR, 2005).

Further relevant priorities that need to be highlighted state that cultural diversity, age, and vulnerable groups should be taken into account when planning for disaster risk reduction and finally both communities and local authorities should be empowered to manage and reduce disaster risk by having access to the necessary

information, resources and authority to implement actions for disaster risk reduction (UNISDR, 2005). The priorities for action stipulated by the HFA motivate the use of knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

These priorities for action as stipulated by the HFA need to be based on key activities, which will assist in the attainment of these priorities. Some of the suggested activities, which are relevant to participation and communication, will now be mentioned as outlined by the UNISDR (2005) and an overview of the aim of each of these suggested activities will be provided.

Activities that promote community participation in disaster risk reduction need to do so through the adoption of specific policies, the promotion of networking, the strategic management of volunteer resources, the attribution of roles and responsibilities, and the delegation and provision of the necessary authority and resources (UNISDR, 2005). Activities need to promote community-based training initiatives and should consider the role of volunteers, as appropriate, to enhance local capacities to mitigate and cope with disasters (UNISDR, 2005). Activities need to allow equal access to appropriate training and educational opportunities for women and vulnerable constituencies; promote gender and cultural sensitivity training as integral components of education and training for disaster risk reduction (UNISDR, 2005).

The various frameworks discussed above, establish and reaffirm the importance of both participation and communication in the disaster risk reduction fields and provide context for the need of both participation and communication. These frameworks guide the implementation of activities, channel the allocation of funds and allow for the creation of universal goals that need to be achieved in order to facilitate communication and participation not only in community-based disaster risk

reduction initiatives but in all disaster risk reduction initiatives. Community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives are guided by legislation which supports participation, enforces community-based approaches to risk reduction and aims to establish community ownership of community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives.

All these aspects fit in with the aims of development communication and the goals of empowering local communities at large. The next section of the study will thus provide the fundamentals of development communication, two of the main paradigms that exist within development communication and emphasise the implementation of the suggested principles within a disaster risk reduction context.

### **2.3 Theoretical approaches underpinning development communication**

The principles of development communication will be explored and need to be understood within the context of disaster risk reduction. The researcher aims to make a very important link between risk reduction literature and that of development communication. Both these fields are complex and as seen above in the community-based disaster risk reduction literature, not all aspects will be able to be evaluated, but those aspects relevant to this study within development communication will now also be evaluated and analysed.

Development communication is a complex term and is very often misunderstood and not properly defined (Balit, 2004; Deane, 2004; Servaes, 2008). Development communication could refer to communication for development or the communication of development initiatives as both these options impact on the implementation of activities within the development communication environment (Servaes, 2008).

Waisbord (2003) reflects on the reasoning behind the variety of definitions and ascribes the confusion to the fact that definitions of development communication are numerous because they reflect the 'scientific premises of research' and the interests and political agendas of organisations in the field of development. Bosch (2009) summarises Waisbord's (2003) view by explaining that each theoretical approach to development is based on its own definitions of the concept and on what ideal communication or development itself should be.

The confusion relating to the definition of development communication is due to the impact of various underlying theoretical approaches, which exist within development communication. There are definitions rooted in the modernisation paradigm and in the participative paradigm. Both views need to be explored to indicate the drivers behind the shifts in definition and to move the study towards formulating its own definition within the context of the study. First, though, attention will be given to a variety of existing definitions in the field of development communication to emphasise the point that there are numerous definitions.

Moemeka (2000) conceptualises development as: the positive change whereby communities advance not only in terms of material wealth, but also in terms of social, political, cultural and human wellbeing that includes freedom, equality and human rights. What makes this definition of development communication so important is that it highlights the aim to improve people's lives and possibility they can improve the lives of others.

Development communication as defined by Fraser and Villet (1994) is based on "the planned use of communication techniques, activities and media which gives people powerful tools both to experience change and actually guide it." This highlights the adaptability of communication techniques and these authors go on to argue that an intensified exchange of ideas among all sectors of society can lead to greater

involvement of people in a common cause. It is this common cause that is shared by communities, but it is the very same common causes that are also so often overlooked in development communication initiatives (Fraser & Villet, 1994) because external parties only focus on providing information to these communities and do not notice the commonality of issues shared by community members.

Mefalopulos (2008:8) uses the World Bank's definition of development communication, which considers development communication as an interdisciplinary field based on empirical research that helps to build consensus while it facilitates the sharing of knowledge to achieve positive change in development initiatives. In practice, development communication needs to function within this multifaceted environment and is impacted by various role-players, the political environment, people's perceptions and the level of communication the project participants and communities function at (Servaes, 2008).

There was thus a need for a new paradigm within development communication but also a revised definition for development communication had to be found. One set of definitions defined development communication as the systematic utilisation of communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural communities at local level, while other definitions stated development communication needed to be human- rather than media-centred (McKee, 1994; Waisbord, 2001; Mefalopulos, 2008). From these two definitions it becomes clear that human input is required in order to change the focus from information dissemination to human-centredness. Participation from the bottom up is the missing link when it comes to communication, development and creating common understanding.

The above-mentioned view on human input ties in with the fact that development communication needs to function as a social process, which involves individuals and is based on dialogue taking place amongst individuals at local level within a social context (Mody, 1997; Mefalopulos, 2008). This suggested dialogue can take place using a variety of tools and methods (Mody, 1997). The important issue that this definition highlights is that development communication seeks change at different levels which consists of listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained measured change.

In order to gain insight into the foundations of development communication which impact on defining development communication the paradigm shift within development communication needs to be looked at. The two main paradigms that need to be analysed and understood are the modernisation paradigm and the participative paradigm, which both indicate this shift within development communication.

### **2.3.1 The Modernisation Paradigm**

The modernisation paradigm focused on changing developing communities into reflections of developed communities mostly without considering local needs, indigenous knowledge and without community consultation (Jennings, 2000; Balit, 2004; Servaes, 2008). Mefalopulos (2008:44) outlines that in order to achieve the goals of modernisation, approaches consisted of the diffusion and adoption of the values, principles and models that were guiding the development of wealthier countries. In other words, individuals, communities and countries were placed on a path of change that would ultimately turn their lives into something unfamiliar and removed from their culture and everyday traditions.

The negative impact of modernisation also needs to be understood and refers to individuals in poor countries abandoning their traditional beliefs and embracing modern behaviour favouring innovation. This meant that traditional society started losing its originality and individuality and all communities were persuaded to change into something presented to them as better than their current way of life (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007; Mefalopulos, 2008).

This is underpinned by the opinion that problems of development were rooted in a lack of knowledge and that, consequently, interventions needed to provide people with information to change their behaviour. Relating to the concept of behaviour change, the central idea of the modernisation paradigm as highlighted by Schramm (1964) was to solve development problems by 'modernising' underdeveloped countries, which was aimed at becoming more and more like developed countries.

Communication in the sense of modernisation was seen as the transmission of information (Lerner, 1958; Schramm, 1964). Together with the providing of information came exposure to the mass media, which was seen as one of the drivers toward modern attitudes and beliefs within the modernisation paradigm. Lerner (1958:53) explains that the mass media exposed mankind to the vicarious universe, which directly affected their lives.

The mass media is thus seen as the agent of social change, which is determined by two mechanisms. Firstly the community must be aware of a need that is not currently satisfied, secondly the community must then borrow behaviour in order to meet that need and in the case of modernisation, the communities started 'borrowing' western ideas and solutions instead of looking for their own local level solutions. It is thus clear that modernisation is a rigid approach with not much room for input or adaptation.

### **2.3.1.1 Defining development communication: a modernist view**

Within this context of modernisation, Rogers (1983) defined development communication as a process by which an idea is transferred from a source to a receiver with the intent to change his behaviour. Usually the source wants to alter the receiver's knowledge of some idea, create or change his attitude toward the idea, or persuade him to adopt the idea as part of his regular behaviour.

Rogers' (1983) definition of development communication emphasises one-way (top-down) communication and ties in with the principles of modernisation as discussed by Lerner (1958) and Schramm (1964). It reflects the lack of community involvement, community opinion and fails to include both developmental and communication needs at ground level.

Within the modernisation paradigm, development was defined in economic terms (Servaes, 1995). Bosch (2009) explains that this implied that development was conceived as directional and cumulative, predetermined and irreversible, progressive and imminent. This view aligns itself with one-way communication, fixed methods of project implementation and generalisation of needs. Servaes (1995) makes reference to the fact that in order for a society to be modern, the attitudes of 'backward' people, their traditionalism, bad taste, superstition, fatalism etc, which are obstacles and barriers in the traditional societies, have to be removed.

In other words, the local community's way of doing and world views were not considered and were seen as issues that needed to be overcome in order for development to take place. Bosch (2009) makes a strong argument when he states that 'modernists expected traditional Third World societies to become adequately developed by imitating the processes endemic to modern society, as modern society held the blueprint for civilisation.' This is an approach set to fail from the beginning

as it contains no localised input and shows no sensitivity towards the culture of the 'developing' community (Naidoo, 2010). The above literature reinforces the importance of distinguishing between development communication today and development communication as defined during the modernisation paradigm.

Mefalopulos (2008:25) suggests that failure to do this leads to misconceptions and wrong expectations and ultimately modernisation was not successful. Development communication crosses over various disciplines and is distinguished from other areas of communication due to its dialogical approach and participative focus (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998; Mefalopulos, 2008). The shift towards a new paradigm, which more inclusively addressed the issue of various disciplines, is what drove many practitioners and theorists to criticise the modernisation paradigm. Some of this criticism will now be explained.

### **2.3.1.2 Critique of the modernisation paradigm**

The modernisation paradigm has constantly received criticism because of its predominantly economic focus. Servaes (1991) criticises the modernisation paradigm by arguing that modernisation neglected to consider the relevance of social dimensions and failed to account for a number of socio-political factors present within communities. Bosch (2009) argues that indigenous knowledge was viewed as unsatisfactory as it was unscientific and often considered part of the information deficit facing traditional communities.

Further criticism of the modernisation theory is its use of a top-down communication approach. This initial strategy to transfer messages from experts/project coordinators, in a top-down approach, did not yield the expected results for development communication initiatives and Bessette (2004:7) argues that it is much more effective to use appropriate communication strategies to build

capability within local communities. Bessette's (2004) argument ties in with the fact that those individuals who were communicating the information in the top-down approaches were the experts and the messages communicated by them were correct (Bosch, 2009). This meant that the assumption was made that communities receiving these messages did not know any better and as such communities started rejecting the messages that did not involve them or address their specific needs (Deane, 2004; Bosch, 2009).

Development communication could no longer afford to focus on changing behaviours of individuals who have no use for the information provided and function within a completely different and unique context. Development communication could also no longer afford to not be based on the newer approach which focused on participation and dialogue.

Without participation development communication cannot claim to have an inclusive focus or show true understanding of the needs of community members (Forbes-Biggs, 2008). Insight into the situation at community level should form the basis for both development communication initiatives and the establishment of community-based disaster risk reduction projects. The need for communities to have their voices heard in decision making and project implementation is one of the main drivers behind the shift towards a new development communication paradigm: the participative paradigm. The main concepts of the participative paradigm need to be looked at as the founding principles still guide development communication today.

### **2.3.2 The Participative Paradigm**

The shift from the modernisation paradigm towards an alternative paradigm was mostly driven by the need for people's participation and the drive for empowerment at local level by means of development initiatives. Mefalopulos (2008:50) describes this push towards participation as originating from the fact that participatory approaches started gaining increased recognition within the development and development communication fields.

One of the important aspects absorbed by the participative paradigm, which was overlooked by the modernisation paradigm, is highlighted by Servaes (1999) who explains that the viewpoint of local public groups is considered before the resources for development projects are allocated and distributed. The participatory paradigm will now be analysed by using principles that have come forth from the various aspects of the literature, which have been grouped according to the aspects addressed by the participative paradigm.

An important observation has been made by Servaes (2008) in that there has been a shift in focus; development communication should not attempt to create a need for the information, which is being disseminated, but rather disseminate information for which there is a need. This shift in focus has become the important driver within the field of development communication.

From a disaster risk reduction point of view one of the biggest motivators for the inclusion of participative approaches is the conversion of knowledge into action, which is vital when it comes to risk awareness and risk reducing behaviour or strategies. Knowledge requires the relevant action in order to bring about change (Altafin, 1991; Gaventa, 2002; Del Castello & Braun, 2006).

### **2.3.2.1 Defining development communication: a participative perspective**

During the last few years there has been a marked shift within the field of development and development communication as participative initiatives gain more and more support and development communication principles become increasingly important when it comes to the implementation of development projects and initiatives (Altafin, 1991; Richardson & Rajasunderam, 1991; Bessette, 2004).

It is this participative shift that has triggered much of the focus of the research and the aim of the study, which is based within the field of development communication and disaster risk reduction. The definition for participatory development communication as formulated by Bessette (2004:10) forms the basis for understanding not only the concept but also the objectives of development communication. This definition sees participatory development communication as the use of communication to facilitate community participation within a development initiative.

All the above-mentioned definitions highlight the desired results and intended principles of development communication but none specifically addresses the issue of participation or community involvement clearly enough. For the purposes of this study the following definition as contextualised by Bessette (2004) will be accepted and can be referred back to in order to support the arguments that will be made later on. Bessette (2004) makes use of participatory development communication and defines it as the process by which people become the leading actors in their own development instead of being mere recipients of external development interventions.

Bessette (2004:10) continues to emphasise the fact that development communication should be a planned activity, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders, based on common goals or developmental problems identified within the community, with the aim of finding applicable solutions, which support the respective development initiative. These suggested solutions to the identified problems need to be based on development communication strategies and processes in order to achieve these solutions (Carley *et al.*, 2001; Cornwall, 2003; Bessette, 2004).

This continued shift of focus within the development communication environment emphasises the importance of interactive and participatory processes instead of simply producing and disseminating information independently from community processes as before the arrival of this new trend (Carley *et al.*, 2001; Del Castello & Braun, 2006).

However, participation is as difficult a term to define as development communication and provides no pre-set method of applying participation to development communication. Not only does the lack of a true definition hamper theoretical arguments and common understanding, it also causes confusion as to the true meaning of participation.

It is this confusion that has allowed many individuals and project initiatives to exploit communities by displaying participation as bait only to impress communities but not to truly involve them. Merely asking someone's opinion is not true participation (Bessette, 2004; Del Castello & Braun, 2006). It is the difficulty in defining participation and the fact that there are no clear principles for participatory development communication that has driven the researcher to compile such principles relevant to the study within a disaster risk reduction context.

### **2.3.2.2 Principles of participatory development communication in a community-based disaster risk reduction context**

If one places the participative approach within a disaster risk reduction context one would be able to achieve the following through a participative approach: the opportunity to discuss natural resource management practices and problems; the proper identification, analysis and prioritisation of problems and needs and the provision of responses to problems that have been identified by implementing concrete initiatives for those problems. Localised solutions for locally identified problems are what participative development communication aims for within development communication initiatives (Servaes, 1991; Bessette, 2004).

Mefalopulos (2008:89) looks at the principles of development communication, which have been adapted to form the basis of this study. The key elements, which need to be considered in order for an initiative or community-based risk reduction project using development communication, can be broken into nine important aspects, which will now be discussed from a development communication angle and applied in a disaster risk reduction context.

**Table 1: Important principles of development communication within a disaster risk reduction context as adapted from Mefalopulos (2008)**

| Development communication principles | Development communication principles defined  | Development communication principles applied within a risk reduction context  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Dialogical</b>                    | Two-way communication model. Facilitates mutual understanding, assesses situations and seeks to establish wider consensus. Allows project priorities to be aligned with needs of local stakeholders. Focuses on building trust, optimising knowledge, minimising risks and reconciling differences. Should always include active listening. | Allowing stakeholders and community members to provide input by identifying their needs, evaluating hazards that impact their lives and ranking risks within their communities. Project scope can thus be developed to address risks faced by communities and include capacity building strategies for the specific needs of the community. |
| <b>Inclusive</b>                     | Important within situation analysis phase in order to gain in-depth understanding of the relevant stakeholders. Avoid omitting a group from the assessment. Specifically focus on groups that are marginalised. Gender issues and cultural identity cannot be ignored and needs to be included.   | A variety of community members need to jointly assess their community's risks and hazards. All groups should be included such as the most vulnerable, the elderly, adolescent girls and community leaders. This will provide varied but in-depth context-specific information. Cultural sensitivity is important in order to be inclusive.  |

|                      |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| <b>Heuristic</b>     | Sharing meaning amongst stakeholders should allow them to discover problems and solutions for themselves and learn something for themselves. Focus on creating mutual understanding amongst participants/stakeholders. Shared meaning should also be created regarding the objectives of the relevant initiatives/projects. | Those community members participating should share their thoughts and ideas with the group. This will allow group discussion and shared understanding of the various problems, risks and hazards within the community.                          |
| <b>Empowerment</b>   | Important to uncover and generate knowledge to design better projects that lead to sustainable change. People need to be effectively empowered to voice their perceptions and opinions.   | Information provided by participants and stakeholders should be used to benefit the community directly. Disaster risk reduction initiatives should be designed to benefit all members in the community based on their input.                    |
| <b>Participatory</b> | Includes information sharing, consultation, collaboration and empowerment. Identify relevant stakeholders and value their input.  | Stakeholders should be allowed the opportunity to share their ideas, raise issues and ask questions about the disaster risk reduction project. Their input should be truly valued and considered during project development and implementation. |

|                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Contextual</b>        | Use local resources to obtain better understanding of the relevant community's needs, problems, risks and opportunities.  | Locals have insight into the situations that they are faced with on a daily basis. This is valuable information, which cannot be ignored. A generic project will not suit the disaster risk needs identified by an individual community and should be adapted to suit the specific context. |
| <b>Interdisciplinary</b> | Include principles from other disciplines. Always consider the cross-cutting nature of communication which can provide a comprehensive overview of the situation.                             | A variety of stakeholders should be allowed to contribute as disaster risk affects a variety of community members. Including various community insights will allow a more targeted approach to disaster risk reduction.   |
| <b>Strategic</b>         | Development communication should take place at the right time using applicable communication methods and techniques to reach the desired objectives.  | Information needs to be provided immediately as disaster risk reduction initiatives focus on preparedness and risk awareness.   |
| <b>Persuasive</b>        | Participants and stakeholders should be convinced to voluntarily change behaviours, initiate change and accept information provided by the communication that takes place within the project. | Communities should be made aware of solutions that may address their needs. These solutions should include behaviour-changing strategies, allow for understanding of risks and even include set out actions.  |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>Persuasion should be based within a two-way context and on accurate contextual information. All input provided should be considered and weighed to select the most appropriate option, which could lead to sustainable change.</p> | <p>These solutions should be presented in a convincing manner and incorporated into disaster risk reduction projects. Although community members should understand the importance of accepting the suggested solutions, it cannot be forced on them and needs to consider their feelings at all times.</p> |
|--|---|--|

Each of the principles will now be discussed in detail from a development communication perspective and then be applied within a community-based disaster risk reduction context to indicate the link between participatory development communication and risk reduction initiatives. The table serves as a summary and introduction to each of the principles and can constantly be referred to throughout the rest of the chapters.

