**Capacity Building: Myth or Reality?**

**Capacity Building: Myth or Reality?** (1995).

From the CDRA Annual Report, 1994/95.

**Introduction**

We have all been talking about capacity building for some years now. We know that the building of organisational and institutional capacity is an essential development intervention towards the strengthening of civil society. Indeed, it is the heart of development practice. Donor agencies, international and indigenous NGOs, and many governments in developing countries recognise the importance of capacity building for development. Yet even while they claim to be practising it, their concepts and practice often remain confused and vague. The greatest area of agreement appears to be that we do not really know what capacity building is. In spite of all the rhetoric, there are few demonstrable successes that we can point to.

We all know the classic development cliche, attributed to Confucius: "Give a man a fish, feed him for a day; teach him how to fish, feed him for a lifetime". This is a laudable sentiment, but it becomes more complex on two counts. The first we have known for some time - it does not help to teach people to fish when they are denied equal access to the resource base. As a result, advocacy activities working towards a "more enabling environment", or towards "a society in which more people have access to resources and power over choices" (CDRA mission statement), become a necessary extension of development practice (Korten, 1990). But the second complexity is more intractable. What if those of us who claim to do the teaching do not know how to fish? What if we have never really fished in our lives? This is not at all far-fetched. Can we - as NGO, as donors, as governmental extension services - honestly claim to have achieved that much capacity in our own organisations, we who strive to teach others? Have we really mastered what we teach, have we been able to organise ourselves sufficiently to achieve meaningful impact?

Clearly we have not; CDRA's experience in the field is testimony to the ongoing search for organisational capacity. We all struggle to do with ourselves what we would do unto others. Yet is it really because capacity building is so opaque and complicated? Or could it be that capacity building and development are so much common sense that we do not want to comprehend what is before our eyes because we fear the consequences and implications for our practice?

Our lack of an adequate theory of capacity building reduces our own capacity to engage in the practice. We lack the theory because we are not thinking through what we see before us. And we are avoiding thinking things through because to face the obvious will be to radically transform our practice. We are avoiding genuine accountability.

In 1994 CDRA undertook an evaluation of a donor agency's capacity-building programme for community-based organisations (CBOs). Recognising the lack of a proven capacity-building methodology, the donor had funded various institutions engaged in a wide variety of capacity-building strategies. CDRA was privileged to interview a wide range of people representing various institutions active in capacity building - CBOs, NGOs, donors and the Government of National Unity's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The individual respondents' observations were often not informed by a conceptual framework in which they could understand and learn from their victories and defeats, successes and failures. Yet from these fragmented ideas a framework emerged, a theory of capacity building. This could be seen as a "story" made up of "sentences" contributed by the individuals we interviewed.

The story is corroborated by an external evaluation of CDRA itself in 1993 which explored NGOs' own conceptions of their capacity building needs, successes and failures (Evaluation report, 1994). Somehow this framework reveals itself as perfect common sense. Coming from a country embarking on its own major national development drive, and one with a thriving and energetic NGO and CBO community, we believe that this framework could be helpful to the entire development community. An overview of the framework is the subject of the first article in our annual report this year. The articles which follow explore the implications of this capacity building theory for development practitioners and organisations.

**References**

Evaluation report: Community Development Resource Association (CDRA): Cape Town, South Africa. Prepared by Francie Lund, David Sogge and Stan van Wichelin. April 1994.

Korten, David. 1990. Getting to the 21st century: voluntary action and the global agenda. West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian.

**In quest of a theory**

It is interesting to note that, during the evaluation into capacity building referred to on page 3, it emerged that CBOs whose capacity had been built to some extent were far more articulate about what capacity building is than the NGOs actually doing the capacity building. And the CBOs themselves were only able to point to their experiences, not to present a coherent theory out of those experiences.

Generally, NGOs also tended to refer to discrete experiences and instances when talking of capacity building. While this has proved a vital point of departure in the development of a more coherent picture, it presents us with the major dilemma faced by NGOs: the lack of a capacity building theory severely constrains practice. In fact, it demonstrates a lack of organisational capacity on the part of NGOs.

The research showed clearly that organisational capacity is dependent on individual capacity, and that building individual and organisational capacity follows the same line of development. What emerged from the interviews were identifiable elements of organisational capacity and, broadly speaking, a sequence in the way they are acquired.

