

Learning from the literature on community development for the implementation of community renewables in South Africa

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Abstract

Implementation of large-scale wind, solar and hydro projects in South African communities is intended to contribute to local economic development. Government policy, through the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP), obliges energy companies to share revenue and ownership with local communities, thus providing renewable energy companies with a significant opportunity to position the industry as a significant contributor to community development and thus to the country's transformation and development agenda. This investigation draws on policy documents and interview data to establish that the policy's lack of appreciation for existing community development tradition and frameworks, commonly applied in South African development policy and programmes, has weakened its potential. Furthermore, it theoretically positions the emerging practice employed by the renewables industry in the implementation of the REIPPPP requirements, and outlines how existing academic and practical know-

edge about community development and company-community relations can provide guidance and support in building an impactful practice.

Keywords: community relations and development, REIPPPP, community benefit, project implementation, social performance

Highlights

- South Africa is implementing a unique version of pro-poor renewable energy policy.
- Industry and local communities and government need to build quality relationships to successfully implement the policy requirements.
- The policy and practice ignores established community development traditions and frameworks.
- Existing knowledge grounded in South African practice and policy experience can guide the sector's understanding of and vision for development.

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1. Introduction

South Africa, for the first time in its history, is feeding the national electricity grid with electricity generated through utility-scale renewable energy projects. The Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) drives this change and also requires private energy companies to commit resources to alleviate local socio-economic needs. The programme is organised in procurement rounds. Six rounds have been issued to date, resulting in 6 376 MW of electricity being procured from 102 renewable independent power producer (IPP) projects across the country. In September 2016, the entire programme was valued at R194.1 billion. At that point, 51 IPPs were connected to the national grid, providing a total of 2 738 MW of electricity generation capacity (IPP Office, 2016).

Project stakeholders on the ground are still grappling with how to implement sustainable development initiatives, while government and industry bodies already celebrate the programme as a success for its energy and development achievements, (Wlokas et al. 2012; Baker & Wlokas 2014; Wlokas 2015). South Africa has a rich history of theoretical and practical community development knowledge and experience (Hart 2012). Theoretical traditions as well as practice frameworks tend to guide policy design and programme implementation, with a mix of radical participatory approaches as advanced by the non-governmental tradition of community development or more conventional welfare approaches as taught in South Africa's schools of social work and development practice, and diffused by many government-led community development work initiatives. The REIPPPP, however, does not make reference to any of this. Lack of policy alignment is obvious not only to policy analysts but also to development practitioners on the ground.

This investigation draws on primary interview data and secondary information. Interviews included formal and informal research conversations with renewable energy project stakeholders (local government, energy companies, and community representatives) that were conducted in the context of the lead author's PhD research during 2014–2015. Secondary information comprised industry workshop reports and academic literature on renewable energy, community development and company-community relations and development.

It is argued that that existing community development knowledge and experience, which is overlooked by the REIPPPP, provides a rich resource in support of good practice development amongst the REIPPPP-concerned stakeholders in government, industry and communities. It is shown that, based on reports of multi-stakeholder workshops, the implementation discourse amongst REIPPPP stakeholders, through increased experiences on the

ground as well as gentle learning space facilitation, has already grown into a greater appreciation of the non-negotiable good practice principles associated with community development. Hence, there is ground to expect that the developmental impacts of community renewables might outperform the achievements of the extractives sector in times to come.

The article defines the concept of community renewables, large-scale renewable energy projects that benefit local communities, in the international and South African contexts. The paper compares international research results on community benefits through such projects with the emerging evidence from REIPPPP implementation. Further, we introduce some of the orthodox community development traditions, frameworks and good practice ideas applicable in South Africa. Finally, we formulate concrete suggestions for REIPPPP stakeholders on how to adopt the theoretical and practical lessons.

2. Community renewables globally and in South Africa

Renewable energy projects, generating supply for national electricity grids, commonly engage with socio-economic needs of their host communities. Projects create benefits, beyond the employment and macro-economic impacts associated with plant construction and contribution of the plant to regional or national energy security. In Britain such benefits appear in different forms: for example, conventional economic benefits (manufacturing, land rental), financial benefits to local communities (ownership investment, cheaper electricity), in-kind contribution to local assets (visitor facilities), provision of other local services (educational visits), and/or involvement in the project development process (liaison activities) (Munday et al. 2011). Table 1 outlines the categories in more detail.