### **2.3.2.2.1 Dialogical**

Twigg (2004:114) argues that by working closely with local people professionals can gain a greater insight into the communities they seek to serve, enabling them to work more effectively and produce better results. The United Nations has also acknowledged the importance of two-way participatory communication when assessing the situation, mitigating risks and building consensus toward change (Mefalopulos, 2008). It is this dialogue that participative approaches need to facilitate in order to gather local level insight.

Community participation during planning and implementation of a community-based disaster risk reduction project is in line with people's right to participate in decisions that affect their lives (Twigg, 2004). It is therefore an important part of democratisation in society (Servaes, 2008) and is increasingly demanded by the participants at community level.

Adopting participatory development communication principles within community-based disaster risk reduction projects may seem pointless when projects usually have a rigid structure and specific goals that guide the implementation of the project. It is important to understand the potential value added by development communication in projects and disaster risk reduction initiatives (Jennings, 2002). In order to ensure this added value within a project it is necessary to avoid the occurrence of the following two factors: failure to use effective communication and the lack of people's involvement (Gaventa, 2002; Mefalopulos, 2008).

Some of the added value of participative approaches includes enhancing project design and sustainability. Due to the dialogical nature (Mefalopulos, 2008; Servaes, 2008) of development communication, stakeholder involvement may be the single deciding factor when it comes to adopting a two-way communication strategy within a community-based disaster risk reduction project or any development communication initiative for that matter (Fraser & Villet, 1994; Del Castello & Braun, 2006). Stakeholder involvement requires participation in the actual project from an early stage to ensure the right needs are addressed within the community.

Mefalopulos (2008:26) explains that the concept of dialogue used within development communication refers to more than just engaging people in a conversation or discussion. More attention needs to be drawn to the professional facilitation of dialogical methods among stakeholders to explore and identify priorities and best alternatives leading to change. Freire (1970) whose work on

dialogue is hailed in the development communication field as that of the key theorist, views participation with a strong emphasis on dialogue and emphasises that the process of dialogue is crucial in the personal transformation of individuals at community level. Similarly to the work of Mefalopulos (2008), Freire (1970) explains that participation should not be the enforcement and adoption of modernist ideals, but should aim at empowering those individuals involved in the participative action promoted by the project or community-based initiative.

Yoon (1996) as highlighted by Bosch (2009) states that empowerment may be equated to placing people in charge of the process while the experts or, in the case of this study, the facilitators and project coordinators, remain in the background. Placing this in a disaster risk reduction view means that dialogue needs to take place in order to prioritise needs, investigate livelihoods, human, social and economic capital, classify and rank hazards and ultimately understand which risk reduction strategies will improve the vulnerability of the affected communities (Wisner *et al.*, 2004; Pelling, 2007).

From this viewpoint, it is clear that dialogue in this case also refers to joint decision-making and true understanding of grassroots level issues. Freire (1970) clarifies this form of dialogue as 'conscientisation', which is dialogue aimed at exposing unwarranted power imbalances and directing this consciousness towards social change. Freire (1970) further emphasises the fact that this process can only be achieved from 'inside out' and not by means of a top down approach. This means that participation needs to take place within the community's own context where the members are aware of the issues and factors impacting their lives.

The important aspect to remember is that dialogue has the ability to foster involvement amongst local stakeholders and external individuals who share the responsibility for making suggestions, contributing ideas and finding solutions accepted and understood by all parties involved in the risk reduction initiative.

#### **2.3.2.2.2 Inclusive**

The top down view of development, which was promoted by the modernisation paradigm, was starting to lose popularity due to all of the above-mentioned factors but most importantly because participation could provide the one basic element that modernisation lacked and that was cultural sensitivity (Waisbord, 2001; Mefalopulos, 2008). The issue of inclusion is very relevant within the disaster risk reduction environment and will be elaborated on in order to emphasise its importance and the role of being culturally sensitive in community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives.

Every community is unique and has its own cultural practices, traditions, social norms and way of life. The fact that communities are so different means that there is no generic solution to issues that they face but also no room for assumptions and generalisations about the community itself. Development communication emphasises the importance of understanding the audience and showing insight into their situation, needs and local knowledge. For the purpose of this study attention needs to be given to cultural diversity because the study will focus on adolescent girls in the community. The idea is not to focus solely on gender but rather to create awareness of the fact that adolescent girls are different from adolescent boys and that cultural norms impact their vulnerability and daily life (Guijt & Kaul Shah, 1998; Forbes-Biggs, 2008).

Servaes (2008) refers to the aspect of inclusion as multiplicity, which needs to be explained as it provides a development communication view for the culturally sensitive issue of participation. Huesca (2008:188) recommends strong grass roots participation in development efforts, which emphasise the importance of input at local level. Development initiatives need to favour approaches, which are based on the context, and needs of the relevant community in order to ensure participative communication. Cultural sensitivity in participation as stated by Huesca (2008:188) is necessary due to pluralism, which is rooted in communities which cultivate their own, responsive approaches to self-determined goals that emerge out of participatory processes. This makes it clear that it is important for communities to be in control of the way in which they participate and that participants want to determine what they want to achieve from the participation that takes place.

Servaes (2008:21) stresses the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and places emphasis on the processes of democratisation and participation at all levels and refers to an inclusive strategy based on traditional receivers. He makes the point that there is a level of role reversal and that those individuals that used to be receivers in traditional communication channels, have now become the contributors and need to be included in the communication and participation process.

Finally, the aspect of multiplicity as supported by Servaes and Malikhao (Servaes, 2008) explains that no universal path to development exists and that development is a multidimensional and dialectic process which differs from one society to the next. Considering all the aspects of multiplicity it is clear that participation needs to consider the diverse communities and circumstances within which it takes place and needs to be based on local needs and practices including sensitivity towards gender, which will now be looked at.

The argument behind cultural diversity within development communication is that women or in this case, adolescent girls, should not be excluded from participatory projects. Mayoux (1995) agrees with this by stating that women's involvement is often limited to implementation of initiatives where they are then not involved in the initial phases of the project. Further arguments state that by not including women's opinions so called participative projects ignore women's caring roles and allow projects to merely revert to assumptions about the community (Lind, 1997; Guijt & Kaul Shah, 1998).

It is thus important to include women/adolescent girls in projects concerning them in the planning phase through participation and to bring attention to the need for advocacy on gender issues. An important aspect to include when looking at cultural diversity is highlighted by Cornwall (2003:1338), who states that the ultimate goal of gender in development is to challenge and change relations of power that subjugate or undermine individuals.

This means that when working within a disaster risk reduction or development environment, attention needs to be given to allowing all participants, irrespective of gender to contribute and provide their input. Ensuring the inclusion of gender in development (Enarson, 2000) requires a specific approach and as highlighted by Cornwall (2003:1338) these approaches should be sensitive to local dynamics and should foster gender issues that both men and women can identify with. Von Kotze and Holloway (1996) illustrate this level of gender inclusion by recommending exercises that are designed to equally involve women and men as they work together at community level to identify local hazards, vulnerabilities, and coping strategies.

Women and adolescent girls have a key role to play in development especially from the perspective of the home and family situation (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Lind, 1997). Adolescent girls need to be seen as assets within the community who can influence many others when it comes to better decision making, understanding risk and building community capacity.

Much work still needs to be done in the development communication field to ensure the inclusion of women and allowing them to contribute when it comes to project planning and needs analysis and for valuable input throughout the development communication initiative (Guijt & Kaul Shah, 1995). The idea is not so much to focus on conventional gender approaches or categories but rather to provide insight into daily experiences and the various interactions between community members (Etzioni, 1996; Cornwall, 2003). From this it is clear that participation has an important role to play when it comes to gender equality within a project and a project will be successful only when it is undertaken with gender awareness and sensitivity towards the differences that will come out during these input sessions (Enarson, 2000).

The aspect of inclusion has been discussed in detail but Twigg (2004:114) makes the valid point that inclusion enables people to explain their vulnerabilities and priorities, allowing for problems to be defined correctly and for the design and implementation of responsive measures which need to consider the various factors that impact on community participation.

This cultural awareness is what drove the acceptance of the participation paradigm within the development communication arena. As a relatively new approach in the field of development communication the participative paradigm focuses on the cultural realities of development.

### **2.3.2.2.3 Heuristic**

Participation by community members at local level relating to disaster risk reduction should not be the only focus but emphasis needs to be placed on integrating the views of all stakeholders into disaster risk reduction and into contributing to the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction within development planning (Pelling, 2007). This idea highlights the importance of bringing local stakeholders together to raise their opinions relating to development planning and disaster risk reduction strategies at community level in order to move away from disaster response and ultimately focus on risk reduction and mitigation (Buckle *et al.*, 2001; Chiwaka, 2005; Pelling, 2007).

### **2.3.2.2.4 Empowerment**

Capacity development consists of various interventions and could include training, shared learning and knowledge relating to risk perception and awareness (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Davis *et al.*, 2004; UNISDR, 2004). Capacity development as highlighted by Hagelsteen (2009:4) is about ownership. Lopes and Theisohn (2003:2) further explain that this ownership should be at local community level. Often, however, there is a tendency for quick-fix approaches when it comes to capacity development instead of approaches that best fit the community's needs (DAC, 2006:3-4).

When the community's needs are not considered the projects initiated often fail to be self-sustaining once the external expertise or project team has withdrawn (UNCRD & SEEDS, 2002:1). This argument of considering communities' needs supports the previous arguments regarding the importance of participation at community level within community-based disaster risk reduction projects.

Capacity development ties in with participation and it is important that at the beginning of a capacity development project for disaster risk reduction, the local context is analysed and understood (UNDMTP, 1997:55; DAC, 2006:17). All stakeholders involved need to understand the political, social, cultural, economic, physical, and environmental contexts in order to develop capacities for disaster risk reduction (UNISDR, 2004:16; Wisner *et al.*, 2004:49-52; Coppola, 2007:146-158).

By involving all local stakeholders through participatory approaches it is possible to establish ownership and commitment (Anderson & Woodrow, 1998:28). Often external parties, project teams or funders disregard or do not fully understand local coping strategies and capacities. Capacity development should encourage the development of the existing capacities and base it on local knowledge and resources (DAC, 2006:35; Sida, 2005:7; Lopes & Theisohn, 2003:9).

Capacity development thus addresses certain aspects of risk reduction within communities, which can improve their chances of survival. Ultimately risk reduction through capacity development enhances the resilience of communities and individuals. Resilience within vulnerable communities should be one of the main concerns of development initiatives that incorporate disaster risk reduction and capacity development strategies in their objectives (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Hagelsteen, 2009).

The role of capacity development in community-based disaster risk reduction projects has now been explained and in order to place it within the context of development communication, these disaster risk reduction measures need to enable communities and individuals to be resilient to hazards and increase their vulnerability to these hazards (UNISDR, 2004) based on community participation as highlighted by the participative development communication principles discussed in the literature mentioned above.

Participative approaches that are initiated within communities need to move toward the idea of capacity development. Once awareness and understanding has been created focus needs to be placed on improving decision making, understanding reasons for being at risk, providing individuals with options and allowing them to be empowered through knowledge (Cannon *et al.*, 2003; UNISDR, 2004; Pelling, 2007; Mercer *et al.*, 2008). Capacity development as a participative function within disaster risk reduction has the ability to build resilience to face risks and reduce vulnerability in communities (Buckle *et al.*, 2001; Benson & Twigg, 2007).

Using communication for facilitating community participation depends first and foremost on the abilities of the researcher and practitioners to strengthen the capacity of individuals and communities in reaching out towards the suggested achievements of participative development communication. This need to strengthen the capacity of individuals is based in the clear indication of a shift towards participation in that individuals want to be part of the process of change and they want to determine their own development (Mefalopulos, 2008; Servaes, 2008).

Although the participative approach within development communication has not been defined with clarity, people is the one aspect on which all theorists have placed emphasis (Mefalopulos, 2008; Servaes, 2008). From this it is clear that the participation paradigm aims to take a more human-based approach to development communication.

Within the disaster risk reduction context, vital information needs to be gathered at local level and the best way to do this is through community level participative initiatives giving individuals an opportunity to highlight their situation, rights and risks.

Better understanding of community level problems will allow the feedback from communities to channel back into the decision making process and ultimately communities will be able to directly impact the decision about which disaster risk reduction initiatives will be implemented within their communities.

One of the main reasons behind the adoption of participation in development communication can be ascribed to the focus on individuals and their feelings, providing them with power, it motivates the establishment of further development initiatives, it provides ownership of the development initiatives at local level and it relies on grassroots information and knowledge for expertise and opinion (McKee, 1994; Mefalopulos, 2008; Servaes, 2008).

#### **2.3.2.2.5 Participatory**

Communities that provide input relating to their current situation, immediately become more aware of the hazards that pose a threat to their lives and property. Risk awareness is not the same for every individual in the community nor is the variety of risks impacting every individual in the community (Minnie, 2000). This approach highlighted by Minnie (2000) has indicated that participation can directly empower the most vulnerable person as improved awareness of risks can immediately start impacting that person's behaviour. Awareness of risks and understanding risky behaviour discussed in a participative manner have the ability to support the objectives of development communication initiatives as well as disaster risk reduction initiatives (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Buckle *et al.*, 2001; Davis *et al.*, 2004).

Participant involvement from the first day ensures common understanding of goals, sharing of responsibility and allows participants to provide vital information about the relevant project or matter at hand (Forbes-Biggs, 2008). Participation by

stakeholders provides valuable insights into the local reality of the community and encourages the sharing of knowledge that, as highlighted by Mefalopoulos (2008) and McKee *et al.* (2000), leads to more relevant, effective and sustainable project design.

The following possibilities available through participative development communication need to be mentioned in order to adapt them for disaster risk reduction initiatives. Participation focuses on inclusion and providing a voice for the less powerful individuals in communities; it has the ability to allow more options to choose from when it comes to finding solutions for disaster risk issues (Gaventa, 2002; Cornwall, 2003).

In order to ensure the suggested inclusion of individuals and to value the input of communities, communication needs to ensure that the information is transmitted efficiently and as directly as possible with the ability to provide feedback in both directions: from the bottom upward and from the top downward (Gaventa, 2002; Del Castello & Braun, 2006). This is where the importance of participation comes in and needs to be explained in order to emphasise its role within development communication and disaster risk reduction initiatives.

The importance of participation is rooted in the fact that proper participation creates understanding, connectivity and commitment and thus creates a greater combined effect, without which communication remains at a basic level often without participation or commitment. One of the important aspects of participation is that it focuses on the creation of knowledge based on the most important issues and, as stressed by Del Castello & Braun (2006:39), has the potential to shorten the time it takes to integrate knowledge and convert this knowledge into action.

Del Castello and Braun (2006:39) consider a scenario without effective participation and from this it is clear that less vocal, less represented groups, less connected groups like rural communities, the most vulnerable, poor and least educated will not be heard. When local opinions are not considered many needs for services will not be addressed, local knowledge, often gained over generations of observations and experience, will not be recognised or heard, new knowledge will not be accepted and the sustainability of interventions will be short-lived. All these issues provide enough reason to give communities a participative voice in order to stimulate the development of dialogical risk reduction interventions.

Gro Brundtland as quoted by Ramirez and Quarry (2004:13) sums up the need for the participative sharing of information by stating: “The only way we can work for a common cause, for common interest, to improve our condition, is really through communication. Basically, it has to do with democracy, with participation, with spreading of knowledge and insight and ability to take care of our own future “.

This is where development communication and the principle of participation link up with disaster risk reduction in that both have a social dimension and focus on including local input in developing strategies for improving the lives of affected communities. Participation is the essential condition for development to take place. The implementation of development initiatives will not have much impact without the effective participation of the communities involved (Besette, 2004; Mefalopulos, 2008). Participatory communication and the related tasks can be defined as communication which encourages participation, stimulates critical thinking, and stresses the process, rather than specific outcomes associated with modernisation and progress (Altafin, 1991; Waisbord, 2001).

From a disaster risk reduction perspective, participation needs to form part of project development to gain insight into the problems communities are dealing with, the risks communities face and to understand the local view on these issues (Nomdo & Coetzee, 2002).

Participation provides information from a localised perspective and empowers participants through involvement in decision-making but also, as highlighted by Mefalopulos (2008:7), it opens up dialogue, assesses risks, identifies solutions and seeks consensus for action. These aspects are key issues when it comes to development communication and its role in disaster risk reduction initiatives.

When the participative principles (as indicated in Table 1) have been employed in a disaster risk reduction project/initiative, the project coordinators can refine the project's objectives because of increased understanding relating to the context within which development and disaster risk reduction needs to take place. Mefalopulos (2008:12) explains that project scope adjustment has to be rooted in the early incorporation of communication, which in turn allows the use of all available knowledge and perspectives and provides in-depth analysis of the situation in order to ultimately enhance the planning of the project and the outcomes. This highlights the importance of the link existing between participative development communication and the disaster risk reduction environment. A few cases will now be looked at in order to reflect the support for participation within various international projects and disaster risk reduction initiatives.

A specific example which relates to the importance of participation in disaster risk reduction can be found in the Australian Aid Program disaster risk reduction policy (AusAID, 2009), which emphasises the fact that any risk reduction initiative needs to be rooted firmly in the following principles:

Disaster risk reduction must be integrated into development activities. Responsibility for disaster risk reduction should be decentralized. Effective disaster risk reduction requires community participation and disaster risk reduction needs to be customized to particular settings. Attention needs to be given to respect people's rights and values in disaster risk reduction activities, including: the value of local culture and indigenous knowledge of communities in managing disaster risks and impacts. Finally the strategy aims to ensure that policies and programs for disaster risk reduction are socially inclusive and meet the needs of the most vulnerable people and communities.