*A conceptual framework*
The first requirement for an organisation with capacity, the "prerequisite" on which all other capacity is built, is the development of a conceptual framework which reflects the organisation's understanding of the world. This is a coherent frame of reference, a set of concepts which allows the organisation to make sense of the world around it, to locate itself within that world, and to make decisions in relation to it. This framework is not a particular ideology or theory, it is not necessarily correct, and it is not impervious to critique and change. It is not a precious, fragile thing, but a robust attempt to keep pace conceptually with the (organisational and contextual) developments and challenges facing the organisation. The organisation which does not have a competent working understanding of its world can be said to be incapacitated, regardless how many other skills and competencies it may have.

*Organisational "attitude"*
The second requirement concerns organisational "attitude". An organisation needs to build its confidence to act in and on the world in a way that it believes can be effective and have an impact. Put another way, it has to shift from "playing the victim" to exerting some control, to believing in its own capacity to affect its circumstances. Another aspect of "attitude" is accepting responsibility for the social and physical conditions "out there", in spite of whatever the organisation faces in the world. This implies a shift from demand and protest politics to a more inclusive acceptance of the responsibilities which go with the recognition of human rights.

Whatever the history of oppression, marginalisation or simply nasty circumstances which an individual or organisation has had to suffer, these "attitudes" are the basis for effective action in the world. This is not a question of morality, of fairness or justice; it is simply the way things work. With clarity of understanding and a sense of confidence and responsibility comes the possibility of developing organisational vision and strategy. As we were told during the interviews, understanding and responsibility leads to a sense of purpose in which the organisation does not lurch from one problem to the next, but manages to plan and implement a programme of action, and is able to adapt the programme in a rational and considered manner.

*Organisational structure*
Although these requirements are not gained entirely sequentially, we may say that once organisational aims and strategy are clear it becomes possible to structure the organisation in such a way that roles and functions are clearly defined and differentiated, lines of communication and accountability untangled, and decision-making procedures transparent and functional. Put slightly differently, 'form follows function' - if one tries to do this the other way around the organisation becomes incapacitated.

*Acquisition of skills*
The next step in the march towards organisational capacity, in terms of priority and sequence, is the growth and extension of individual skills, abilities and competencies - the traditional terrain of training courses. Of course skills also feature earlier; they can, in and of themselves, generate confidence and a sense of control. Development cannot be viewed simplistically; these phases overlap. Yet what emerges clearly from our research is that there is a sequence, a hierarchy, an order. Unless organisational capacity has been developed sufficiently to harness training and acquisition of new skills, training courses do not "take", and skills do not adhere. The organisation which does not know where it is going and why; which has a poorly developed sense of responsibility for itself; and which is inadequately structured, cannot make use of training courses and skills acquisition.

*Material resources*
Finally, an organisation needs material resources: finances, equipment, office space, and so on. Without an appropriate level of these, the organisation will always remain, in an important sense, incapacitated.

The elements of organisational capacity identified here and the sequence in which they come about was confirmed by CBOs whose capacity had been developed through NGO intervention, as well as by NGOs responding to questions about the effectiveness of CDRA's interventions. This accords with organisational theory and it seems to make common sense. Yet it is clear that the order cannot be regarded as a simple sequence. Capacity building is part of a developmental process, and organisations repeat phases at different stages of their drive towards capacity.

*Recurring phases at different stages*
A small, new NGO has a different level of impact and "sophistication" from a large NGO which is established and effective. The larger NGO has more need of "sophisticated organisational conditions" because development and growth in capacity implies greater sophistication of organisational processes, functions and structures. While the new NGO will need clarity of vision, it may not yet have the problems which often accompany organisational vision building activities within the older NGO. The needs of individual staff members in terms of skills - and therefore training courses - will differ at different stages of the organisation's life, as will material resource constraints and assets. Similarly, with respect to structure, organisations will have different needs at different stages of their lives. At times an increasingly complex structure is called for; at other times "restructuring" is required.

With regard to CBOs, these can grow to become highly sophisticated organisations, but generally in southern Africa at present they are far less developed and sophisticated, organisationally speaking, than their NGO counterparts. And within the organisational form of the CBO itself a wide range of different capacities and competencies exists. There are communities which lack any organisational representation at all. There are the embryonic CBOs, consisting of little more than a (theoretically) rotating committee, without a thought-through strategy, resources or clarity of roles and functions. Then there is the CBO with employees, differentiated strategies and office space and equipment. There is also the CBO which has begun to play the role of development agent, even taking the place of non-functioning local government in the community.