The importance of community involvement and benefits in the implementation of large-scale energy plants is emerging as a new field of research in Europe and, slowly, also in other countries. Existing research provides further insights about how renewables companies relate to communities and local development. These studies draw on case studies, interviews and surveys from Europe. Present research investigates the process and outcome of community wind projects (Walker & Devine-Wright 2008), conditions determining local impact of renewables projects (del Río & Burguillo 2009), the importance of trust (Walker et al. 2010), opportunities for rural development associated with community benefits of wind farms (Munday et al. 2011), the role and challenges of community ownership and investment (Haggett & Aitken 2015), the role of community benefits in the acceptance of offshore wind farms (Walker et al. 2014; Cowell et al. 2011), as well as investigating evidence in support

Table 1: Categories of community benefits in the context of Britain (Community Viewfinder, 2007; DTI, 2005; in Munday et al, 2011).

<p><i>Conventional economic benefit:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using locally manufactured content, and local contractors for construction, operation and maintenance • Land rental income to landowners and any royalties • Local business rates and/or taxes
<p><i>Flows of financial benefits to local communities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some form of ownership/investment in the project among local people, either as equity or a form of profit share • Some form of community fund, with lump sum and/or annual payments, either focussed on specific purposes (such as energy efficiency) or more open-ended • Cheaper electricity • Sponsorship of local events
<p><i>Contributions in kind to local assets and facilities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To landscape and ecological enhancement measures, perhaps that mitigate or compensate for any environmental costs caused by the wind farm. • To tourism/visitor facilities
<p><i>Provision of other local services:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational visits of other educational programmes
<p><i>Involvement in the development process:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various forms of liaison activity

of community ownership (Slee 2015). Slee (2015) suggests that there remains substantial need for further research into a range of topics associated with community ownership, benefits and capacity, indicating that this field of enquiry requires increased attention not only in emerging renewable energy countries, but even in mature renewables environments like the UK and Germany.

In this context, the term community renewables refers to large-scale renewable energy projects that engage with communities around the project site about socio-economic needs and opportunities. The engagement can be deliberate on the side of the project implementers or government policy, but it can also be the result of socio-political necessity. The World Wind Energy Association (WWEA) coined a very similar term: community power. Community power projects have to fulfil at least two of these three criteria (WWEA 2011):

1. Local stakeholders own the majority or all of a project: A local individual or a group of local stakeholders, whether they are farmers, cooperatives, independent power producers, financial institutions, municipalities, and schools, own, immediately or eventually, the majority or all of a project.
2. Voting control rests with the community-based organisation: The community-based organisation made up of local stakeholders has the majority of the voting rights concerning the decisions taken on the project.
3. The majority of social and economic benefits are distributed locally: the major part or all of the social and economic benefits are returned to the local community.

None of the renewable energy projects in South Africa's REIPPPP qualify as community power projects, despite government's deliberate effort to include communities as mandatory beneficiary and shareholders into the programme design. The procurement programme requires projects to share revenue and ownership with local communities in a 50-kilometre radius around project sites (Department of Energy 2011), but there is no focus on ownership per se, rather an emphasis on limited ownership and economic benefit opportunities, combined with a capped local redistribution of profits with potential for social, welfare and developmental to local communities. The policy and associated tender documents stipulate quantitative targets for investments into socio-economic and enterprise development (1–1.5% and up to 0.6% of total project revenue) and also identify a minimum community shareholding threshold (2.5% of project shareholding). Strategic guidance as to what these investments should ultimately achieve is only recently available, in the form reproduced in Table 2 below, which the procuring Department of Energy and the IPP office published in 2015. It outlines the expected alignment between the REIPPPP criteria and the National Development Plan.

The REIPPPP applies technocratic language, referring to socio-economic development (SED), enterprise development (ED) and local ownership, with companies tending to adopt these terms. Commonly, local government understands these to feed into, or at least relate to, their 'local economic development' efforts. Social performance consultants, hired by energy companies, need to translate the REIPPPP terminology into language that is

understood by ordinary citizens in communities across the country. Thus, consultants often refer to 'community benefits' or 'local community development'. Communities and community development practitioners discuss these elements in the context of 'community development'. This article refers to 'community benefits' and focuses specifically on the gaps between the provision for community benefit, and in particular SED, and the practices that might best give effect to these intentions.