Another example of disaster risk reduction initiatives emphasising the importance of community participation, empowerment and ownership is that of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Helmer & Van Aalst, 2005):

Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Community-based Organisations and development NGOs have much experience in using participatory investigations to gather information and design programs and activities. Community risk assessments (CRA) emphasize ownership and trust, thereby increasing chances of success. One example is the Red Cross and Red Crescent's 'Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments' (VCAs), which have been used in over 80 countries. Worldwide, they have led to a range of disaster preparedness activities in communities; and have also been used to influence national and international agendas.

Helmer and Van Aalst (2005) further explain that community-based participatory investigations gather diverse data using diverse methods. They collect information about livelihoods, resilience, local risks and hazards through methods such as risk mapping, transect walks, focus group discussions, wealth ranking, asset inventories, seasonal calendars and risk prioritisation. It is clear that international associations endorse the use of participative strategies in disaster risk reduction initiatives.

Another international association supporting community-based participation is Christian Aid which was extensively involved in the Orissa supercyclone and the Gujarat earthquake respectively. Keve and Mohanty (*In Palakudiyil & Todd, 2003*) share the lessons learnt and explain that disaster risk reduction approaches should allow communities to plan together for change:

While disasters traumatise the social systems and structures of a community and test its capacity to cope, we have seen that often the management of relief and rehabilitation can provide a unique opportunity for an entire community to work together for change. The micro-planning approach adopted by Aparajita in Orissa actually brought about not just people's participation in planning to lessen the effects of future disasters, but also encouraged their involvement in long-term development. Micro planning involves planning with, and within, a community. It respects and draws on the knowledge of the people – as distinct from that of 'experts' – and trusts the community's ability to cope. People at the grassroots level discuss, identify and decide on their development needs and priorities. They then take an active part in carrying out a plan. Transparency and accountability is key.

All three of the above-mentioned cases are examples of organisations working in the field of disaster risk reduction on a daily basis. The fact that three very different cases all support the incorporation of participation in disaster risk reduction initiatives and giving ownership to the communities involved, ties in with the principles of participatory development communication.

The participative paradigm supports the movement towards change at community level which is also the aim of empowered participation, which will be discussed in order to provide insight into the improvement of community members' lives and not merely extracting information from them.

Participation is not merely seeking the opinions of community members and local stakeholders when it comes to identifying risks, understanding the community and decision-making. Participation needs to reflect true input by individuals who have indicated a clear understanding of the circumstances surrounding them and the proposed disaster risk reduction initiative. It is important to distinguish between types of participation as participation is easily misunderstood and mere responses from community members are seen as 'participation' when ultimately no insight is gained into the community members' lives.

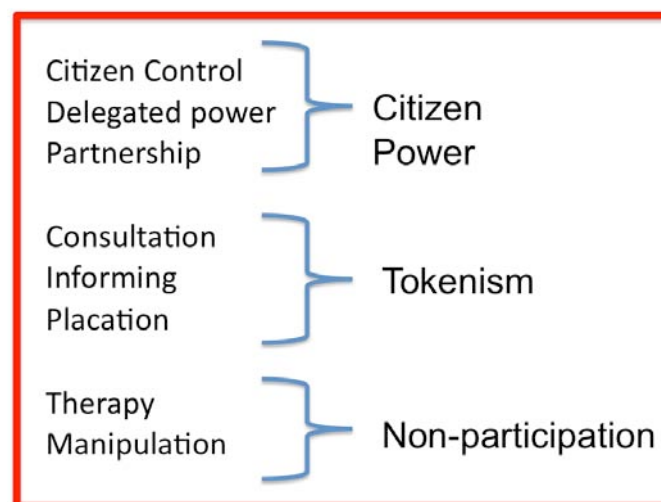
Mefalopulos (2008:11) illustrates participation in development initiatives as ranging from the lowest form to the highest form, which is where local stakeholders share equal weight in decision making with external stakeholders. For the purpose of this study, attention needs to be given to the highest form of participation, empowered participation, as this is the level of participation that should be aimed for within disaster risk reduction and development communication initiatives. Participation is ranked from 'Passive participation, participation by consultation to functional participation' and ultimately 'empowered participation'.

Freire (1970) explains that empowered participation is achieved when stakeholders are part of the process and part of a joint analysis which should lead not only to decision making about what should be accomplished but also how these goals should be met in the relevant disaster risk reduction initiative. This creates a shared vision amongst participants and project coordinators and allows ownership of the project to be transferred to the community members themselves. This level of

decision-making and input empowers people to have a say in decisions concerning their everyday lives (Mefalopulos, 2008). It is the lack of individual input at local level that has been the biggest criticism of the top-down communication approach employed by the modernisation paradigm.

A similar model has long since been developed by Arnstein (1969) who simplifies participation in the 'ladder of social participation' which differentiates between activities and participation on the various rungs of the suggested ladder of social participation.

**Figure 3: Ladder of social participation as adapted from Arnstein (1969:217)**



Bosch (2009) and Naidoo (2010) make use of Arnstein's (1969) 'Ladder of social participation' to define the various forms of participation but in the case of this study it has been used to understand the strategies employed by development communication initiatives and disaster risk reduction projects when it comes to participation.

Bosch (2009) explains that Arnstein's (1969) 'ladder of social participation' differentiates between activities on the lower rungs of non-participation, where citizens are given a voice as a way of involving them while they remain recipients of services instead of receiving actual influence in projects. Bosch (2009) further highlights the various steps in the ladder by stating that the second rung constitutes tokenism, where consultation activities merely seek to identify the community's needs and views before making decisions. Finally, actual participation can only be observed on the highest level/rung where, according to Bosch (2009), there is involvement and actual commitment to integrating the community's views in wider processes. Furthermore the top rung indicates user-led activities, which means that experts, facilitators, funders and project coordinators assume a facilitating role in order to assist the community to achieve their goals.

This 'ladder of participation' explains the fact that participation is often used in the wrong form and misunderstood. That is why there is often confusion as to the true advantage and impact of participation. As Del Castello and Braun (2006:39) explain, the advantages of participatory approaches, despite their drawbacks, include better-targeted action, faster acceptance of solutions and interventions, more meaningful results and longer lasting effects. Within disaster risk reduction initiatives, these advantages are similar to some of the expected outcomes of interventions, which means that a participation-based approach will assist disaster risk reduction initiatives in reaching their goals and support such initiatives (Pelling, 2007).

#### **2.3.2.2.6 Contextual**

Communities gain ownership of these initiatives and the idea is that risk reduction can come from within and not necessarily in the form of external involvement (donations, financial assistance, medical treatment and international investment), which allows solutions to be localised and understood. This approach to disaster risk reduction will prevent hostility towards funders as problems are addressed by

community-based solutions and strategies and will avoid the implementation of initiatives that are removed from the local perspective and which lack insight into community needs. This is exactly the type of initiative one would find belonging to the modernisation paradigm (Jennings, 2000; Balit, 2004).

One cannot ignore the social context within which communities function and in order to consider local situations understanding of cultures and traditions must take centre stage. Mefalopulos (2008:7) states that development's focus has shifted from economic growth to include other social dimensions and it is this point that ties in perfectly with disaster risk reduction. Development that needs to take place within the disaster risk reduction environment must focus on social hazards and social vulnerability. The disaster risk reduction initiatives should then be developed according to these needs and address the risks faced by the affected communities.

#### **2.3.2.2.7 Interdisciplinary**

Participatory work as highlighted by Twigg (2004:114) takes on a multi-track approach, combining different activities, hazards and disaster phases. It is therefore well placed for dealing with the complexity of disasters and the diversity of factors affecting people's vulnerability. The process of working and achieving things together can strengthen communities. It reinforces local organisation, building up confidence, skills, capacity to cooperate, awareness and critical appraisal. In this way, it increases people's potential for reducing their vulnerability. It empowers people more generally by enabling them to tackle other challenges, individually and collectively. From a disaster risk reduction perspective it is clear that various disciplines and individuals need to come together to ensure that contributions are made representing all levels of the community, and by all stakeholders within the community.

In the same way that development communication is impacted by numerous factors, so too is the field of disaster risk reduction complex and multi-faceted. Disaster risk hinges on various terms and concepts and also depends on various role-players to act as drivers that initiate disaster risk reduction at community level (Buckle *et al.*, 2001). Some of these role-players can include police services, fire management services, emergency services, disaster management services, health facilities, the department of social development, academics in the field of disaster risk reduction, community-based organisations, non-government organisations, schools and community members.

#### **2.3.2.2.8 Strategic**

Twigg (2004:114) states that participatory risk reduction initiatives are likely to be sustainable because they build on local capacity, the participants have ownership of them, and they are more likely to be compatible with long-term development plans. Participatory approaches may be more cost-effective, in the long term, than externally driven initiatives, partly because they are more likely to be sustainable and because the process allows ideas to be tested and refined before adoption. This provides a sound argument for the implementation of participative strategies within disaster risk reduction initiatives as communities and donors alike want to cut costs but still achieve their goals.

#### **2.3.2.2.9 Persuasive**

Twigg (2004:114) points out that external agents cannot cope alone with the enormous risks facing vulnerable populations. The risks that vulnerable communities face cannot be the sole responsibility of external partners or funders (Twigg, 2004). Local people can bring a wealth of resources, especially knowledge and skills, to help reduce risk once they have been persuaded to accept these risks and use the information that has been provided to them.

In this context persuasion is more focused on individuals accepting their roles in community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives. Persuasion is usually categorised as manipulation and according to Steyn (2004) this raises the question: how can a facilitator be persuasive while encouraging participation or two-way communication, which appears to ignore the knowledge of the persuader? The dilemma of persuasion is clarified by Steyn (2004) who argues that information shared by the persuader, within a participative context, still allows for the questioning and discussion of the information shared.

When working in a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative there are certain aspects of information that cannot only be participative but should take on a stronger form of convincing. In other words, there are certain bits of information that are crucial and that need to be accepted by the community and thereafter participation can continue to be facilitated. Habermas (1984) as endorsed by Bosch (2009) refers to open strategic action through which the persuasive message is passed on to a community for the purpose of information and which may be a participatory form of communication. Although this may not allow participants to ultimately create their own meaning, it does allow for persuasion without manipulation.

Bosch (2009) emphasises that participatory persuasion allows for discussion and even the opportunity for community members or participants to question the information that is being disseminated. Bosch (2009) argues that the result is that the indigenous knowledge that an outsider may have ignored when formulating a message is also considered when that message is debated and discussed. From this it is clear that persuasion does have a role to play in information dissemination and in development communication initiatives in that it should allow for ample debate and as Bosch (2009) explains even allow communities to be part of formulating a participatory persuasive campaign.

Nine principles of participative development communication relevant to a disaster risk reduction context have now been discussed. As much as these principles are firmly rooted in the literature and have the potential to contribute to community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives, there are always aspects that hamper the implementation of principles. Some of the limitations of the participative approach should be understood and will now be highlighted.

### **2.3.2.3 Limitations of the participative approach**

The principles of development communication have been explained from a disaster risk reduction point of view and the ability of these principles to make a sound contribution to community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives has also been indicated in this literature review. From Table 1 as discussed above (Table 1: Important principles of development communication within a disaster risk reduction context as adapted from Mefalopulos (2008)), it is clear that the principles of development communication can easily be adapted to function within the disaster risk reduction context. Although the principles of development communication and participation are strongly motivated by various authors (Richardson & Rajasunderam, 1999; Bessette, 2004; Mefalopulos, 2008; Servaes, 2008), it is important to understand that participatory development communication has limitations and does not necessarily address all the aspects that need to be considered when implementing development or disaster risk reduction initiatives. Some of these limitations will now be considered and their impact evaluated as far as possible.

One of the main contributions of development communication activities is that it encourages communities to believe that their development problems can be solved and that they can take action and be part of the solution instead of being passive spectators. Unfortunately communication alone is not enough in order to foster participation and community action whether it is in a development or disaster risk

reduction initiative. Bessette (2004:13) looks at some limitations relating to participative development communication and argues that the above-mentioned initiatives require financial and material resources and most importantly political will.

This rings as true in development initiatives as with disaster risk reduction initiatives. Communities function under both political and social rules and it is vital for the success of any initiative to have the support of both political and community stakeholders. By having political buy-in projects ensure support at local level and have a stronger case when approaching communities to participate in development communication projects as a local structure has already shown support for the initiative.

Furthermore Bessette (2004) argues that communication may not be the answer to every development problem. In some cases communication can assist to resolve a problem promptly, or it could be of little use. Although this research aims to prove the importance of development communication and participation in disaster risk reduction, it is necessary to keep this fact in mind; development problems are extremely complex and are rooted in a wide variety of circumstances, especially in relation to disaster risk reduction. Communities are facing risks ranging from physical risks such as drought or floods to social risks like disease, assault and teenage pregnancy (Forbes-Biggs, 2008).

Participative development communication has a vital role to play in understanding the needs of communities and finding proactive solutions within their situations but it cannot be seen as a single handed solution since participation needs to go hand in hand with community support, local insight, political commitment, motivation for change and understanding of limitations in the proposed solution or disaster risk reduction initiative.

Certain challenges exist relating to the application of participatory methods in development communication and will be briefly touched on as these challenges can serve as lessons in preparing both participative or risk reduction initiatives. Participatory methods require a high initial investment in time, training and funds (Del Castello & Braun, 2006); furthermore social, educational and cultural differences influence the true understanding of participation (Midgley, 1986; Servaes *et al.*, 1996), and thus participatory tools have to be adapted to the specific social and cultural environments in which the disaster risk reduction initiative is based. Finally Del Castello and Braun (2006:42) warn against participatory manipulation, which occurs during communication among groups with different communication skills.

Participatory manipulation may occur where groups with better communication skills and of perceived higher social status can dominate weaker ones and so in turn influence the contributions made by community members (Servaes *et al.*, 1996). Participative approaches are more intense and it may take longer to delve into the issues raised by communities, which in turn means that participative approaches are more costly (Del Castello & Braun, 2006).

These limitations need to be considered, as participative development communication is not a quick-fix solution with one-word answers. It is an in-depth process, which requires all encompassing input from all stakeholders and participants involved (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera, 2004; McKee, 1994).

The time that a participative development communication approach may take often frustrates people as communities, project coordinators, funders and other stakeholders want immediate results with measurable change and improvements to their situation (Bessette, 2004; Mefalopulos, 2008; McKee, 1994).

Issues of time frame and implementation in any initiative are always important to consider but even more so when looking at disaster risk reduction initiatives, which deal with pressing issues.

A factor that places more pressure on development and disaster risk reduction initiatives is the fact that increased participation and involvement of participants means that they are closer to the problems and suggested solutions which often causes them to be extremely driven towards their cause and hungry for change (McKee, 1994; Jennings, 2000). However, this hunger for change should not only be seen as a limitation to participative development communication but should be used as a springboard for action, implementation and cooperation amongst project coordinators, participants, community leaders and funders.

The limitations of participative development communication have now been discussed and it is important to allow these limitations to serve as lessons on which to base improved participative strategies and enhance the implementation of community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

Increasing community participation can assist community-based risk reduction initiatives to achieve an improved participatory mandate that, as explained by Guijt and Kaul Shah (1998), has the possibility to facilitate improved understanding of problems and change and place emphasis on a search for development through unity rather than separation.

Much attention has now been given to the role of participative development communication in disaster risk reduction initiatives and many arguments have been made for the inclusion of participative approaches. Aspects that have been looked

at were approached from both a development communication angle and a disaster risk reduction perspective. The relation between development communication and its principles and community-based disaster risk reduction has been established and the researcher will, for the remainder of the research project, accept this link between community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives and the principles of participative development communication.

This will allow the principles to be drawn into the methodology and analysis of the research and to be used as measures to determine whether these principles were established within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and what contribution they have made. The principles of development communication that have been established are: dialogical, inclusive, heuristic, empowerment, participatory, contextual, interdisciplinary, strategic and persuasive. Chapter Three will discuss the research methodology used and the empirical findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The context within which the research took place was greatly influenced by individual perceptions, community needs and the fact that the G.I.R.R.L. Programme focused on disaster risk reduction at community level. This context called for a qualitative research approach which required input from individuals at community level who had participated in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. For this purpose focus groups were held with the participants in the various G.I.R.R.L. Project sites enabling them to contribute and share their insights. The G.I.R.R.L. Programme team that coordinated the implementation have learnt various lessons over the past three years and the researcher needed to find a way to collect these valuable lessons in order to gain insight into the processes and reasoning behind a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative such as the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. This research could contribute to future research in both disaster risk reduction and development communication. Further research on community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives could be based on this research when looking at the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. Due to the qualitative nature of the study semi-structured interviews were employed and the input of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme coordinators was added to the study, falling within the ontological dimension of research, which sets the tone for the data analysis and in-depth discussion on the findings of the study in Chapter Four.

### **3.2 Research approach**

The research approach consisted of the focus group interviews held at the three respective sites of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and relied on the input of the various participants. Furthermore the research approach included the respective G.I.R.R.L. Programme coordinators' views by means of semi-structured interviews.

The questions posed in both the focus group and semi-structured interviews were founded on the literature (see Chapter Two of this study) and are reflected in the objectives of the research.

Although the research findings are based on the focus groups and semi-structured interviews that were conducted, the researcher cannot ignore the valuable contribution of the research notes, project reports and the knowledge gained by the researcher as the G.I.R.R.L. Programme coordinator. As project coordinator, the researcher has insight into all aspects of the project and has been involved in all phases of the project from planning, site identification, and participant selection to implementation, follow-up and project evaluation. Much of the information provided by the participants during the focus groups and the interviewees of the semi-structured interviews can be supported by the experiences of the researcher. As additional resources to the research, the findings can be supported by the G.I.R.R.L. Programme reports from 2008 to 2010. The researcher has three years' worth of field notes and participant observations that have been used to explain some of the issues raised by the research participants. All additional information that the researcher has will add richness to the study and further the objectives of the research. This obviously ensures triangulation of the data.

### **3.3 Research Method**

The empirical study consisted of three focus groups and three semi-structured interviews. Both these approaches fall within the scope of qualitative research methods and will be explained below. The main reason for using both focus groups and semi-structured interviews is highlighted by Greeff (2007:286) as it is stated that aspects that are not likely to emerge in the semi-structured interviews are more likely to emerge in the focus group interviews as group dynamics act as a catalyst ultimately ensuring information is shared by participants.

It is important to provide insight into what qualitative research is and how it will be used in this study. Struwig and Stead (2007:12) highlight some of the characteristics which define qualitative research and explain that qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the issues being researched from the perspective of the research participants. Qualitative research recognises that research takes place within a specific context (Fitzpatrick & Bolton, 1994) and Struwig and Stead (2007) further take note of the fact that human behaviour does not occur in a vacuum. Individuals are influenced by the environments within which they function (Struwig & Stead, 2007:12), and the opinions of participants should not be seen in isolation but within the state of their direct environment.