All of these different stages of organisation development, from no organisation through organisation building through organisational differentiation to highly sophisticated national NGOs with mega-budgets, (theoretically) represent increasing capacity. And each of the elements mentioned above recur - with their demands for intervention - at different stages in the game.

A CBO might be struggling with the transition in "attitude" from resistance to responsibility while an NGO is dealing with attitudinal issues which it refers to as organisational culture, issues of meaning, principle and motivation. An NGO in its early phases may function healthily with a flat, informal structure and later, in order to maintain the same level of health, a more hierarchical structure may be called for. A CBO may have achieved greater organisational capacity through clarifying its constitutional or membership structures, only to discover that it degenerates into chaos and conflict when it begins to employ staff without clarifying the relationship between its operational structure (staff) and its constitutional structure.

The basic order in which capacity building occurs is: conceptual framework first; appropriate organisational attitudes leading to vision and strategy; followed by structure (organisational form), which in turn is given content and energy through skilled individuals. The whole is then supported through adequate resourcing. Needs change with respect to all these elements as the organisation develops, but the central point is this: intervention or work on any one of these elements will not prove effective unless sufficient work has been done on the preceding elements in the hierarchy.

It does not help to train individuals when organisational is vision unclear, organisational culture is unhelpful and structure is confusing or obtuse. It does not help to secure resources when the organisation is not equipped to carry out its tasks. It does not help to develop information management systems when the basic organisational attitude is one which rejects learning through monitoring and evaluation in favour of frantic activity. In terms of the hierarchy and sequence of capacity building steps explored here, interventions can only work if they address the problem at an appropriate level for a particular organisation.

**Demand for capacity-building services**

Effective capacity building interventions must address the unique needs of an organisation in its particular stage of development at that specific time. This means that the service organisation must be capable of close observation in the field and of being able to provide a nuanced and differentiated response to the needs of the (client) organisation at a particular time. Put another way, it must have a range of capacities which it can employ in differentiated strategies. The most important thing we learn here is that there is no single way to build organisational capacity. And this in face of the fact that many organisations are in search of the single intervention methodology, rather than an adequate understanding of capacity itself.

Some examples of differentiated fieldwork strategies were give by our respondents. It became abundantly clear that the first three elements of capacity building - conceptual understanding and framework, organisational attitudes, and organisational structure - are the subject of fieldwork interventions, rather than, say, training courses. That is, they can be improved through various forms of fieldwork, from unstructured and informal "community development" work through to highly structure and contained consultancy processes with formal contracts. But NGOs often do not distinguish between different types of fieldwork interventions.

*Differentiated interventions*
The community in which no organisation or in which only quasi-organisation exists requires leadership and motivation, a galvanising activity. Pure facilitative fieldwork may not be appropriate where there is no groundswell of activity to facilitate. Rather, the fieldworker needs to work here more as "animator", even possibly as activist, in order to provide the leadership which is lacking, to provide "voice" in the midst of what Freire called the oppressed's "culture of silence" (Freire, 1970). Yet later, when organisation is established and has attained a certain degree of capacity, this same attitude will come across as paternalistic and patronising, and will in fact often hold the CBO back from further development. In other words, fieldworkers and NGOs who have worked as animators often develop the idea that the developing CBO somehow "belongs" to them. The attitude which helped build capacity at one stage becomes detrimental at another.

Even later, when the client organisation is more sophisticated, the unstructured, informal nature of "community development" fieldwork which works so well during the organisation building phase may become detrimental when it no longer accords with the growing formality and differentiation of the organisation. Fieldworkers value informality while organisational consultants prefer to work within the framework of formal contracts. While informality facilitates interaction with less sophisticated organisations, it often keeps control of the process in the hands of the fieldworker. Part of the organisation's development of capacity lies in its ability to take control of the interventions which it requests; setting the terms of reference and defining the framework. This is the domain of "consultancy fieldwork" rather that "community development fieldwork".

On the other hand, much skills acquisition (using "skills" in the broadest possible sense) is a more fitting subject for training courses than for fieldwork intervention. Thus the fourth level in our sequence of elements towards building capacity requires a strategy differentiated from fieldwork entirely. Training, regarded by many to be the only form of capacity building, is only appropriate at certain times and in certain circumstances. Clearly there are many capacity building needs which cannot be met through training.