The table stipulates that REIPPPP's SED investments shall contribute towards sustainable rural communities and sustainable human settlements. Government's expectation of SED investments presents a mechanical view of change and development, suggesting that financial investments into education, health and infrastructure will lead to improved wellbeing of previously disadvantaged individuals and communities, whatever the conditions under which the intervention occurs. Enterprise development is targeted to support decent employment through inclusive growth and also sustainable rural communities. Enterprise development reflects another development paradigm, associating strengthened free market forces with the alleviation of poverty. A third development intent can be associated with the local ownership requirement. Government indicates that local community ownership in REIPPPP projects shall benefit decent employment through inclusive

growth, sustainable rural communities, creating a better and safer South Africa, as well as nation-building and social cohesion (IPP Office 2015). Table 2 outlines the NDP outcomes and primary focus and individual REIPPPP contributions in further detail. It would be fascinating to draw the respective theories of change, underlying each of these paradigms in the REIPPPP context – an exercise worth considering as the industry grows and develops a clearer vision for its development contribution.

To date, the stipulated community benefit requirements have resulted in significant financial commitments towards community benefits. After four bid window rounds that approved a total of 92 wind, solar, hydro, landfill gas and biomass projects, industry's collective commitments total over R70 billion (SED: R19.2 billion; ED: R6 billion; local ownership: R50.1 billion) (IPP Office 2015). Table 3 presents the commitments per criteria, for the country as a whole and the individual amounts for the Northern, Eastern and Western Cape provinces, which host most REIPPPP projects.

The policy provides a unique opportunity for the prominent and growing green economy player, the renewable energy industry, to position itself as significant development contributor in the South African landscape. But what, if not policy, can guide industry to how to conduct itself in the challenging task of to implementing community development?

Table 2: Alignment of NDP outcomes and REIPPPP bid obligations (adopted from IPP Office 2015a).

NDP outcomes	Primary focus	REIPPPP bid categories addressing specific outcome
Outcome 4	Decent employment through inclusive economic growth	Job creation Enterprise development Ownership Preferential procurement Local content
Outcome 5	A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth	Job creation Management control
Outcome 7	Vibrant, equitable sustainable rural communities contributing towards food security for all. Reduction of rural unemployment rate. Increased access to quality infrastructure and services, specifically education, healthcare and public transport	Job creation Socio-economic development Ownership Enterprise development
Outcome 8	Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Socio-economic development
Outcome 10	Protect and enhance environmental assets and natural resources Reduced total emissions of CO ₂ 34% reduction from business as usual scenarios.	Results from power generation from 'clean' energy sources (a consequence of Outcome 6)
Outcome 11	Create a better South Africa, contribute to a better and safer Africa in a better world Increased FDI: R230 billion by 2019 (from baseline of R40 billion in 2013)	Ownership
Outcome 14	Nation-building and social cohesion Disability and gender equality Equal opportunities and redress	Preferential procurement Job creation Ownership

**Table 3: Committed community funds per province (BW1 to 4, 1S2)
(IPP Office reports published December 2015).**

Criteria	Northern Cape	Eastern Cape	Western Cape	South Africa
Socio-economic development*	R11.9 billion (R10.2 billion)	R4.5 billion (R3.9 billion)	R1.0 billion (R0.7 billion)	R19.2 billion
Enterprise development	R3.1 billion	R1.2 billion	R0.1 million	R6 billion
Local ownership	R29.3 billion (net income R18.3 billion)	R14.5 billion (net income R7.4 billion)	R2.5 billion (net income R1.6 billion)	R50.1 billion (net income R20.9 billion)

* Commitments vary; the amounts in brackets indicate the committed amount for local communities within a 50 km radius.

3. The REIPPPP overlooks a rich community development history in South Africa

As stated in the introduction to this paper, one of the issues for the renewable energy investments in community development is what appears to be a lack of attention to what has been learned for many decades in South Africa and beyond about successful community-company relations specifically, and also community development generally (Lochner et al. forthcoming). The mining industry is also known for succumbing to a lack of reflection about knowledge and practice, attributing it to tight timelines and budgets (Owen & Kemp 2012). In an attempt to categorise the community relations and development practices across minerals companies (within the extractives sector), Owen and Kemp (2012) preliminarily grouped them into five frames and methods, including public relations approach, risk mitigation and 'opportunity' orientation, needs-based approach and the five capitals model. Common amongst these, is a limiting tendency 'to polarize discussion by focusing on what "reputation," "risks," "needs," "capitals," "rights," or "resources" mean to one party, without offering a conceptual mechanism through which to mediate these understandings' (Owen & Kemp 2012). It is too early in the life of the renewables industry, at least in South Africa, to distinctly seek out practice frames. Only about half of the approved REIPPPP projects (around 45) are operational at this point, with others in various stages of development. Thus, the contribution this article offers is a timely reflection in anticipation and preparation of the imminent practice development within the renewables sector.