Furthermore, qualitative research is a process which takes place over time and examines interrelated events (Struwig & Stead, 2007:12). Social events are not static and therefore Struwig and Stead (2007) emphasise the importance of understanding that the process of change is imperative. One specific point argued by Struwig and Stead (2007:13) is particularly relevant in this study. They argue that qualitative research is value laden and that qualitative researchers are value driven which means that the methods used and interpretations made cannot be separated from the researcher.

Ultimately qualitative research involves the studying of phenomena in their full complexity, portraying their multi-faceted forms, and therefore rarely tries to simplify what was observed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:101). The views of Leedy and Ormrod (2001) place emphasis on the unique role of the researcher within qualitative research and explain that the researcher's ability to interpret what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon. It is also accepted in qualitative research that there may be multiple perspectives on a single subject of study, held by different individuals, with each of these perspectives having equal validity, or truth (Wiggil, 2009). Seen from this perspective, the researcher is an instrument in the research process because data collection and interpretation

depend on the researcher's personal involvement in the research process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:102). The role of the researcher in this research has been discussed in Chapter One and will be briefly revisited in this chapter.

### **3.3.1 Research methods explained**

The aim of a semi-structured interview is to allow interaction between the interviewer and the respondent. Du Plooy (2002:177) explains that the interviewer is free to deviate from the predetermined questions in order to ask follow-up or probing questions based on the respondents' replies. Struwig and Stead (2007:98) agree with du Plooy (2007) when they explain that the advantage of a semi-structured interview lies in the ability of respondents to discuss issues beyond the question's confines.

With semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has a list of specific, open-ended questions to ask, but the flexible nature of the semi-structured interview allows him or her to alter the sequence of the questions if necessary (Mason, 2002:65). Mason (2002:64) goes on to highlight the point that the flexibility of the semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to take cues from the ongoing dialogue with the interviewee about what to ask next, to follow up on their responses, which are relevant to them and their specific context, and to add questions if necessary. This form of interviewing clearly allows in-depth information from the respondents and adds to the richness of data gathered.

The researcher has chosen semi-structured interviews for the reason that it is a personal method of interaction; the questions are still predetermined but allow room for individual contribution and explanation. The researcher felt that semi-structured interviews needed to be conducted due to the fact that only the semi-structured interviews would be able to evaluate a specific objective of the study, namely whether the inclusion of development principles could contribute to the successful implementation of a disaster risk reduction community-based project.

The relevant information for this research objective could only be gathered from the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team at whom the semi-structured interviews were aimed. The semi-structured interviews conducted by the research assistant provided valuable insights into the reasoning behind the project and decision-making leading to the implementation of specific aspects of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

Focus group interviews are based on group interactions to gather information and research data. Focus groups as defined by Krueger (1988:18) are “carefully planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment.” Focus groups furthermore rely on interaction within the group (Morgan & Krueger, 1993) based on the topics supplied by the researcher.

As explained by Struwig and Stead (2007:99), focus groups need to be guided by carefully planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions of a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. The questions asked in a focus group interview start with the general and non-threatening and progress gradually to the specific questions that should yield conversation about the desired topic (Struwig and Stead, 2007).

Focus group interviews allow a larger amount of information to be shared by the respondents and as emphasised by Neuman (2006) allow opportunity for respondents to share their specific attitudes,, experiences and reactions toward the topics presented by the interview questions.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher found that in order to effectively reach the research objectives focus group interviews needed to be conducted specifically to assist in achieving the following research objectives, namely: to

ascertain how development communication strategies could improve stakeholder relationships in a community-based project and to determine to what extent development communication principles could be able to address the gaps identified by the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. The focus group interviews needed to stimulate thought amongst the participants specifically relating to these two research objectives.

### **3.3.2 Sample**

The semi-structured interviews were aimed at the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team in order to gain understanding of the way in which decisions were made, how participants were selected and to establish problems as identified by the project team. The project team was involved in the implementation and coordination of the project whereas the participants in the project provided an alternative view and therefore they were asked to be involved in the focus group sessions.

Three semi-structured interviews were held with three different members of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team. The first interview was with the founder of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme, the second with one of the project coordinators and the third semi-structured interview was held with one of the project facilitators.

The G.I.R.R.L. Programme consisted of three G.I.R.R.L. Project sites made up of 63 participants over the past three years. Thus the population for the focus group interviews was 63 participants (n=63). The sample consisted of the actual respondents, as not all participants accepted the invitation to be part of the research. Thus the sample size consisted of 29 respondents divided as follows among each of the three G.I.R.R.L. Project sites: Ikageng (Boitshoko) = 9 respondents, Maquassi (Reabona) = 12 respondents and Ventersdorp (Thuto Boswa) = 8 respondents. The size of the sample is consistent with the requirements for focus group interviews as explained by Neuman (2006) and Fern (1982).

Purposive sampling was used as the relevant respondents fitted the context of the specific research and were participants in the G.I.R.R.L. Programmes respectively (Forbes-Biggs, 2008; Forbes-Biggs, 2009; Forbes-Biggs, 2010). The participants from each site were invited to participate in focus groups as they fitted within the parameters of the original G.I.R.R.L. Programme participant selection criteria.

Patton (1990) explains that purposive sampling allows subjects to be selected because of a certain characteristic and is a popular sampling method in qualitative research. In the case of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and the individual sites, the participants of each of the projects had specific knowledge and characteristics that set them apart from other adolescent girls in the respective communities. Trochim (2006) argues that purposive sampling falls within non-probability sampling, which does not involve random selection of participants.

For this reason, the researcher decided on purposive sampling, as it allowed the participants of the various G.I.R.R.L. Programme sites to form part of the sample for the research. Purposive sampling, as the name suggests, allows one to sample with a purpose in mind (Trochim, 2006), which directly relates to the fact that the research is focused on a very specific kind of respondent, the various participants in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

Participants need to be selected, as explained by Greeff (2007:299) based on the fact that they have certain characteristics in common and the fact that the participants relate to the topic of the focus group. The participants in this research study were selected because they had all participated in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme since 2008. They were part of the implementation of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and were familiar with the project team and goals of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. Furthermore the participants were familiar with one another, which allowed participants to feel comfortable during the focus groups and ensured that there was trust amongst the participants.

### **3.3.3 Procedure**

The semi-structured interviews were conducted by a research assistant, as explained above, in order to ensure objective responses from the rest of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team. The research assistant asked the questions as pre-determined by the researcher but also allowed the respondents to guide the conversation into areas they felt were important for the study. The interview setting was a familiar and safe environment for all respondents, which ensured their comfort and allowed for a relaxed interview atmosphere. (See Annexure C for the questions asked during the semi-structured interviews.)

The focus groups were planned for each of the G.I.R.R.L. Project sites which meant that an invitation had to be sent to each of the participants. Twenty-nine (29) participants took part in the three focus group sessions which provided them with an opportunity to take part in the research and provide their input. Consent forms were sent to the schools so that the parents of the participants could give permission for their daughters to participate in the research. The aim of the consent forms was to inform the parents of the research intervention and its aims and to protect the researcher and the participants as the consent form also ensures the participants' anonymity. (See Annexure A for a copy of the consent form.)

Fern (1982) investigated how size influenced focus group discussion and found that a group of four generated fewer concepts than a group of eight. He went on to argue that a group of eight is thus more valuable when it comes to contributions made by respondents. Smith (1972) as highlighted by Fern (1982) explains that the ideal focus group size is eight to twelve members and for the purpose of this study this was accepted as the margin for the focus groups. The questions of the focus groups were predetermined according to the objectives of the study. (See Annexure B for the questions asked during the focus groups.) Although the aim was to ask all the

questions and gather as much insight into their responses as possible, the fact that adolescent girls were together in a room for a focus group allowed a lot of additional discussion to take place which provided insight into their opinions and reasoning. A facilitator with whom the participants were familiar was asked to facilitate the focus group sessions. The facilitator was experienced in focus group research as he had formed part of numerous research initiatives of the African Centre for Disaster Studies (ACDS) at North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa), and had taught high school pupils after hours. The facilitator was familiar with the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as he presented one of the sessions during the implementation phases of the Maquassi and Ventersdorp projects. The objectives of the research were discussed beforehand with the facilitator and the facilitator was provided with the relevant questions for the focus group sessions. There was thus no need for additional training and the facilitator led the focus groups under the scrutiny of the researcher.

One of the key reasons for the use of an external facilitator is highlighted by Harvey *et al.* (2002) who emphasise that an external facilitator has the ability to maintain a neutral view in order to ensure that the researcher avoids a biased approach to the research. Further support for the use of an external facilitator is expressed by Harvey *et al.* (2002) who argue that an external facilitator allows the research to benefit from impartial guidance, the creation of a safe climate and more scope for an open exchange of views.

The three focus groups were held at the three respective G.I.R.R.L. Programme implementation sites. As introduction at all three focus group sessions, the aim of the research was explained and the participants understood that their anonymity would be respected and that all contributions made would be treated with confidentiality. The participants were allowed to ask questions relating to the study and all participants that participated in the focus groups had submitted signed consent forms.

Each focus group lasted approximately two hours, which allowed the participants enough time to answer the questions posed by the facilitator, and also allowed the researcher sufficient time to ask any additional questions.

#### **3.3.3.1 Objectivity of researcher during focus groups**

The researcher felt that, due to a personal relationship with the participants and being close to the G.I.R.R.L. Programme and the research topic itself, the research would only be objective if an external facilitator was present to lead the focus group sessions and if a research assistant also made notes during the research. However, the researcher was present at all three focus group sessions and made notes throughout the sessions. The researcher also asked a few questions and was present to provide information in case there was any uncertainty raised by the participants.

The researcher was accompanied by a research assistant and external facilitator who ensured that the participants were not left alone in the presence of the researcher but in the presence of the entire research team. This prevented the participants from feeling threatened by the researcher and allowed the research assistant and external facilitator to act as witnesses in the research. The external facilitator ensured that the participants understood the meaning of the questions posed, as he is fluent in English and Setswana. This is a crucial aspect of focus groups or any research, as participants need to understand the questions asked and need to understand what the researcher wants from them (Schwarz, 1999). The facilitator allowed enough time for each question to be discussed and guided the participants by posing the questions to various participants alternately. This ensured that one participant did not provide all the input and that one participant did not dominate the views of the other participants.

The facilitator also asked follow-up questions wherever he found it necessary to additionally discuss an issue raised by the participants. Du Plooy (2002:179) emphasises that a moderator (or in the case of this research, the facilitator) is not restricted to adhering solely to the research questions but must act as critical listener to ask follow-up questions when respondents raise relevant points.

### **3.3.4 Data capturing**

Each semi-structured and focus group interview was captured by means of an audio recording. Polgar and Thomas (1995) in McLafferty (2004:188) argue that the real advantage of audio recordings is that they act as a validity check, in that raw data, or in this case respondent contributions are available for scrutiny. The recordings of interviews protect the credibility of the researcher in that they support the findings and serve as evidence of the actual contributions made by the participants (Fitzpatrick & Bolton, 1994). The audio recordings were transcribed and translated by the facilitator who ensured that the contributions of the participants were understood and could be reflected in the research findings. From the transcribed data the researcher developed the themes according to which the contributions were analysed.

The research assistant furthermore made notes throughout the focus group sessions and semi-structured interviews, which were compared with the notes made by the researcher. This ensured that the participants' contributions were captured objectively and both sets of notes made on the day of the various interviews reflected what the participants discussed.

### **3.3.5 Thematic data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis is based on more detailed respondent contributions and is descriptive in nature (McLafferty, 2004). A large amount of information needs to be analysed in a systematic way in order to group the findings and to achieve the research objectives. For this reason, the researcher decided to use thematic data analysis for both the focus group and semi-structured interviews.

The value of qualitative research according to Attride-Stirling (2001:403) lies in its exploratory and explanatory power, prospects that are unachievable without methodological rigour at all stages of the research process which is specifically important when it comes to analysing the data gathered by the research. Attride-Stirling (2001:387) argues the importance of thematic analysis by stating that it aims to explore the understanding of an issue or the signification of an idea. The process of deriving themes from data and illustrating these is well established in qualitative research.

The literature review in Chapter Two formed the foundation for the formulation of the research objectives. Once the research objectives had been finalised, the researcher needed to formulate questions that would ensure contributions that in turn would achieve the desired research objectives. The questions were formulated separately for both the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews as the various respondents would provide different insights for each objective of the study.

The principles of development communication that were identified in the literature in Chapter Two were used to guide the researcher when it came to the grouping of the research themes.

This would allow the researcher to directly link responses to the principles required by the literature which in turn support the objectives of the research.

Once the questions were accepted and answered, the researcher grouped the responses into categories or themes that matched which were then slotted in below one of the nine principles of development communication. As example, the focus group research theme “Participant involvement” aimed at determining whether the participants were involved in the decision making process before the implementation of the actual G.I.R.R.L. Project. “Participant involvement” was then moved to fit under the development communication principle “Inclusive” as it would indicated the level of inclusion and involvement from the start of the project.

This same method was followed for each of the research themes which were then all categorised to match one of the principles of development communication. However, there was no guarantee that there would be a research theme for each of the principles included in both the focus group and semi-structured interviews as the principles needed to act as guidelines and the researcher could not assume that the project adhered to each of the development communication principles.

The findings of the research will be discussed below and analysed according to research themes which have been discussed in detail, for both the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews. A combined analysis was used in order to integrate the findings and indicate the overlapping areas of the study.

### **3.3.6 Reliability, validity and triangulation**

The researcher wanted to ensure the objectivity of the research by making use of an external facilitator and a research assistant. In the case of the semi-structured interviews, the research assistant conducted the interviews, although the questions

were determined by the researcher and based on the objectives of the research. The researcher had to consider the aspects of reliability, validity and triangulation which will be discussed next.

Reliability as defined by Leedy and Ormrod (2001:99) determines whether a measurement instrument or in this case the research method yields consistent results when the characteristic being measured has not changed. Reliability in this study was ensured by the fact that the literature regarding disaster risk reduction and development communication led to the researcher conducting focus group and semi-structured interviews. This meant that the concepts discussed were taken from the literature with the specific goal in mind to meet the objectives of the research. Furthermore the research was conducted at three independent sites which consisted of two separate groups within the three sites, the original project participants (Ikageng, Boitshoko) and the subsequent sites (Maquassi, Reabona and Ventersdorp, Thuto Boswa). The data gathered from these three sites allowed the researcher to refer back to the literature and the principles set out in the literature.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:103) state that the validity of a research study is the extent to which its design and the resulting data allow the researcher to draw accurate conclusions about the researched phenomena. Validity of this research study was ensured by the fact that the researcher made use of an external facilitator who led the focus group interviews according to the questions and objectives formulated by the researcher. The respondents were allowed to respond in their mother tongue (Setswana) which allowed them to express their thoughts with ease. The external facilitator then translated the contributions made by the respondents during the focus groups where the participants were present so as to ensure no meaning was lost in the language.

The same questions were asked at each of the three focus groups which ensured consistency and allowed a larger number of respondents to provide input on the same questions. Finally, the categories and principles identified in the literature in Chapter Two, assisted the researcher to formulate the research questions which ensured that the research objectives could be traced back to the literature.

Triangulation is achieved due to the fact that there were three focus group sites and four semi-structured interviews for which the questions were formulated from the research objectives. The research objectives in turn were formulated from a detailed literature review which provided principles against which the outcomes of the research could be measured.

### **3.3.7 Ethical considerations**

Due to the nature of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme parameters and the sensitivity of some of the aspects of the research, it was imperative to keep in mind that most respondents were young, adolescent girls who came from very testing backgrounds and who functioned within often harsh and challenging circumstances. The safety, confidentiality and anonymity of each participant needed to be guaranteed and constantly kept in mind throughout the research. The consent form was necessary to protect both the researcher and the rights of the minors/participants as stated by the South African Child Act (South Africa, 1994).

Further ethical considerations relating to the study were addressed by adhering to the requirements of the North-West University's Committee for Advanced Degrees based within the Faculty of Arts. A checklist with ethical requirements was filled out and submitted to this committee. The Committee for Advanced Degrees then approved the study and accepted the ethical considerations.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The research is rooted in qualitative research methods which have now been explained and the research methods used discussed. The researcher ultimately chose qualitative research methods for the in-depth contributions they yield. The findings of the research will now be discussed in Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

The empirical findings of the research are founded on the nine principles of participative development communication as discussed in Chapter Two. The research themes will now form the basis for the analysis. Each theme is followed by the respective findings and a discussion supported by participant contributions.

### 4.2 Research findings of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme grouped thematically

The findings of the focus groups and semi-structured interviews will be discussed jointly according to themes as explained previously. The following research themes were used:

**Table 2 – Thematic grouping of research themes according to principles of development communication**

| Principles of development communication | Comparative focus group research themes  | Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>4.4.1 Dialogical</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participant selection</li> <li>▪ Communication from the project team</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two-way communication and decision making</li> <li>▪ Communication from the project team</li> </ul> |
| <b>4.4.2 Inclusive</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participant involvement</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No corresponding theme</li> </ul>   |
| <b>4.4.3 Heuristic</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cultural considerations</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cultural considerations</li> </ul>  |
| <b>4.4.4 Empowerment</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating disaster risk awareness through the community event and communicating with others</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Empowerment</li> </ul>  |

|                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>4.4.5 Participatory</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No corresponding theme</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Session selection</li> <li>▪ Participant needs</li> <li>▪ Community needs</li> <li>▪ Capacity development</li> </ul> |
| <b>4.4.6 Contextual</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participant needs</li> <li>▪ Community input</li> <li>▪ Expectations</li> <li>▪ Understanding Risk/Disaster Risk</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No corresponding theme</li> </ul>  |
| <b>4.4.7 Interdisciplinary</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local facilitators and stakeholder involvement</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No corresponding theme</li> </ul>  |
| <b>4.4.8 Strategic</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No corresponding theme</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project aims</li> </ul>  |
| <b>4.4.9 Persuasive</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainability of project and continuity of project</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No corresponding theme</li> </ul>  |

The findings of the focus groups and semi-structured interviews were simultaneously analysed according to the respective themes which allowed the researcher to compare how the participants viewed the project and how the project team viewed the project.

The findings will now be discussed according to the development communication principles as set out by the literature review in Chapter Two. Each principle has the underlying research themes to remind the reader which themes contributed to the respective development communication principle. Below each block the researcher recaps the aim of the respective development communication principle. Where there was no corresponding theme, the researcher has indicated this by stating “No corresponding theme”, this only means that one specific theme was suited to be categorised under the respective development communication principle.