*Donor Priorities*
It was interesting to note during this evaluation that donors who specifically fund what they refer to as capacity building confine their grant-making mainly to training activities, and only sometimes to ongoing fieldwork and consultancy activities. Few fund NGO infrastructure; even fewer will fund CBO infrastructural and material needs. Yet it is clear that, at a certain point, fulfillment of resourcing needs rates higher in terms of capacity building process than any other activity. Most CBOs are expected to become effective organisations without any physical means but often, if the phase is right, it is precisely this form of intervention which allows an organisation to take the next step in its developmental process.

*Conclusion*
One point must be made at the close of this article. Patently, if the presence of a conceptual framework is part of the development of an organisation's capacity, then many donors, NGOs and governmental service are severely incapacitated. Their activities do not take place within a theoretical understanding which would lend coherence and continuity to their efforts, as well as enable practitioners to reflect on, and learn from, their activities in structured ways. This is what would enable them to modify and improve both the theory and the practice. Most of us are incapacitated in this sense. How can we then "teach others to fish"? It is high time that we paid our discipline a little more respect by taking the time to think it through.

**Reference**
Freire, Paulo. 1970. Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Continuum

**Implications for practice**

The rudiments of theory which have been described here seem to make perfect sense. Indeed, they accord closely with the practice of organisation development itself. We wondered whether the fact that practitioners appear to remain oblivious to such theory is an avoidance mechanism, because the implications bear radical consequences for practice.

*There is no single way to build organisational capacity*
The first conclusion arising from the previous articles is that there is no single capacity building response or intervention which is right for all times, phases, organisations or contexts. This may appear obvious, but it takes on profound implications for capacity builders when considered against a background in which attempts by government, donors and even some large NGOs to devise and implement mass-based capacity building formulae are the order of the day. Of course, the alternative to formula approaches is not to continue in the unsystematic and intuitive way in which much NGO capacity-building work presently happens. On the contrary, all our knowledge about organisational capacity building demands that capacity builders are able either to supply, or arrange and coordinate the supply of a range of different interventions. Capacity builders need the ability to observe accurately, to interpret their observations intelligently and impersonally and then to deliver the appropriate intervention at the appropriate time.

*There is no end to capacity building*
There appears to be a prevailing assumption that, if we could arrange for the correct quantifiable inputs to be inserted into organisations, then certain pre-determined outputs would occur, and the organisation would be "capacitated". Clearly nothing could be further from the truth. Inputs must be determined by context, and their efficacy is further dependent on the competence of the intervening agency. There is no straight line between input and output, between cause and effect. Output is the result of a multiple range of factors and, even more to the point, it is naive to imagine that any organisation is ever finally capacitated. Indeed, the converse is true: the more sophisticated the organisation, the more complex its intervention requirements become. After all, it is amongst the highly capacitated commercial organisations that organisational consultancy is most widely practised, and it is within the most skilled organisations that human resource development is taken most seriously.

*Capacity building takes time and money*
The pre-packaged (usually training) programme is at best a paltry response to the intricacies of capacity building, but it is by far the most ubiquitous response. No package can answer an organisation's development needs, except in part, and then only when it is presented at the appropriate time within a wider, more systemic approach. This suggests the very concept of "cost-effectiveness" needs to be reconsidered. Short-term responses will not satisfy long-term requirements. The question arises as to whether donors and NGOs operating within the framework of time-bound projects and products are really concerned with development at all. Perhaps these organisations are more concerned with the husbanding of their own resources than they are with the genuine facilitation of capacity building in others.

*Capacity building is marked by shifts in relationships and strategies*
All too often relationships between capacity builders and their client organisations come to an end or decline at the point at which they should be changing. This happens because they cannot find the way of shifting their relationship or the strategies which inform the relationship.

Thus (northern) donors find it difficult to be challenged by their recently capacitated southern "partners", even though this should be regarded as success in the capacity building game. Similarly, NGOs preach accountability but find it difficult when they are actually held to account by CBOs. At the same time, our research revealed that within communities the CBO which begins to operate as a dynamic capacitated organisation often loses touch with its own membership. Initial relationships are often undeniably ones of dependence and, by their very nature, somewhat patronising. Initially, this is not necessarily a problem. It is often out of this dependency that capacity building begins. But the objective is independence, ultimately even interdependence, and it is often the practitioner who fails to make the change. This may be due to the capacity builder's own insecurities, to limitations in strategic versatility or even to the (unconscious) development of co-dependency. Whatever the cause, it is at these times that the practitioner becomes the greatest stumbling block to the client's development. There is abundant evidence that programmes and assumptions are thrust upon recipient organisations in spite of, rather than as a response to, their real needs.