#### 4.4.1 Dialogical

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Participant selection
- Communication from the project team

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- Two-way communication and decision making
- Communication from the project team

The development communication principle “**Dialogical**” aims to ensure the following:

*Allowing stakeholders and community members to provide input by identifying their needs, evaluating hazards that impact their lives and ranking risks within their communities. Project scope can thus be developed to address risks faced by communities and include capacity building strategies for the specific needs of the community.*

In order to address the issue of participant selection, the actual participant criteria from the initial G.I.R.R.L Project as presented to all project stakeholders on which the participant selection was to be based (Forbes-Biggs, 2008) needed to be clarified.

The G.I.R.R.L. Programme endeavours to assist adolescent girls who, because of circumstances beyond their control, are put in inferior positions within society. In order to achieve the goals and objectives that have been set out in the project plan the project had specific characteristics that were fundamental attributes for all of the participants selected.

These characteristics were carefully thought out and were as follows:

- Female
- Living in one targeted settlement (community activities will be held in one central area and designed specifically for the needs of that population group)
- Facing poverty
- Between the ages of 13 and 16 years old
- Must not have children of their own (based on time commitments)
- Have basic literacy skills

The G.I.R.R.L. Programme aims to develop leadership characteristics in girls that may not normally be considered 'socially predominant'. Specific attention needed to be given to the girls in the targeted community that 'stood in the shadows' - perhaps those not endowed with popularity, charisma or great self-confidence. Ultimately the G.I.R.R.L. Programme was designed to help girls that needed a chance.

It was also requested that no two girls should be living in the same yard or be from the same family – i.e. sisters, cousins. Participants needed to be as geographically spread out as possible within the community so that no area was left vulnerable.

Diversity in the areas of age, social groupings (not all friends prior to the commencement of the project) and goals would help give the group a better opportunity to learn from the others, build new friendships and represent different interests.

The same participant criterion as highlighted above, was used for the second and third projects but was slightly adapted once the findings and lessons learnt in the initial project were considered and presented in the project report (Forbes-Biggs, 2008). The biggest change in criteria related to the age of participants, since age was not as important as the school grade the participants were currently completing. Thus the new parameter stated that participants were to be between grades 8 and 11, irrespective of age. This would enable matriculants (pupils in their final year of high school) to complete their schooling.

The research indicated that the participants were selected in various ways to be part of the project and they ascribed the reasons for their selection to various factors including their age, their social status, place of residence, personalities and grade in school. From the research it has become clear that there was a communication gap between what the teachers communicated and what was instructed to them from the project team. The teachers did not always inform the participants, as they should have about the aims of the project, which led to preconceived expectations that could not be fulfilled. The following comments regarding participant selection indicate this discrepancy.

*“Our life skills teacher sent someone to class to get the girls from Sonderwater to come and see her. We got papers from her to take home. She did not say much about the project, only that people would come”.*

*“The teacher came into our class and chose two of us to meet the project team after school. We did not get any information about the project. We were chosen because we were the only two younger than 16 years in our class.”*

*“There were two girls that were chosen from my class because they lived in the Chris Hani settlement because it is close to school. They did not want to participate so I volunteered.”*

*“I was chosen by the teacher to participate, perhaps because I am too quiet.”*

*“The life skills teacher told us people were coming who wanted to get to know us. We never knew who else was chosen, we only saw the other participants at the first session.”*

*“The teacher asked me whether I had a baby, I said no and then she chose me.”*

*“We were chosen because of the way we behaved in class, we never disrupted class, I was well behaved and that is maybe why she (the life skills teacher) chose us.”*

*“I was chosen because I am always friendly.”*

*“The teacher came to the class and in front of the class said she was looking for poor girls. She asked for volunteers. Four of us volunteered and went to the staff room where she explained about the project.”*

*“The teacher came to our class and explained about the project and asked for poor people. The class then picked two poor kids, me and one other girl. That hurt me.”*

The majority of the participants were not aware of why they were being chosen and what they were being chosen for, the teachers clearly did not understand the importance of the participant criteria outlined by the project team or were too busy to explain the project properly to the participants before the project team arrived. This re-emphasises the importance of identifying reliable teachers to communicate with the participants who will have the ability to select the right type of participant for the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

**KEY FINDING 1: Participants entered into the project without sufficient information regarding the project itself and the reasons for their selection.**

Communication from the project team may also not have been sufficient and thus the teachers did not know what to communicate to the participants. For this reason, it was important to find out how the project team communicated with the participants. Here are some of their responses:

*“They (the project team) explained to us what was going to happen. Made us more interested because there is food. Explained to us that if we did not understand we just had to raise our hands.”*

*“Two members of the project team came to school and met with us. They explained that the project would be during the school holiday.”*

*“The project team did things in the right way. We always knew what was going to happen and who was coming. We had a work schedule.”*

*“The way the project team communicated was effective. We were all at school. To phone costs money and some of us did not have phones. They (the project team) just told us what was happening.”*

*“It is good that the project team told us what was going to happen but we had to remind each other of when things were happening. If they phoned our parents to remind us of something there was the problem that our parents don’t understand English.”*

*“The participants had to meet and remind each other. A schedule is a good idea, if it is kept in a safe place.”*

*“The project team explained every day what tomorrow’s session would be about and what we would be doing.”*

*“The work schedule we got, worked really well and we always knew what was happening.”*

It seems there was a lot of communication from the project team’s side regarding what sessions the participants had to prepare for and what the sessions would be about; however not all the participants felt that this was very effective but they could not come up with a better suggestion.

**KEY FINDING 2: Communication between the project team and the stakeholders such as the teachers was not sufficient and failed to convey the importance of the participant selection criteria.**

The project team responses regarding communication with the participants highlight the fact that most of the communication took place during the project implementation itself but hardly any communication, especially with the participants, took place before the implementation or during the planning stages.

*“There was not really dialogue with the participants during planning. When we met the girls we had already planned the sessions and did not ask for their input. External funding meant that we had very tight timelines to withhold, during the sessions; however there was ample opportunity for feedback where the participants could raise their biggest issues in the community.”*

**KEY FINDING 3: Very little communication took place between participants and the project team before the implementation of the project. The lack of initial research and groundwork by the project team is also made clear and the issue of the structure of funding impacted the time provided for initial research.**

Regarding the schedule that the participants referred to, this was set up beforehand and based on local stakeholder input and availability of facilitators and not on the needs of the participants themselves. The project team based the sessions on the original project and on what they felt would work within the communities.

*“We had a fixed schedule determined by the project team. The project team looked at the types of sessions to be presented first and then facilitators were found for the relevant sessions. The participants were not involved in the decision-making process.”*

From this it is clear that the participants had very little input regarding the type of sessions that may address their specific needs. The project team did not focus on input before implementation but it is clear that throughout the implementation of the project their main goal was to accommodate the participants’ needs and to allow for their feedback and input.

*“The project was based on the PAR model – participatory action research. This is designed specifically so that we provided them with information but the purpose was to get them involved and participate in the session. One of our prerequisites for facilitators presenting the sessions was that the session had to be designed to be interactive. It was very important that the participants felt confident and comfortable with the facilitators, as we did not want them to hesitate to make a contribution. They were asked to challenge us if they did not agree with us. We encouraged the girls to give us their feedback and give us their insight. If the girls raised something we had missed or that we weren’t culturally aware of we wanted to know from them. The PAR model facilitated this and assisted us in being more like facilitators than teachers.”*

**KEY FINDING 4: Participants express a need to be able to provide input from an earlier stage of the project. However, during implementation there was ample opportunity for participants to provide input and share their thoughts.**

The project team thus accommodated the needs of the participants during implementation but not during the set-up phase of the project. The project team did however focus on the local stakeholders before implementation. This was done in order to gain insight into the local situation in every community and to base the project on the community needs determined by community members.

*“We also included the facilitators in the stakeholder body and the stakeholder body was allowed to determine the content of the sessions based on their expertise. The girls did not have a say before the project started as they were already selected/identified according to criteria but the stakeholders represented the needs of the participants as the stakeholders were closer to the community. The participants provided their input in an ongoing manner throughout the project and they could add to the core sessions that we had identified.”*

**KEY FINDING 5: The project team relied on stakeholders in the community to identify the needs of the participants without the input of the actual participants.**

Some of the reasons given by the project team for not including the participants during project planning were:

*“Financial restraints meant that the project team had no funding for additional sessions and that if all the sessions reflecting the participants needs were to be included it would be impossible to*

*implement them all under the banner of a disaster risk reduction initiative.”*

From the above it is clear that time constraints set by the project funder also hampered the inclusion of additional sessions as each project needed to be completed before a specific date. At the Reabona project site the issue of time was very clear:

*“At the Reabona project site the group did not really fit in well with each other. Individual response was not bad, but the group participation setting created peer pressure. The Maquassi project was implemented over the shortest time, which made it difficult to do everything as thoroughly as we would have liked. It bordered on information overload. The time frame for implementation directly influenced the trust within the specific project, participants trusting the project team and trusting each other. The project team wanted to build a relationship with the participants but after a month it was over and this was the biggest problem with the Maquassi project.”*

**KEY FINDING 6: Time constraints are a serious issue during implementation and again hampered the project by related funding constraints.**

This issue of trust did not hamper the success of implementation; it just delayed the sessions to a certain extent. The project team had to employ other ways in order for participants to share their thoughts and have their voices heard throughout the project.

*“The project team looked at various things that would work for the participants. We had an anonymous box where the participants could ask questions or make statements, which would be answered to the group by the facilitators. Suggestions were always looked at and addressed as far as possible. Ultimately the participants had their say during the community event where they shared what they had learnt.”*

**KEY FINDING 7: Trust among participants was not very high although the participants trusted the project team.**

It is clear that the project team accommodated participant input in various ways during implementation; however the actual means of communication needed to be examined to determine whether the communication methods allowed for dialogue and sufficient participation.

*“The project team communicated in a group setting with the participants. We did not use a teacher pupil way of interaction. The participants’ involvement was important in every session. They could ask questions and share opinions. We also communicated with the participants through the teachers at the schools, as they were the ones who had contact with the girls on a daily basis. The teachers were the point of contact because the project team was not based in the area of the sites. This form of communication is not always the best option as you cannot always rely on the teachers to provide the information correctly but the project team had no alternative way of reaching the participants. The relevant information was faxed to the teachers at school so that they knew exactly what instructions to give the participants.”*

An important aspect to consider was the fact that the project team did not rely much on printed materials to communicate with the participants as the project team felt that the printed materials would only end up in the garbage; other reasons given for this were:

*“The project team limited the amount of hand-outs/reading material that was handed out, as we did not want to burden them with pamphlets and papers. Most of the sessions were done in an interactive manner. E.g. the fire safety session was presented at the fire safety and we wanted to demonstrate to them in a visual manner what happens when there is a fire. This encouraged the participants and it was interesting and not forced learning. The aim was to make it fun and the project team had to understand that we were working with adolescent girls. The participants spent every day in school; they would not be motivated to attend the project if the sessions were not presented in an interesting and fun manner.”*

The communication with the participants is relatively satisfactory but only present during implementation and not from the initial set-up phase. The lack of participant input from the start influenced the participants’ understanding of the project aims and objectives.

**KEY FINDING 8: The project team possessed good communication skills and accommodated the participants’ needs as far as possible but this mostly occurred during implementation and not prior to the start of the project. There was also some confusion regarding the aims of the project amongst the participants.**

#### 4.4.2 Inclusive

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Participant involvement

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- No corresponding theme

The development communication principle “**Inclusive**” aims to ensure the following:

*A variety of community members need to jointly assess their community’s risks and hazards. All groups should be included such as the most vulnerable, the elderly, adolescent girls and community leaders. This will provide varied but in-depth context-specific information. Cultural sensitivity is important in order to be inclusive.*

Most of the participants felt that they would have wanted to be more involved in deciding which sessions would be included in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. There is clearly much disappointment regarding the fact that the sessions were decided on before the project started.

*“We were not involved. The project team came the day before with a work schedule with all the sessions already on it.”*

**KEY FINDING 9: The participants demanded more inclusion in the process to determine the sessions that would be presented.**

The participants were asked to make suggestions as to what the project would have looked like had they made their contributions from the start. Some of the

suggestions included that the project should be based within the community itself and not necessarily at school as this would allow the community to be involved in the project and will allow the community to be part of the continuation of the project. Furthermore, some of the points raised included getting community members to present the sessions and not relying on external facilitators so much e.g. Involving local nurses and policemen to present the sessions.

The second major suggestion was to present the sessions on a Saturday as the participants felt that it was difficult to balance schoolwork, responsibilities at home and the project sessions. The main area of focus that participants felt lacked attention during the G.I.R.R.L. Programme was that of teenage pregnancy as reflected in the following comments made by some of the participants:

*“I want to learn how to prevent teenage pregnancy; this is getting bigger and bigger in our community. However, I feel the sessions (presented during the G.I.R.R.L. Programme) were exactly what the girls wanted to learn.”*

*“We need to learn about teenage pregnancy. Girls get pregnant and then they just quit school. They want to get a social grant.”*

*“We need face-to-face discussions about teenage pregnancy.”*

*“We still need to talk about teenage pregnancy. Some teenagers don’t use condoms and get diseases.”*

Further sessions suggested by the participants that should also be considered were:

*“More information is needed on abuse in general; this includes mental abuse, sexual abuse and drug abuse. There is more abuse in our families than even on the streets. We girls are the victims of abuse. It will be much better for me as a young girl to deal with all types of*

*abuse. I need more information about stress. I cannot concentrate at school and need to cope."*

*"We need to know more about rape. I did not know where to start. We need more sympathy from the police." (Rape Victim)*

*"Girls need to know more about human trafficking because children are kidnapped. Since the world cup started it has gotten worse. Only information I have about this is what I saw on a program on TV."*

*"We need more information about abortion. Where to go, what to do and we need to learn about safe abortions."*

*"We need a session about nature conservation. We must care about nature. Anything that has to do with nature, planting trees and water. Others need to know about deforestation and global warming."*

*"We need a session on addiction. An addiction councillor should teach us to help others."*

Overall there was satisfaction with the sessions presented and the content in general; however there was a majority agreement that sessions regarding rape, abuse, human trafficking, abortion, nature conservation, addiction and as emphasised above, teenage pregnancy should have been key areas of focus as these were based on the needs expressed by the participants.

**KEY FINDING 10: Participants expressed the need for various additional sessions that were not covered by the project, which reflect the needs of the participants and the threats in their communities.**

Most participants were pleased with the way the project was presented and the sessions that were presented during the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. Some suggested changes included the following:

*"After the sessions I would like the participants to explain to the whole school, especially the girls. Go to them and explain what they have learnt. The project team must be there to observe the participants."*

*“I would go to the community, search for young girls who are ten years old and teach them what we have learnt at the G.I.R.R.L. Programme, while they are young.”*

*“We should have gone to the farms to find the girls there. When these girls come to town they lack skills and they sleep around. We should give our skills to the farm girls.”*

This highlights a strong emphasis placed on the increased sharing of knowledge. The participants expressed the need to share what they have learnt with groups that they would like to target which indicates that the participants do not want to be prescribed to, but rather focus on the areas they feel can benefit the most from the lessons they have learnt. It is clear that the project stimulated thought amongst the participants about how they would implement the project if they were the project coordinators and it needs to be noted that participants want to share what they have learnt with as many individuals as possible.

Although the need to share what they have learnt with others is commendable and necessary for the continuity of the project, the research findings also indicate that there are many issues that the project could have addressed had the participants' needs been analysed properly initially and if the project funding had allowed for improved groundwork in order to understand the context of each project site and the situations which the participants face on a daily basis.

**KEY FINDING 11: The participants want to share their knowledge with others and could identify relevant recipients of this information which indicates that the need for information in the community is much bigger than the project parameters.**

#### 4.4.3 Heuristic

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Cultural considerations

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- Cultural considerations

The development communication principle “**Heuristic**” aims to ensure the following:

*Those community members participating should share their thoughts and ideas with the group. This will allow group discussion and shared understanding of the various problems, risks and hazards within the community.*

The project team came from a very different background from that of the participants and the issue of cultural sensitivity and awareness was a vital aspect that needed to be considered during implementation. The participants were asked whether they ever felt that they were being treated unfairly or whether their culture was offended in any way. The responses indicate that the project team treated the participants with respect and did not force their ideas onto the participants.

*“I don’t think people in our own culture would have treated us the way the project team treated us. The project team did not control us; they allowed us to participate. They treated us better than what our own people would have. There was no culture, we had freedom.”*

*“There were no culture issues and no discrimination.”*

*“The project team never disrespected us.”*

*“The project team treated us like sisters.”*

*“There were no specific cultures involved. All cultures were respected. We were not told to not show our culture.”*

*“The fact that the girls in the project team were white was not a problem. Only the language was difficult sometimes.”*

The girls felt that there were no problems relating to culture and complimented the project team on the way they treated them throughout the project. The project team explained their approach and stated that it was important for them not to intrude on the participants' lives, views or way of life.

*“I don't think you can implement a community project without considering the culture of the community. The sessions were specifically aimed at the participants in the communities of the projects, their age and culture. Risks faced are different in every community and culture.”*

*“The food provided for lunch was adjusted according to the culture; the life skills teacher assisted us in picking food that was preferred in their culture in order to accommodate the participants. Culture is always in the back of our minds even if it is not our main focus the whole time. When differences and problems arose we always looked at the reasons behind them and looked if they were perhaps rooted in a cultural[ly] way of doing. In the Maquassi project for example there was a power difference between the various ages and the older girls ordered the younger girls around.”*

*“The girls came from very diverse backgrounds although they were from the same community. Those were underlying factors that influence how they make decisions and what is accepted culturally. We understood that within their culture they could not just go up to*

*an adult and discuss these issues with them; we had to find ways to help them feel comfortable in approaching elders to pass on information in a way that was not offensive. The participants themselves provided valuable insight into their culture and how it impacts their lives.*

*“We had translators in some of the sessions. We missed some important issues/points as facilitators because we spoke English. We encouraged our facilitators to be black and African so that the girls could identify with them but also because they showed insight into the culture of the girls. I think language was our biggest cultural factor.”*

*“Some of the more quiet girls were not used to white people and they were very shy. We made a point to draw in the shy girls so that they could get used to us from the start.”*

Although the project team was very much aware of the culture of the participants, it seems that culture is not such a big aspect in the lives of the participants, but more emphasis is placed on respect.