*Capacity builders must give attention to their own development*
This point follows directly from the preceding ones. In order to determine, embark on and shift strategies and approaches to organisational capacity building, development practitioners and funders need to pay close attention to the process and understand what they are seeing. If capacity building occurs through the development of long-term relationships which are marked by shifts in strategy and attitudes, those wishing to build capacity need to continually be observing, reflecting on, changing and improving those relationships. The marked absence of self-evaluation in NGO and donor practice does not bode well in this regard.

**Practical consequences**

If the implications flowing out of the theory, what are the practical consequences for capacity builders? We believe the consequences are relatively radical. We also contend, however, that there is no way out.

To recap briefly: In order to build capacity it is necessary to have a thorough, rational and explicable theory, or understanding, of what it is that you are trying to achieve. Further, this theory must be translated into a strategy and programme of action which makes clear the steps (and the reasons for the steps) that will be taken in order to build capacity. With regard to strategy, it is necessary in the first place that capacity builders, whether fieldworkers, consultants or organisations, must, simply, be working in the field with the people and organisations whose capacity they are intending to build. They must be willing and able to do work which stretches over a long period, even an indefinite period. While the relationship may change, when and how it will change cannot be predicted with any certainty. The strategy must be sufficiently flexible to respond to the needs of "client" organisations and allow for changes, including possibly involving other capacity builders.

*Critical self-reflection*
In order for a capacity-building organisation to maintain the required level of responsiveness and strategic clarity, it is necessary that it constantly engages in critical self-reflection, learning and strategising. Action learning (learning from experience, from "doing") requires that the organisation has a willingness to learn and have its horizons broadened. In addition, there needs to be a real organisational commitment to making time for this to happen, or the methods, approaches and techniques will become entrenched and applied doggedly, even when they have ceased to become effective. If these conditions are not present, attempts at capacity building will be ineffective in the long term.

*"Letting go"*
A willingness to relinquish control, to let go, is necessary if the capacity builder is to be open to the client organisation changing. Yet all too often capacity builders attitudes suggest that client organisations will never be truly effective, that they will always be, in some way, needy. It is, perhaps, an inability to deal with ambiguity. As we have argued, increasing capacity brings with it increasing need. Old interventions, ways of relating, expectations have to be given up in order to allow development to take its course and create space for new interventions, relationships and expectations.

Put another way, and very simply, there is no short cut to capacity building. There are no watertight formulae, and no straight line between cause and effect. Capacity building is an art, not a science. Yet there is no reason to despair; both of the evaluations on which these ideas are based demonstrated very clearly and unambiguously that capacity is being built. It is just that we are so woefully inadequate, fumbling and wasteful in comparison with consequences of this perspective for our practice.

*NGOs themselves*
In NGOs, we often find that conceptual frameworks, reasoned strategies and action-learning processes are conspicuous by their absence. A form of ad hoc intuition often takes their place. Either this, or hide-bound, formula-driven activities which do not respond to their changing context. Further, fieldwork - the heart of capacity building - is often relegated to marginal status in the organisation (CDRA, 1994: 6-9).

The ability to "let go" - of control, of preconceived assumptions, of the notion of the client organisation's dependence on the service provider - appears particularly difficult for NGOs. Lack of the skills required for the successful employment of varied strategies is a serious constraint. Adequate human resource development processes are lacking. Management practices are often not geared to strategies in which outputs do not relate easily and linearly to inputs, and where, therefore, a form of "disciplined flexibility" is required.

Procuring financial resources, something which lies largely beyond the control of NGOs, also plays havoc with attempts at improvement. Where donors are the major source of income, and where these donors set the rules by limiting their interventions to short-term, package-oriented, single-intervention project grants, the flexibility to change and improve is severely hampered. Where donors pay scant regard to the capacity building requirements of the grantees themselves, and prefer to disregard the most basic requirements of organisation like sustained funding for administration costs, the game becomes largely self-defeating.

*Donor agencies*
So far as donors themselves are concerned, the lack of adequate conceptual frameworks for capacity building has recently been demonstrated by research conducted in the north (James, 1994). However, it appears from the behaviour of many donors that capacity building, and even development itself, is not their primary intention. Their primary intention appears to be "facilitating the flow of funds", and one questions whether they see themselves as agents of development at all, in spite of all the rhetoric about development and capacity building. Certainly not all donors fall into this category, but all donors need to take the consequences of their actions on board if they are to seriously engage with capacity building. This means seriously rethinking the way in which funds are granted, and preferably eradicating the short-term package approach to funding.

*A new approach to funding*
Realistic funding permits long-term, multi-strategic approaches capable of responding flexibly to developments in the field. Donors should join forces with NGOs in the search for comprehensive and relevant criteria for success, as well as assisting in the development of ongoing evaluation, adaptation and improvement of NGO methodologies. The current insistence on externally-imposed summative evaluations which create defensiveness and resistance and are seldom developmental or even accurate, is a major block to capacity building. Donors would do better to insist on ongoing self-evaluation processes and organisational action learning, and join with NGOs in developing the ability to do this.

Of course, this also implies that donors would need to engage in these practices themselves in terms of their own organisational needs as capacity builders. Yet the honest donor will admit how little this is practised, how lit responsiveness there is, how little real listening, and how many preconceived programmes and methods foisted on the South. Some of these are in response to the most superficial of fashions prevalent at the time, some of them to political pressures which are of Northern, rather than Southern origin. Without a doubt, there are exceptions to the generalisations presented here.

There are donors with whom it is a privilege to work. By and large these donors has strong field presence either through the creation of regional offices, or through the strategic deployment of, intelligent and responsive field staff.

We have argued that a strong field presence is a pre-requisite for capacity builders. This presence needs to be coupled with an organisational culture which allows the donor to be accessible to those organisations and communities which it serves. All too often organisational demands which are internal to the donor agency preclude easy access by NGOs as well as, particularly, by CBOs.

*Flexibility is a key*
This organisational culture should be backed up by a conceptual framework which is disciplined rather than shackled, and flexible rather than rigid. For example, many donors funding CBO capacity building insist that their funds are used exclusively for capacity building activities, therefore not for infrastructure, office space or equipment, salaries, and so on. Yet our research demonstrated conclusively that at certain points in CBO's development, it is precisely the fulfillment of these material needs which will take the CBO the next step on its development path. In other words, the term "capacity-building activities" covers a broad spectrum of responses to specific needs in an organisation's growth. If donors cannot respond to what is needed with considered flexibility and openness, then they should avoid the straw allegiance to the concept of capacity building, and even development itself, for it can only be regarded as posturing. Of course, there are many and major constraints on donor ability to avoid what appears as the norm. But the consequences to the theory of capacity building presented here are radical, and we would request readers of this report to at least begin the work of renewal which is so desperately needed. It will take time, and there are major forces militating against it, but this is the same struggle which is being waged in the South. If donors cannot begin to engage with this on their own territory, then the real question arises: "Whose lack of capacity is really the constraining factor in development?"

*The role of government*
So far as government is concerned, we do not yet know how successful this institution can be with respect to capacity building. We do know that responsiveness and flexibility do not come easily to bureaucracies. We know too, that the business of regulating society can be at odds with the business of facilitating the development of that society. At the very least, governments which are attempting to accomplish both regulation and facilitation - such as the Government of National Unity in South Africa - would do well to work closely, even through, NGOs whose business it is to facilitate the development of the civil organs of society (Fowler, 1990). Government can ill afford to bypass NGOs if it is serious about capacity building; at the same time, government needs to take some of the implications presented here seriously in terms of its own practice. It needs to ensure that it is accessible to communities, and that it is able to maintain a presence in the field. It needs to work on its own conceptual framework, and set action-learning processes in place.

This is a tall order for government as a whole. Practically, it will take place at departmental level, and some departments will become more effective that others. Human resource development - in terms of the skills necessary to build capacity - becomes necessary, as does a close watch on the culture of the government department which will struggle between the conflicting demands of regulation and facilitation. At the very least, government and NGOs must learn to work together for the sake of the added value which each brings to the field of social development.

**References**

Community Development Resource Association. 1994. C*apacity building: In the name of development?: Exploring issues of consultancy and fieldwork.* Annual report 1993/94. Cape Town: CDRA.

Fowler, Alan. 1990.*Building partnerships between Northern and Southern development NGOs: issues for the nineties.* Unpublished.

James, Rick. 1994. *Strengthening the capacity of Southern NGO partners: A survey of current Northern NGO approaches.*International NGO Training and Research Centre. INTRAC Occasional paper Vol. 1, no. 5. Oxford: INTRAC