**KEY FINDING 12: Sufficient attention was given to cultural awareness and acceptance throughout the project.**

#### 4.4.4 Empowerment

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Creating disaster risk awareness through the community event and communicating with others

**Comparative semi-structured interviews themes:**

- Empowerment

The development communication principle “**Empowerment**” aims to ensure the following:

*Information provided by participants and stakeholders should be used to benefit the community directly. Disaster risk reduction initiatives should be designed to benefit all members in the community based on their input.*

The participant comments below indicate an increased need for information and that the community event raised awareness regarding some of the issues faced by the respective communities; however disaster risk awareness was not truly achieved.

*“My sister was there. At home things have changed, they have interest in what I am doing and saving money for me to go and study drama.”*

*“This one brother was abusive towards his wife and kids. After the event, we see he has changed, he is no longer abusive.”*

*“After the event there were two boys who came to me, who wanted to know more. They wanted to know when is the “boy” project coming.”*

The fact that disaster awareness was not truly achieved, could be due to the fact that the issues raised during risk awareness are difficult to understand and if one is not familiar with these concepts it can hamper true understanding of risk and suggested risk reduction strategies.

*“My brother used to drink a lot, like a gangster. He got the message about abuse after the event.”*

*“People did get the message because I did not hear anything bad after the event.”*

*“Yes, I’ve seen extreme changes in the community. Especially relating to fire safety.”*

*“What we did at the community event was very important in our community especially regarding raising awareness of knowing your HIV status. After the event my friend came to me and said he used to sleep around. She checked her HIV status and I encouraged her to continue helping others.”*

**KEY FINDING 13: Community members are aware of risky behaviour/disaster risk but have not completely accepted their role in changing their behaviour. Not enough emphasis is placed on disaster risk awareness.**

Some participants felt that the community event was not at all successful as highlighted by the following comments:

*“Some people who were there did not understand what we said. One man thought we were disrespectful towards drunken people. The fire safety information we presented has not changed the way people put out paraffin fires, they still use water, however the idea to put paraffin in a sta-soft bottle (fabric softener bottle) really worked well.”*

The community event is a public platform and it is not always easy to address such sensitive issues as those that were raised by the participants on such a public platform where young and old alike are exposed to the reality of their community. However the project aimed at empowering the lives of the participants and not so much the entire community. The project team's contributions below make it very clear that they feel the project was a success.

*“Ultimately empowerment comes through education and information but a part of it is what you now do with this information. The participants have the information, they shared it with communities, they have given us feedback and now they have the groundwork, we have to see what they do with the info and it is now up to them. Empowerment comes from capacity.”*

*“The project has allowed the participants to gain access to information which should empower them, influence the way they see the world and the way they think. Some of the participants had never had personal contact and interaction with white girls before, and for this reason, it has exposed them to unknown experiences and broadened their horizon. We could show them that culture and race should not be such a big thing.”*

*“One can see a change in some of the participants. Some have undergone a mind shift when it comes to their circumstances. They have now been exposed to other ideas and ways of thinking.”*

*“We may not have been able to change their lives but I think we have made a difference in the way they think, how they feel about others and their fellow participants. I think they are more aware of the warning signs surrounding them when it comes to relationships, paraffin safety, personal safety and personal behaviour. They are also more aware of the opportunities that exist in society and they can now see that just because they live in a township their life is not over, they don’t have to sit and do nothing. We have at least initiated awareness, the responsibility now lies with them to take it further and use what they have been given.”*

**KEY FINDING 14: There is a level of disagreement between the participants and the project team regarding the success of the project and the success of the community event.**

#### **4.4.5 Participatory**

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- No corresponding theme

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- Session selection
- Participant needs
- Community needs
- Capacity development

The development communication principle “**Participatory**” aims to ensure the following:

*Stakeholders should be allowed the opportunity to share their ideas, raise issues and ask questions about the disaster risk reduction project. Their input should be truly valued and considered during project development and implementation.*

It has already been established that the participants’ input was not asked for during the planning phase; however session selection was based on the recommendations of the local stakeholders who understand the context of the communities.

*“Originally the project was designed primarily on a literature review based on girls living in townships in South Africa. It was then narrowed down to focus on the actual training we could provide the girls. The most important input came from the community stakeholders and the girls. Some sessions were added during the project as the participants indicated a need for them. E.g. the Family Planning session was added at one of our projects when we heard that most of the girls were heads of households.”*

*“I think the participants could have made a positive contribution to deciding what sessions they needed. Awareness of their needs is almost more important than having their input regarding session content. The more time you have the more beneficial the project becomes and the more the participants bond and show trust in the project team.”*

*“I think it would definitely be better to have a general session with girls in the community, like a focus group. Discussing issues and needs*

*within the community. You can have a focus group session per grade. This will provide the input you need to develop the sessions and relevant project.”*

*“It’s easier to adjust sessions whilst implementing the project than starting a new session as project funding only allows a certain amount of sessions. With focus groups session like these one would be able to tell the project funders that you need the following amount of sessions based on the input from the community and girls in the targeted schools. Funding will then be able to match the needs of the project and the participants/sessions.”*

From the comments above, one gains the idea that the project team understood what they should have done regarding gathering participant input from the start; however none of this matters if it is not implemented. Participation was not a key part of the project from the beginning.

**KEY FINDING 15: Local stakeholder input formed the basis for the needs analysis of the participants which in turn determined the sessions presented in the project. The importance of local knowledge is also emphasised.**

#### 4.4.6 Contextual

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Participant needs
- Community input
- Expectations
- Understanding risk and disaster risk

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- No corresponding theme

The development communication principle “**Contextual**” aims to ensure the following:

*Locals have insight into the situations that they are faced with on a daily basis. This is valuable information, which cannot be ignored. A generic project will not suit the disaster risk needs identified by an individual community and should be adapted to suit the specific context.*

The following areas as indicated by the participants, successfully addressed their needs as young girls in the community which indicates that these sessions matched their context:

*“The stress management session was very good, we can make a difference, perhaps stop someone from committing suicide. Lastly, communication is important; this counts as a skill on your CV. If you want to be a receptionist, communication is very important.”*

*“First Aid worked for me, I was able to help an old man who was injured on his hand. I managed to use my skills I learnt, to help him.”*

*“Communication worked for me. If someone is going through a difficult time I can help them and motivate them.”*

*“Communication helped me in an interview, I looked the guy in the eyes and I wasn’t scared.”*

*“After the team building session, I went on a camp with the manager of our Youth Centre and I was able to do the activities, work in a team and solve the problems presented to us during the camp. Even at school in our classes we have problems. The skills I learnt I have used in class with my class mates.”*

*“The sessions (in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme) related to me. I took it into consideration in my life. I realised teamwork is important and I learnt to be a lady.”*

Some of the participants felt that the first aid session did not address their needs as much as they had hoped or did not meet their expectations:

*“The First Aid session did not help me as much as I had expected. I went to help someone with my kit and they said I could not help them because my certificate was not professional. We cannot help someone as it was only an introduction to First Aid.”*

*“The problem with the First Aid session is that the certificate expires.”*

The problems with the first aid session, as highlighted above, could have been addressed had the participants understood the intention of the first aid session better. Although it was explained to them that the certification expires, it seems that this upset them the most and the fact that they had extremely high expectations of the first aid certification, as indicated in this comment by one of the participants:

*“I cannot find a job at the hospital because my first aid certificate is only an introduction to first aid.”*

This indicates that participants want to use what they have learnt to their advantage in order to improve their lives; however the certification is not a qualification and it is this distinction that the participants have not made.

**KEY FINDING 16: Although the participants indicated a need for the inclusion of a variety of additional sessions, they were satisfied with the sessions that were presented.**

The first aid session was not the only session where the participants' expectations did not match the end product, which can be seen in the variety of expectations of the project indicated by the participants. The expectations below expressed by the participants reflect the fact that the objective of the project was not clearly communicated to all the participants and that some confusion existed as to what the project would be about and with whom the responsibility for the continuity of the project rests. This could be due to lack of communication from the project team to the teachers at the school, a language problem, the teachers may have not communicated the aims of the project properly or may have understood them incorrectly themselves. Some of the expectations expressed by the participants are reflected below:

*"I did not understand why those that have children could not take part. I thought it would be like sports activities during the holiday. I now see babies would have been a problem, sometimes you would be able to come and sometimes they would not be able to come."*

*"I thought I would go to school for free."*

*"Because we are poor I thought they would get us out of poverty."*

*"I thought we would get a chance to visit people in the community and talk to people in the community."*

Serious attention needs to be given to the amount of information made available to participants and teachers alike before the start of the project. Participants cannot be expected to volunteer for a project where they do not know exactly what the project is about and what their role will be in the project. Project facilitators need to constantly remind participants of the expected outcomes of the project and the individual sessions so as to avoid the disappointment when the expectations they may have, are not reached. It may also be valuable to have an introductory session where the participants' expectations and the G.I.R.R.L. Programme team expectations are discussed.

**KEY FINDING 17: The expectations of participants did not match the outcome of the project. This indicates that the project aims and parameters were not clear from the start.**

One of the main aims of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme was to improve the understanding of community members toward the risks they face. This aim, however, was not only intended for the participants, but also extended itself to the community members and other invitees of the community event. The participants were not very sure whether the community understood disaster risk and whether they would be more aware of risks surrounding them.

The participants needed to indicate whether they felt the community members understood disaster risk and that they would be able to make better decisions based on this. Their responses indicate a general lack of excitement for the few scenarios where they indicated that the community does understand disaster risk:

*“Yes, some community members used to use candles and have now started using electricity instead. They know candles can cause fire.”*

*“After the community event I visited Mafikeng stadium and most people were using the safety candles. One shop owner was from Maquassi and said he saw the safety candle at our community event.”*

*“Maybe some of the people tried to get the message but some did not understand. After the community event some things have dropped (decreased) especially crime, rape and even teenage pregnancy. I think those who did not understand were old and others participate in criminal activities themselves and did not take us seriously.”*

Although the above comments indicate that some community members do understand what disaster risk is, there is still much uncertainty regarding the extent to which the community event impacted disaster risk awareness.

**KEY FINDING 18: Communities are aware of risks and the community event did impact their awareness.**

Not only the community needs to show understanding of disaster risks faced but also the participants themselves need to be able to deal with these risks. When asked whether the participants felt that they would now be able to deal with some of the risks they had identified, the majority of participants felt that they are now able to do so.

*“I have friends who drink and they have asked me to also drink. Sometimes they force me to drink. Since the event, we are no longer friends. I can see the problem!”*

*“With all the knowledge I got from the project it keeps me going day in and day out.”*

*“I am able to deal with things at school. I can deal with stress when there are exams. I set goals for myself to handle exam stress.”*

*“In our class people come from different backgrounds. I am from a poor family and I can deal with any situation in class better than the others in my class.”*

*“Alcohol abuse and anger violation – within that situation I can now stand up for myself.”*

*“Yes, if someone else tries to rape someone I might be able to help.”*

*“I can always give advice to my friends.”*

*“I told a friend to stay away from bad things and to use a condom.”*

The participants are clearly more aware of disaster risks surrounding them and even felt that they would be able to react properly when faced with risk. All the risks form part of the context of the lives that each and every participant leads.

**KEY FINDING 19: The participants are aware of disaster risks and felt confident that they knew what to do in the respective risky situations.**

#### **4.4.7 Interdisciplinary**

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Local facilitators and stakeholder involvement

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- No corresponding theme

The development communication principle “**Interdisciplinary**” aims to ensure the following:

*A variety of stakeholders should be allowed to contribute as disaster risk affects a variety of community members. Including various community insights will allow a more targeted approach to disaster risk reduction.*

The objectives of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme focus on establishing relationships with local stakeholders and fostering shared understanding and responsibility when it comes to continuing the project once the project team withdraws from the project. It is thus important to gauge whether participants feel comfortable about approaching local stakeholders to assist them in continuing the project. It is also important to establish whether participants would get involved with local stakeholders and community initiatives to share what they have learnt with others.

Some participants indicated that they would join other community initiatives and that they would approach the local stakeholders. The participants also shared a few success stories of incidents during the project where they were involved in various community initiatives and how they share what they have learnt in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme with others.

*“Yes. I will go to Love Life. I add on what they have and add what I have learnt. When I am there I bring different information and a different style.”*

*“I can get involved somewhere else. I don’t go there for myself; I go there for others. The information I have will be important for those who need it.”*

*“We went to the youth centre and continue the project through a talk show where we the G.I.R.R.L. participants were the facilitators. It was successful.”*

*“I am already involved with a traditional group. With them I have shared the First Aid and the Self-Defence information and how to act if someone wants to rape you. I also told them how to be a lady.”*

*“We will start with the teacher and tell her what we want to do and ask her to help us with a few things. We haven’t approached any of the community facilitators because we are first trying to do something at school. E.g. started an environmental cleaning project at school and clean the toilets at school. For now we are fine and working in school but we will approach them later.”*

Some of the areas in which the participants were interested in getting involved, included:

*“At the clinic. I would like to speak to the youth about pregnancy and other things happening in life.”*

*“At school. I would like to work with the lower grades to advise them on which subjects to take.”*

*“At the Police Station. Because crime is high I would like to encourage people to stop going to the shebeen and stop drinking.”*

*“At the Youth Centre. Just to speak to and encourage the youth that there are challenges in life and tell them how to face these challenges.”*

The participants have indicated that they are aware of the fact that they do not function in isolation and that the information they have from the G.I.R.R.L. Programme is extremely valuable for a variety of people.

**KEY FINDING 20: The participants want to get involved with local stakeholders and feel that these stakeholders carry some form of responsibility towards the project and its future.**

#### 4.4.8 Strategic

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- No corresponding theme

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- Project aims

The development communication principle “**Strategic**” aims to ensure the following:

*Information needs to be provided immediately as disaster risk reduction initiatives focus on preparedness and risk awareness.*

The aims and objectives of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme should have been communicated with the participants right in the beginning; stakeholders and facilitators also had to be familiar with the expected outcomes of the project. This will allow important information to be shared immediately and ensure that all individuals involved in the project know what to expect. For this reason, the project team explained the goals of the project and explained whether or not these goals were reached and what reasons there may be for the outcome.

*“The main aim is to reduce risk through providing information. The idea was to have twenty girls functioning as a unit within the community who in turn would reach out to twenty more girls in their community. Providing them with access to various pieces of knowledge to apply to their specific problems/risks/issues. We wanted to improve their safety and be more able to deal with risk.”*

*“The focus was on building these girls and to empower young women and facilitating a situation where they would be more in control than in their normal day to day lives. Give the girls a sense that they can be leaders and to believe in themselves and to help them understand how they fit in the community – these were some of the direct outputs.”*

*“To get leaders in the community, girl leaders to implement what they have learnt and share what they have learnt with others. The idea was that they would work together to achieve this. Together they must understand the potential impact they can have and get involved in their communities.”*

*“The goal was to uplift girls in the community and to empower them to think for themselves. They need to value their self-worth and understand that they are now a team. Each participant now has 19 other girls that can help her and support her. The idea was also to create dialogue amongst young girls so that they do not have to feel alone and so that they can share their feelings and experiences. The girls must be able to learn from each other.*

The goals are clear and, when implemented according to the principles of development communication as highlighted in Chapter Two, achievement of these goals will be simplified as every participant and stakeholder will be working towards the goals and there would be a shared vision. However, at this point the research has made it clear that the goals are great on paper but not implemented as strongly as they should be for a variety of reasons. One of these reasons may likely be the fact that the project team needs to stand in for the local facilitators who do not fulfil their part of the project responsibilities. It is very difficult for an external team to run a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative with little local level support.

Once asked whether they feel the goals, as stated above, were reached there was a mixed reaction from the project team. The project team was very much aware of the obstacles in their way to reach the project goals. Here is a look at some of the comments made by the project team.

*“I don’t think the goal of “each one, teach one” has been achieved in each project. In Maquassi this has not happened whereas the Ventersdorp project has been successful when it comes to teaching others. The Maquassi project had more individual change and benefits. It helped shift the thoughts of some of the girls. I think the main problem for not reaching all the project goals is due to the short time frame we had to implement the project. We were dependent on external funding. There was not enough time for proper research before the time. To improve this we could focus on better research before the time and getting more reliable stakeholders (key community members) to join the project.”*

*“More time would have meant getting more stakeholders involved with the sessions. By increasing the implementation time, it provides participants with more time in each other’s company and they become more of a team.”*

*“If we really reached our goal of making a difference or of having an impact, it cannot really be measured. You cannot measure whether the participants actually take in what we have shared with them or how many times they have passed on the information to others. The biggest proof of impact is when you meet the participants again after*

*the project and notice the change in them. Some have changed the way they talk to others and have matured.”*

The project team is satisfied with successfully implementing the project, but is clearly not happy with the lack of continuity and poor communication that existed between the project team and the stakeholders regarding the project goals and stakeholder responsibilities.

**KEY FINDING 21: Although the majority of the project goals were achieved the project team is not satisfied with the level of continuity of the project.**

The participants were generally pleased with the achievements of the project as indicated below:

*“I never noticed any problems with the project because we had rules which we adhered to. Respect was there, discipline was there.”*

*“There were no problems. The project should go on a camp, away from daily stress. I think we should learn more about responsibility, this would relax our minds.”*

*“There were no problems. We were allowed to ask questions and they (the project team) explained to us.”*

*“Respect was good within the team; we were listening at all times.”*

It was also important to reflect the aspects of the project which the participants felt had been conducted successfully and they were also asked to highlight the needs that they felt the project team had addressed correctly:

*“James’ session (HIV/Aids & Peer-Education) was really good. He explained a lot about HIV/Aids and we played games.”*

*“The mental health session was good.”*

*“The peer education session was positive.”*

Only a few of the sessions stood out as some of the participants were incredibly shy throughout the project implementation and during the research it was also difficult to get some of them to share their thoughts, thus in reply to the above question, most of them agreed with the rest who only named a few sessions they felt had been conducted successfully.

**KEY FINDING 22: The participants were reluctant to unanimously label the project as successful but felt that their needs were successfully addressed by the project.**

#### **4.4.9 Persuasive**

**Comparative focus group research themes:**

- Sustainability of project and continuity of project

**Comparative semi-structured interviews research themes:**

- No corresponding theme

The development communication principle “**Persuasive**” aims to ensure the following:

*Communities should be made aware of solutions that may address their needs. These solutions should include behaviour-changing strategies, allow for understanding of risks and even include set out actions.*

From the comments below it is clear that the majority of participants are confident that they will be able to continue the project by themselves; however the participants have not considered the issue of who they will be able to rely on locally and what support base they would need to sustain a project without the guidance of the project team. Some of the participants did however acknowledge the importance of local support once the project team withdrew.

*“Yes, the G.I.R.R.L. Programme taught me so much. I have information and I can continue without them (the project team).”*

*“Yes, they (the project team) have taught us a lot. It is easier to continue because we have the knowledge.”*

*“Yes we can, but when we are alone we cannot do it. We need discipline. Some girls will say they cannot come because of other appointments.”*

*“Yes we can within our group if we commit ourselves within our group.”*

*“There are other girls in my class who are interested in what we have learnt. In our class we shared what we have learnt: First Aid, fire safety, counselling, teamwork and communication. The principal of our school even came. So yes, we can continue on our own with self-discipline.”*

*“Yes, but we need to ask support from our parents. We will have to ask for money, but I want to try it by myself. Without the project team we can try.”*

*“Yes, if we can work together as a group inviting others at school after school. Going class to class to teach them what we have learnt about the project.”*

*“Yes we can, if the information we have can help the others. Information about risks, safety, fires and drugs.”*

Hardly any participants felt that they would not be able to continue the project without the project team. Although it is important that the participants have the confidence to approach the local stakeholders, the project objectives emphasise the responsibility of local stakeholders to take ownership of the project and assist the participants in sustaining the project, the respective local stakeholders should reach to the participants.

**KEY FINDING 23: Not enough convincing took place during the project for local stakeholders to take ownership of the project and the participants seem to want to only depend on themselves for the continuity of the project. There is not much shared responsibility between the community and the participants.**

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

The research has now indicated a number of key findings after the successful implementation of semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions respectively. The importance of both semi-structured and focus group interviews was discussed and the process of conducting these interviews was explained. The principles of development communication were applied in such a manner that the research themes were grouped according to the development communication principles set out in the literature. In the fifth and final chapter the conclusions and the recommendations of the study will be discussed and the key findings will be adapted to formulate relevant recommendations promoted in Chapter Five.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out the recommendations of the study in order to put the results and findings described in Chapter Four into perspective and yield a helpful outcome. The previous chapters discussed the theoretical foundation of the study as well as the research methodology employed. This research provided a detailed analysis of communication and participation within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. In this chapter these findings are linked to the research objectives outlined in Chapter One. Thus conclusions and recommendations are made and attention is given to future research and the study's contribution and limitations are discussed. .

### **5.2 Limitations of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme**

The G.I.R.R.L. Programme has been successfully implemented in three sites and is still ongoing (as of May 2011) at the African Centre for Disaster Studies. However, the limitations of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme need to be analysed and suggestions made as to how they may be addressed. The research findings as presented in Chapter Four provided insight into the gaps of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as identified by the participants of the respective implementation sites. Most of the issues raised by the participants were not based on the implementation of the project but were rooted in the participants themselves and the interaction amongst participants. Some of these gaps as highlighted by the participants and the researcher will be stated briefly and then discussed in the recommendations.

- The lack of acceptance and respect amongst participants needs to be addressed. Trust amongst participants seemed to impact the level of participation in the G.I.R.R.L. Project as not all participants felt sufficiently comfortable to contribute their input in front of some of the other participants

- Poor levels of commitment towards the G.I.R.R.L. Programme were shown by participants as they were not always on time and some participants did not respect the proceedings of the sessions.
- The limited time frame of the project meant that certain aspects of the project did not enjoy as much attention as necessary, such as groundwork research and allowing participant input from the beginning.
- Stakeholders within the community did not adopt the project after project handover as intended. This means that there is very little project sustainability although the stakeholders were involved in the project.

The limitations highlighted by the participants and the researcher will now be addressed within the recommendations of the study.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The recommendations of the study are based on the key findings of the research as discussed in detail in Chapter Four and on the limitations of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as highlighted by the participants themselves. The recommendations aim to make a valuable contribution to the field of development communication and the implementation of future G.I.R.R.L. Projects or similar community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives.

- Participants of the community-based disaster risk reduction initiative need increased information regarding the project itself and the reasons for being selected to participate in the initiative. This will ensure that participant expectations do not vary and that there is a common understanding of the outcomes of the initiative.

- Communication between the project team and the stakeholders needs to occur more frequently and include more detail regarding the project aims. This will ensure that roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and the project team can be distinguished from one another and can be better defined.
- Initiatives such as the G.I.R.R.L. Programme should propose a budget for in-depth groundwork and, once funding is secured, the importance of baseline research must be emphasised so that funders have insight into the need to understand the community in which the initiative will be implemented. Improved groundwork will ensure that the needs of participants, stakeholders and communities are better addressed by the initiative; here the importance of local knowledge and insight cannot be emphasised enough. The suggested sessions can then be included in the initiative that focuses on reducing the risks within the specific community. Once these sessions have been determined the issue of time constraints may also be addressed in that specific sessions can be presented and time will not be wasted on non-essential sessions.
- Participant participation is vital and should not only be considered during the implementation of the initiative but should be adopted from planning right through to project handover. This will allow improved insight into the needs of participants, identifying relevant sessions to be presented and increasing the level of community ownership of the initiative.
- It is difficult for participants from various backgrounds and ages to automatically trust one another. This could be addressed by increasing the amount of team-building that takes place within the initiative and by strengthening the relations between participants through various exercises aimed at fostering trust.
- Allowing participants to share what they have learnt with the respective communities strengthens community ties and may even address the need for information in the community. This will also improve the participants' self-

esteem, which is vital considering the context within which they live, and will increase disaster risk awareness. Increased disaster risk awareness may lead to improved behaviour and better decision making by participants and communities alike.

- Although cultural awareness was sufficiently addressed in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme, it is an aspect that cannot be ignored and needs to be included in the baseline research and be considered throughout implementation.
- Local stakeholders are the key to sustaining a community-based disaster risk initiative and their responsibility towards the continuity of the initiative can be improved by intensifying their involvement during the groundwork phase and by motivating communication between participants and community level stakeholders.
- Stakeholders need to understand that success should not be seen as successfully completing the project but as sustaining the initiative within the community. The implementation may be the responsibility of the project team, but there must be some level of accountability for the initiative at local level. The more local stakeholders are involved in the initiative the greater the chance of their seeing the benefits of the initiative and this may improve their level of motivation towards sustaining the initiative.

#### **5.4 Future research**

Future research based on the G.I.R.R.L. Programme could include a comparative study of the three project sites. This would provide insight into the different perspectives and variances in the respective project sites.

Other research could be embarked on from a disaster risk reduction perspective in the three communities of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme with a focus on understanding

community risks, analysing the lack of community involvement and determining what strategies would improve disaster risk awareness at community level.

Lastly, research could also include the formulation of a new development communication approach which would be based on the analysis of theories in the literature with specific focus on the participative paradigm. The aim would be to adapt the participative paradigm and strengthen the initial weaknesses of the participative paradigm within development communication. The lessons learnt in the G.I.R.R.L. Programme may serve as guidelines to improve the participative paradigm from a disaster risk reduction perspective.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The objectives of the research as set out in Chapter One have guided the entire study. The objectives need to be revisited in order to establish whether the research attained the objectives it set out to achieve initially.

**Objective 1:** The nine principles of participative development communication have determined whether the principles of participatory development communication were adhered to within the G.I.R.R.L. Programme as an example of a community-based disaster risk reduction initiative.

**Objective 2:** The findings of the research and the literature review itself indicated that the inclusion of development principles can contribute to the successful implementation of a disaster risk reduction community-based project by improving dialogue, ensuring inclusion, establishing the elements of a heuristic approach, empowering participants, allowing for participation, considering the context, accepting the interdisciplinary nature, having a strategic focus and finally by ensuring that a level of persuasion exists.

**Objective 3:** The principles of participative development communication form the guideline in order to emphasise how communication strategies could improve stakeholder relationships in a community-based initiative such as the G.I.R.R.L. Programme.

**Objective 4:** The gaps of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme have been paired with recommendations that are based on the nine principles of participative development communication and indicate how these principles can bridge the above mentioned gaps.

This research has taken place within the parameters of disaster risk reduction and development communication. The focus has been on analysing the Girls In Risk Reduction Programme and making recommendations that could improve future community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives. Chapter One provided the context for the research and explained the origin of the G.I.R.R.L. Programme. It also set out the objectives of the study and explained the problem statement under investigation in the study. Chapter Two explored the theoretical foundations of development communication and disaster risk reduction by means of an in-depth literature review. The principles of participatory development communication formed the basis for the methodology used in the research and the analysis of the findings. Chapter Three was rooted in the principles that were identified in the literature and explained the methods followed in the conducting of the research. The use of focus groups and semi-structured interviews was explored and their implementation described in this chapter. Themes based on the principles highlighted in the literature were used to analyse the results of the research and establish the link between disaster risk reduction and development communication initiatives. Finally Chapter Five provided a summative overview of the findings of the study by making recommendations in the fields of disaster risk reduction and development communication, and recapped the objectives of the study.

The role of participative development communication principles cannot be ignored in community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives. The importance of in-depth baseline research is also supported by this research and the findings presented. The G.I.R.R.L. Programme as community-based disaster risk reduction initiative needs to be applauded as unique and for having a clear impact on the lives of the participants. However, the recommendations of the study should be considered in future G.I.R.R.L. Programme initiatives in order to improve implementation and ensure sustainability of these initiatives.

## REFERENCES

ALTAFIN, I. 1991. Participatory Communication in Social Development Evaluation. *Community Development Journal* Vol. 26 (4), 312-314.

ANDERSON, M.B. & WOODROW, P.J. 1998. Rising from the ashes: development strategies in times of disaster. Boulder: USA. Lynne Rienner Publishers. 191p.

ARNSTEIN, S.R. 1969. A ladder of citizen participation. *American Institute of Planners Journal*, 35(4):216-224, Jul.

ATTRIDE-STIRLING, J. 2001. Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research* 1: 385. London: Sage publications.

AusAID. 2009. Investing in a safer future: a disaster risk reduction policy for the Australian aid program. Canberra: Australia. Commonwealth of Australia. 34p.

BALIT, S. 2004. Communication for isolated and marginalized groups: Blending the old and the new. *Communication for development roundtable report*. Rome: FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation). 96p.

BENSON, C. & TWIGG, J. 2007. Tools for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction: guidance notes for development organisations. Switzerland: ProVention Consortium. 193p.

BESSETTE, G. 1996. Development communication in West and Central Africa: toward a research and intervention agenda. (*In eds. Bessette, G & Rajasunderam, C.V. Participatory development communication: A West African agenda.*) Ottawa: IDRC (International Development Research Centre). 313p.

BESSETTE, G. 2004. Involving the community: A guide to participatory development communication. Canada: IDRC (International Development Research Centre). 154p.

BESSETTE, G. & RAJASUNDERAM, C.V. 1996. Participatory Development Communication: A West African Agenda. IDRC Canada: Southbound. 154p.

BOSCH, S. 2009. The communication approach of the *LoveLife* HIV/AIDS prevention programme. Potchefstroom: North-West University. (Dissertation – MA).

BUCKLE, P., MARSH, G. & SMALE, S. 2001. Assessing resilience and vulnerability: principles, strategies and actions, guidelines emergency management. Australia. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, 15(2):8-14, May.

CANNON, T., TWIGG, J. & ROWELL, J. 2003. Social vulnerability, sustainable livelihoods and disasters: Report to the DFID. London: DFID (Department for International Development). 524p.

CARLEY, M., JENKINS, P & SMITH, H. 2001. Urban development and civil society: the role of communities in sustainable cities. (*In Cooper,R., Evans, G & Boyko, C. Designing sustainable cities*). London: EarthScan. 320p.

CHAMBERS, R. 1995. Poverty and livelihoods: whose reality counts? *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 7, No. 1:173-204

CHAMBERS, R. & CONWAY, G. 1992. Sustainable rural livelihoods: practical concepts for the 21st Century. IDS Discussion Paper 296. (In De Satge, R & Holloway, A. Learning about livelihoods: insights from Southern Africa). Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. 361p.

CHIWAKA, E. 2005. Mainstreaming participatory vulnerability analysis in ActionAid international. *International Studies*, 42(2):167-179

CORNWALL, A. 2003. Whose voices? Whose choices? Reflections on gender and participatory development. *World Development*, 31(8): 1325-1342

DAC (Development Assistance Committee). 2006. The challenge of capacity development: working towards good practice. Paris: OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development). 46p.

DAVIS, I., HAGHEBAERT, B. & PEPPIATT, D. 2004. Social Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis: ProVention Consortium discussion paper and workshop report. Geneva: ProVention Consortium. 40p. Available at: <http://www.proventionconsortium.org/?pageid=37&publicationid=30#30> Date of access: 21 April 2011

DEANE, J. 2004. The context of communication for development. 9<sup>th</sup> UN Roundtable on communication for development. *Communication for development roundtable report*. Rome: FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation). 96p.

DEL CASTELLO, R. & BRAUN, P.R. 2006. Framework on effective rural communication for development. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/participation/participatory-communication-lesson.html>

Date of access: 21 April 2011

DENEULIN, S. & SHAHANI, L. 2009. An introduction to the human development and capability approach. USA: EarthScan Publications. 320p.

DE VOS, A.S., STRYDOM, H., FOUCHE, C.B. & DELPORT, C.S.L. 2007. Research at Grass roots: for the social sciences and human service professions. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

DFID (Department for International Development). 2004. Disaster risk reduction: a development concern. UK: Crown Copyright. Available at: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=1070>

Date of access: 21 April 2011

DU PLOOY, G.M. 2002. Communication Research: Techniques, methods and applications. Kenwyn: JUTA. 379p.

ENARSON, E. 2000. Gender and Natural Disasters: IPCRR Working Paper no.1. Geneva: International Labour Organization. Available at: [www.unisdr.org/eng/library/Literature/7566.pdf](http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/Literature/7566.pdf) Date of access: 21 April 2011

ETZIONI, A. 1996. Positive aspects of community and the dangers of fragmentation. *Development and Change*. Vol. 27. pp. 301–314.

FERN, E.F. 1982. The use of focus groups for idea generation: the effects of group size, acquaintanceship, and moderator on response quantity and quality. *Journal of Marketing Research* 19(February), 1–13.

FITZPATRICK, R. & BOULTON, M. 1994. Qualitative methods for assessing health care. *Quality in Health Care* 3, 107-113.

FORBES-BIGGS, K. 2008. The Girls in Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project: Report to the ProVention Consortium. 2007 – 2008 Round III. Jamaica: University of the West Indies.

FORBES-BIGGS, K. 2009. The Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project: Final Reabona Report to the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. Potchefstroom: ACDS.

FORBES-BIGGS, K. 2010. The Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project: Final Thuto Boswa Report to the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. Potchefstroom: ACDS.

FORBES-BIGGS, K. & VAN NIEKERK, D. 2011. The Girls in Risk Reduction Leadership (G.I.R.R.L.) Project: The Emerging Role of Adolescent Girls as Change Agents for Disaster Risk Reduction. *Youth and Society*. (In review).

FRASER, C. & VILLET, J. 1994. Communication: A key to human development. Rome: FAO (Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations). Available at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/t1815e/t1815e00.htm> Date of access: 21 April 2011

FREIRE, P. 1970. Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Seabury Press. 192p.

GAVENTA, J. 2002. Introduction: exploring citizenship, participation and accountability. *IDS Bulletin* Vol. 33, 1– 11.

GREEFF, M. 2007. Information collection: Interviewing. (*In De Vos et al, Research at Grass roots.*) Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

GUIJT, I. & KAUL SHAH, M. 1998. Waking up to power, conflict and process. (*In eds. Guijt, I. & Kaul Shah, M. The myth of community: Gender issues in participatory development*). London: Intermediate Technology Publications. 288p.

HABERMAS, J. 1984. The theory of communicative action. Volume One. Reason and the rationalisation of society. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press.

HAGELSTEEN, M. 2009. Capacity development for disaster risk reduction: Bridging Theory and Practice. Lund: University of Copenhagen & University of Lund. (Thesis – MA).

HARVEY G., LOFTUS-HILLS A., RYCROFT-MALONE J., TITCHEN A., KITSON A., McCORMACK B. & SEERS K. 2002. Getting evidence into practice: the role and function of facilitation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 37(6), 577–588.

HELMER, M. & VAN AALST, M. 2005. 2nd International work conference on climate change and disaster risk reduction: Report. The Hague: Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre. Available at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/site/publications/81/annual-report-2005?type=1>  
Date of access: 21 April 2011

HORNIK, R.C. 1989. Channel effectiveness in development communication programs. (*In eds. Rice, R.E. & Atkin, C. K. Public information campaigns*). Newbury Park: Sage. pp. 309-330.

HUESCA, R. 2008. Tracing the history of participatory communication approaches to development: A critical appraisal. (*In Servaes, J. Communication for Development and Social Change*). New Delhi: Sage Publications. 428p.

INKELES, A. & SMITH, D.H. 1974. Becoming modern: Individual change in six developing countries. *American Journal of Sociology*, 75, 208-225.

JENNINGS, R. 2000. Participatory development as new paradigm: The transition of development professionalism. Presented at the *Community Based Reintegration and Rehabilitation in Post-Conflict Settings Conference 5-8 October 2000*, Washington DC.

KEVE, J. & MOHANTY, P.K. 2003. From disaster to development: How communities can help themselves. (*In* Palakudiyil, T. & Todd, M. Facing up to the storm: How local communities can cope with disaster: Lessons from Orissa and Gujarat). p 47-48. New Delhi, Christian Aid.

KRUEGER, R.A. 1988. Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research. Newbury Park, California: Sage.

LEEDY, P.D. & ORMROD, J.E. 2001. Practical research: planning and design. 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

LERNER, D. 1958. The passing of traditional society. New York: Free Press. 466p.

LIND, A. 1997. Gender, development and urban social change: Women's community action in global cities. *In* World Development Vol. 25, pp. 1205–1223., Great Britain: Elsevier Limited.

LOPES, C. & THEISOHN, T. 2003. Ownership, Leadership and Transformation – Can we do better for capacity development? UNDP, London: EarthScan publications. 372p.

LOPES, C., MALIK, K., FUKUDA-PARR, S. 2002. *Capacity for development – New solutions to old problems*, UNDP, London: EarthScan publications. 284p.

MASON, J. 2002. Qualitative researching. 2nd ed. London: Sage. 225p.

MAYOUX, L. 1995. Beyond naivety: Women, gender inequality and participatory development. *In* *Development and Change* Vol. 26, pp. 235 – 258.

McKEE, N. 1994. A community-based learning approach: beyond social marketing. (*In* eds. White, S., Nair, S. & Ascroft, J. *Participatory communication: working for change and development*. New Delhi, India: Sage. 470p.

MC LAFFERTY, I. 2004. Methodological issues in nursing research: Focus group interviews as a data collecting strategy. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 48(2), 187–194.

MEFALOPULOS, P. 2008. *Development communication sourcebook: Broadening the Boundaries of communication*. Washington: World Bank. 244p.

MEFALOPULOS, P. & KAMLONGERA, C. 2004. *Participatory Communication Strategy Design: A Handbook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. SADC Centre of Communication for Development, Harare and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome. <http://www.fao.org>

MERCER, J., KELMAN, I., LLOYD, K. & SUCHET-PEARSON, S. 2008. Reflections on the use of participatory research for disaster risk reduction. *Area*. Vol. 40 (2). pp. 172–83.

MIDGLEY, J. 1986. *Community participation, Social Development and the State*. London: Methuen & Co. 185p.

MINNIE, J. 2000. Improving local government service-delivery through public sector marketing. University of Stellenbosch. (Dissertation – MPA).

MOEMEKA, A.A. 2000. Development, social change and development communication: background and conceptual discussion. (*In Moemeka, A.A., ed. Development communication in action: building understanding and creating participation.*) Lanham: University Press of America. 336p.

MORGAN, D.L. & KREUGER, R.A. 1993. When to use focus groups and why. (*In ed. Morgan D.L. Successful Focus Groups.*) London: Sage.

NAIDOO, L. 2010. The Participatory development communication approach of Thusong Service Centres in Tshwane. North West University. (Dissertation – MA).

NEUMAN, W.L. 2006. Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. USA: Pearson Education.

NOMDO, C. & COETZEE, E. 2002. Urban vulnerability: Perspectives from southern Africa. Disaster Mitigation for Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, Cape Town: Periperi Publications.

PATTON, M.Q. 1990. Qualitative evaluation and research methods. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. 261-283p.

PELLING, M. 2007. Learning from others: the scope and challenges for participatory disaster risk assessment. *Disasters* Vol. 31(4): 373–385. UK:Blackwell Publishing.

POLGAR, S. & THOMAS, S. 1995. Introduction to Research in the Health Sciences. 3rd ed. Melbourne: Churchill Livingstone.

RAMIREZ, R. & QUARRY, W. 2004. Communication for development: A medium for innovation in natural resource management. Rome: International Development Research Centre and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

RICHARDSON, D. & RAJASUNDERAM, C.V. 1999. Training Community Animators as Participatory Communication for Development Practitioners. *SD Dimensions*, Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/sd/CDdirect/CDre0044.htm>

ROGERS, E.M. 1983. Diffusion of innovations. 3rd edition. New York: Free Press.

ROGERS, E.M. 2004. A Prospective and Retrospective look at the Diffusion Model. *Journal of Health Communication*, Vol. 9: 13–19. Taylor & Francis Inc.

SCHRAMM, W. 1964. Mass media and national development. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

SCHWARZ, N. 1999. Self-reports: How the questions shape the answers . *American Psychologist*. 54, 93-105.

SCOONES, I. 1998. Sustainable rural livelihoods: a framework for analysis. IDS Discussion Paper 72. Brighton: University of Sussex.

SERVAES, J. & MALIKHAO, P. 2007. Communication and sustainable development. 9<sup>th</sup> UN roundtable on communication for development. Communication for development roundtable report. Rome: FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation). 96p.

SERVAES, J. & MALIKHAO, P. 2008. Development communication approaches in an international perspective. *In* Servaes, Participatory communication and social change. UNESCO: Sage Publications. 289p.

SERVAES, J. 1995. Development communication for whom and for what? *Communicatio*, 21(1):39-49

SERVAES, J. 2008. Communication for development and Social Change. UNESCO: Sage Publications.

SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency). 2005. Manual for Capacity Development. Stockholm: Department of Policy and Methodology.

SMITH, J.M. 1972. Group Discussions: Interviewing in Market and Social Research. London and Boston: Routledge.

SOUTH AFRICA. 2002. Disaster Management Act No 57 of 2002. Pretoria: Government Printer.

SOUTH AFRICA. 2005. A policy framework for disaster risk management in South Africa. *Government Gazette*, No. 27534. Pretoria: Government Printer.

STEYN, B. 2004. A metaphorical application of the concept 'paradigm' to the public relations domain. *Communicare*, 23(1):54-78

STRUWIG, F.W. & STEAD, G.B. 2007. Planning, designing and reporting research. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Cape Town: Pearson Education. 279p.

THOMAS, P. 1994. Participatory Development Communication: philosophical premises. (In eds. White, S.A.W., Nair, K.S. & Ashcroft, J. Participatory Communication : Working for change and development.) Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. 470p.

TROCHIM, W.M.K. 2006. The research methods knowledge base: Non-probability sampling. (In Salkind, N.J. Encyclopedia of human development. Volume 1 ) <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampron.php> Date of access: 4 May 2011.

TWIGG, J. 2004. HPN: Good Practice Review. DRR: Mitigation and preparedness in development and emergency programming. (No. 9, March 2004) HPN. (Humanitarian Practice Network). 365p.

TWIGG, J. 2007. Characteristics of a disaster resilient community: A Guidance Note. Disaster Risk Reduction Interagency Coordination Group, DFID. [http://www.benfieldhrc.org/disaster\\_studies/projects/communitydrindicators/community\\_drr\\_indicators\\_index.htm](http://www.benfieldhrc.org/disaster_studies/projects/communitydrindicators/community_drr_indicators_index.htm)

UNCRD & SEEDS. (United Nations Centre for Regional Development & Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society) 2002. The Sustainable Community Rehabilitation Handbook. Kobe, UNCRD-SEEDS. 22p.

UNDP. (United Nations Development Programme) 2008. Capacity Development Practise Note. New York: UNDP.

UNDMTP. (United Nations Disaster Management Training Program) 1997. Building Capacities for Risk Reduction, Geneva: UNDMTP.

UNICEF. (United Nations Children's Fund) 2008. Climate Change and children: A human security challenge. Florence, Italy: UNICEF.

UNISDR. (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction). 1998. Mobilising local communities in reducing disasters. Geneva, Switzerland: UN ISDR.

UNISDR. (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) 2004. Living with Risk: A global review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives. Volume 1. Geneva, Switzerland: UNISDR.

UNISDR. (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) 2005. Hyogo Framework for Action. Geneva, Switzerland: UNISDR.

UNISDR. (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) 2008. Gender Perspectives: Integrating DRR into Climate Change Adaptation: Good Practices and Lessons Learned. *South Africa: Girls as leaders in community resilience*, K.F. Biggs. UNISDR. Geneva, Switzerland.

UN. (United Nations). 1991. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. <http://www.unicef.org/crc/> Date of access: 8 Jan 2009

VAN NIEKERK, D. 2005. A comprehensive framework for multi-sphere disaster risk reduction in South Africa. PhD – NWU.

VAN RIET, G. & VAN NIEKERK, D. 2011. Capacity development for participatory disaster risk assessment. (Submitted to: Environmental Hazards: Human and Policy Dimensions.)

VON KOTZE & HOLLOWAY. 1996. Reducing Risk: Participatory Learning Activities for Disaster Mitigation in Southern Africa. United Kingdom: Oxfam.

WAISBORD, S. 2001. Family tree of theories, methodologies and strategies in development communication: Convergences and differences. New York: Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org> Date of access: 21 April 2011.

WIGGIL, M.N. 2009. Strategic communication management in the non-profit adult literacy sector. North-West University. PhD –NWU.

WISNER, B., BLAIKIE, P., CANNON, T. & DAVIS, I. 2004. At Risk: Natural Hazards, people's vulnerability and Disasters. 2nd. Ed. London: Routledge. 472p.

YOON, C.S. 1996. Participatory communication for development. *In* Bessette, G. Rajasunderam, C.V., eds. Participatory development communication: a West African agenda. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. p. 37 – 62.

## ANNEXURE A – G.I.R.R.L. PROJECT SESSION OUTLINE

| Week | Session |   | Time         |
|------|---------|---|--------------|
| 1    | 1       | <i>Intro &amp; Team building</i>  | 3hrs         |
|      | 2       | <i>Team building, decision making &amp; logo discussion</i>                   | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 2    | 3       | <i>Physical health &amp; exercise</i>   | 3hrs         |
|      | 4       | <i>Mental health &amp; coping strategies</i>                                  | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 3    | 5       | <i>Personal safety &amp; Self defence</i>                                     | 3hrs         |
|      | 6       | <i>Personal safety &amp; Self defence</i>                                     | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 4    | 7       | <i>Personal philosophy &amp; evaluation</i>                                   | 3hrs         |
|      | 8       | <i>Fire Safety intro</i>  | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 5    | 9       | <i>Positive thinking &amp; Career guidance</i>                                | 3hrs         |
|      | 10      | <i>Peer education &amp; Sexual health</i>                                     | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 6    | 11      | <i>Peer education &amp; Sexual Health</i>                                     | 3hrs         |
|      | 12      | <i>Family planning</i>  | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 7    | 13      | <i>Community involvement</i>  | 3hrs         |
|      | 14      | <i>Social &amp; personal issues</i>   | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 8    | 15      | <i>Climate change intro</i>   | 3hrs         |
|      | 16      | <i>Disaster Management KKDM</i>   | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 9    | 17      | <i>Fire Safety</i>  | 3hrs         |
|      | 18      | <i>Environmental awareness</i>  | 2hrs 30 min  |
|      | 19      | <i>Environmental excursion</i>  | 1 day        |
| 10   | 20      | <i>1<sup>st</sup> Aid training</i>  | 3hrs         |
|      | 21      | <i>1<sup>st</sup> Aid training</i>  | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 11   | 22      | <i>Disaster Planning &amp; Community mapping</i>                              | 3hrs 30 min  |
|      | 23      | <i>Effective communication: Audience &amp; Listening skills</i>               | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 12   | 24      | <i>Effective communication: Professionalism, Leadership &amp; GIRRL power</i> | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 13   | 25      | <i>Community event planning</i>   | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 14   | 26      | <i>Community event practice</i>   | 2hrs 30min   |
| 15   | 27      | <i>Community event practice</i>   | 2hrs 30 min  |
| 16   | 28      | <i>Community event practice</i>   | 2hrs 30 min  |
|      | 29      | <i>Community event: Dress Rehearsal</i>                                       | 1 Day        |
|      | 30      | <b>COMMUNITY EVENT</b>  | <b>1 Day</b> |
| 17   | 31      | <i>Stakeholder workshop</i>   | 1 Day        |

## ANNEXURE B – G.I.R.R.L. PROJECT RESEARCH CONSENT FORMS



### AFRICAN CENTRE FOR DISASTER STUDIES

Research Focus Area: Social Transformation  
North-West University  
Potchefstroom Campus  
Private Bag X6001  
Potchefstroom  
2520

Tel: +27 (0)18 299 1620

Fax: +27 (0)18 293 5266

E-mail: [girrlproject@acds.co.za](mailto:girrlproject@acds.co.za)

Web: <http://acds.co.za>

June 2010

### G.I.R.R.L. Project Participants: Consent Form

#### 1. Research Information

Due to the role Yolanda Maartens has played as Project Coordinator for the Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership Project, which was conducted at the relevant school in 2009, she has gained extensive experience relating to young adolescent girls in the community and their vulnerable nature. The G.I.R.R.L. Project's unique focus has opened up the opportunity to explore the option to replicate the project in other communities and even other countries.

For this reason, it is vital to understand the strengths and weaknesses of previous G.I.R.R.L. Project of which the respective participant holds vital information and the possibility to make important contributions relating to the development and improvement of the G.I.R.R.L. Project in general.

The following consent form will give the researcher, Yolanda Maartens (8511190162089) permission to conduct research required for her Masters Degree in Sustainable Development which the researcher is conducting through the African Centre for Disaster Studies at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

The nature of the research will consist of the conducting of focus group sessions at the relevant school. The participants will be well looked after and refreshments will be provided at each session. Questions that have been specifically designed for the research outcomes required by the researcher's study will be asked to all the participants and each girl will have the opportunity to express her valuable opinion and make valid contribution to the researcher's study.

## **2. Ethical Considerations**

The researcher's questionnaire has to adhere to the ethical requirements set out by the North-West University's ethical committee and adhere to the regulations embedded in the Child Act of South Africa. Minors (participants under the age of 18) will need written consent/permission from their parents/guardians to participate in the research. Those participants who are older than 18 years will be asked to give individual permission to participate in the research study.

The content of the research questions will not discriminate against the participants in any way and the answering of these questions will remain at the discretion of each participant. No personal information or content of any of the responses will be made available to any external parties whatsoever. The questions will be answered anonymously and the information shared with the researcher will be handled with confidentiality. No personal information will be printed or published during or after the research has been completed.

Gender issues, sexual issues and the social and health situation of each participant will be handled with sensitivity and these specific questions will be submitted to the ethics committee of the North-West University before the research commences.

### **3. Parent/Guardian/Participant and Researcher consent and declaration**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Name and surname of Guardian/Parent) hereby give permission that \_\_\_\_\_ (Participant name and surname) participates in the research study conducted by Yolanda Maartens that forms part of her Masters study at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. In understand that the researcher will maintain the ethical codes of the NWU and will keep the interests of the participants in mind.

The research assistant for Y. Maartens' research is Genie van Wyk (8710040148088). She is a Honours student at the North-West University. She has fieldwork experience and is currently an intern at the G.I.R.R.L. Project.

She will assist in data collection, facilitation and report writing. Information that she collects may also be applicable to her studies and will adhere to the agreement signed in this consent form. I, Genie van Wyk (8710040148088) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby commit myself to the agreement stated within this consent form.

I, Yolanda Maartens (8511190162089) hereby commit myself as researcher to the guidelines stipulated by the ethical committee of the North-West University and the stipulations agreed upon in this consent form.

I will uphold the declaration undersigned here and will convey the interests of the participants at all times. For any queries, please contact me on 083 781 2550 or 018

299 1620. Thanks for your participation and cooperation in improving the G.I.R.R.L. Project for future initiatives.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

G.I.R.R.L. Participant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: Y. Maartens

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Study leader: Prof. D. van Niekerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **4. Personal Information: GIRRL participants**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Participant name:</b>                 |  |
| <b>Participant surname:</b>              |  |
| <b>Contact number:</b>                   |  |
| <b>ID number:</b>                        |  |
| <b>Date of birth:</b>                    |  |
| <b>Name of school:</b>                   |  |
| <b>G.I.R.R.L. Project year:</b>          |  |
| <b>Grade at school (2010):</b>           |  |
| <b>Town and Physical Address:</b>        |  |
| <b>Parent/Guardian name and surname:</b> |  |
| <b>Parent/Guardian contact number:</b>   |  |

12 May 2010

**SUBMITTED TO THE ETHICAL COMMITTEE OF THE NWU**

**RE: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF STUDY**

To whom it may concern,

I, Yolanda Maartens (8511190162089) hereby confirm that participants have received a consent form for my research and that I will receive them completed and signed within the next two weeks.

The following ethical consideration has to be made regarding my intended research:

*“Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? (e.g. children, people with learning or other mental or physical disabilities, people who are incarcerated, unemployed or otherwise compromise in responding to your questions).”*

My intended research will focus on young adolescent girls who have previously participated in the G.I.R.R.L. (Girls In Risk Reduction Leadership) Project. They are aware of my studies and understand the need to improve certain aspects of the project for future replication or implementation.

Each participant's parent/guardian will have to complete the attached consent form. Without it I will not be able to conduct my planned focus groups. The consent form stipulates the intention of my research and ensures their privacy and my professionalism.

The participants are familiar with the project team and myself, as we have built a relationship of trust over the last two years. This relationship will be respected throughout the research and is vital for the future of the G.I.R.R.L. Project.

Regards,

Yolanda Maartens

## **ANNEXURE C – G.I.R.R.L. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1: Were the principles of participatory development communication adhered to within the G.I.R.R.L. Project as an example of a Disaster Risk Reduction community-based project?**

1. Were you involved in deciding what sessions you wanted in the G.I.R.R.L. project?
2. Do you feel the sessions presented addressed your needs as young girls within the community?
3. Were you involved in deciding what activities you wanted to do every day?
4. What additional sessions would you have wanted within the G.I.R.R.L. project?  
Why?
5. Would you have wanted the sessions scheduled differently? How?

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: Can the inclusion of development principles contribute to the successful implementation of a Disaster Risk Reduction community-based project?**

1. Do you feel the community event belongs to you?
2. Is the community event something you feel proud of?
3. What was the goal of the community event?
4. Do you think you reached that goal? Why/Why no?
5. Do you feel those that attended the community event understood what you had to say and that they understand what disaster risk is?
6. Are you now able to deal with some of the risks you identified within your community? E.g. HIV/Aids or Fire hazards.
7. Do you feel you can now assist your friends in making better decisions when it comes to the awareness of risks/hazards within the community?

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3: How can development communication strategies improve stakeholder relationships in a community-based project?**

1. Will you be able to continue the project without the project team? Explain.
2. What would you need to continue the project on your own?
3. Who would you rely on for support within your community?
4. Would you be able to approach some of the local facilitators for help in general and for support in continuing the project? (From the community involvement session). E.g. Love Life, Dept of Social Dev, the youth centre, the church? Your teacher. Why or why not?
5. Will you get involved with the various community partners/stakeholders? Why or why not?
6. Do you think the right people from your community were asked to get involved with the project?
7. Who else would you have wanted from your community to work with the G.I.R.R.L. project?

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 4: To what extent could development communication principles be able to address the gaps identifies by the G.I.R.R.L. Project?**

1. If you were asked for your input from the start do you feel it would have made a difference as to what the G.I.R.R.L. project would have looked like? How?
2. Would you have wanted to have a say in which girls were selected to be part of the project? What criteria would you have for participants?
3. What problems (gaps) do you feel did the G.I.R.R.L. project have? How do you think this could be overcome?

## **ANNEXURE D – G.I.R.R.L. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Which activities were implemented in the G.I.R.R.L. Project?
2. How did you decide on these activities and why?
3. Who was involved in the decision making regarding the activities that were to be implemented in the G.I.R.R.L. Project?
4. Were the participants themselves involved in deciding which activities would form part of the G.I.R.R.L. Project?
5. If yes, in which way were they involved in this decision making process?
6. What was the project leaders' goal with the G.I.R.R.L. Project?
7. How did you plan on attaining these goals? Were these goals attained, why or why not?
8. What is your definition of effective participative communication?
9. Would you say the G.I.R.R.L. Project adhered to effective participative communication principles?