Locating community development within the broader literature

There are many community development frameworks or approaches (the two terms are used interchangeably here) which have been developed, articulated and diffused within the academic literature. Examples include: 'human rights from below' (Ife, 2009), a networking approach (Gilchrist, 2004), a critical approach (Ledwith, 2005), dialogical community development (Westoby and Dowling, 2009/2013), radical empowerment (Craig and Mayo, 1995), community organising (Alinsky, 1969; 1971), human-scale development (Max-

Neef, 1991), and so forth. Each framework considers community development practice through different lenses, and highlights different aspects of theory that can provide indications for practice. While these are not examined here, readers can draw on the references to explore the particulars of each one. Within South Africa, however, the predominant approaches can be understood through a policy-oriented lens and an organisationally-diffused lens. Each is explained.

Policy-oriented frameworks

There have been at least four development frameworks that the post-1994 South African government has adopted in its effort to improve the lives of its citizens. These approaches have been identified within the draft National Community Development Policy Framework – and most recently by Luka and Maistry (2012) – as the income, basic needs, social exclusion and the sustainable livelihoods perspectives. Each of these frameworks has been operationalised in terms of pragmatic initiatives, programmes and projects, and has also been deeply influenced by the way in which community development practitioners, particularly those employed by the state, understand their work.

The *income framework* was grounded on the logic of economic poverty, reasonably arguing that people are recognised as poor if they fall below a defined income line or if they do not hold income-based employment. Despite the limits of such a frame, interventions based on income have been a significant part of the government's approach to poverty. For example, its social protection policy, operationalised primarily in social welfare grants, but also in anti-poverty jobs and wages, has been diffused through various policy instruments including the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Plan, social assistance and the Extended Public Works Programme.

The *basic needs framework* focused assistance to the poor in supporting their access to sanitation, security, clean water, shelter, education, appropriate clothing, health and other such necessities. South Africa, primarily through its Reconstruction and Development Programme and accompanying programmes, has attempted to operationalise this perspective. Evaluations indicate that the impacts have

remained largely patchy, uncoordinated, disorganised, poorly integrated, lacking consistency or focus and incoherent. However, such a framing of development policy and programmes remains important considering the level of marginalisation from access to such basic needs.

The *social exclusion framework* seeks to seal the cracks of deprivation, vulnerability and inequality that can coexist with wealth creation and adequate social welfare systems. In South Africa, the key policy instrument situated within this framework is the Bill of Rights within the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996). This seeks to address the systemic and structural results of racism, sexism, geographical isolation as well as cultural and political exclusionism. Other relevant policy instruments include the South African Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Gender and Equality.

Finally, the *sustainable livelihoods framework* focuses practice on the requirement for ordinary people and communities to be assisted, through the construction and strengthening of an appropriate 'asset base', enabling them to proactively identify, define and practice particular strategies for coping with their conditions of poverty, vulnerability and hardships. This is the key policy and programme 'framing' on current discourses of community development at the time of writing. It is central to the newly developed community development policy framework as well as many initiatives of the Social Development Department.

Such policy-oriented frameworks frequently determine the direction of programmes and practice, at least in theory. As Westoby reported in his research, 'Often when interviewing community development practitioners it was easy to discern the influence of such frameworks and their accompanying languages. People would often talk about income, needs, rights or assets ... it was assumed knowledge' (Westoby, 2014).

Organisationally-diffused frameworks – 'the big four'

Many community development practitioners are, however, primarily influenced less by these policy-oriented frameworks, or by the academic literature, than by what can be understood as organisationally-diffused frameworks. Practitioners used some of the words of the policy frameworks, but their actual practice is often more aligned to those frames diffused through the organisations they work for. The most commonly occurring organisationally diffused frameworks were as follows:

- The framework of community-driven or community-led development, internationally championed particularly by the World Bank (Everatt & Gwagwa, 2005). Within South Africa this approach is being used by NGOs such as Khanya-acidd. Other examples of this would be

the people's-housing process – ideally a self-help and community-driven approach for delivering housing to people.

- Rights-based community development, again diffused internationally by numerous international NGOs (e.g. ActionAid) and some United Nations programmes, are being used by NGOs such as Institute for Democracy in South Africa.
- The asset-based community development (ABCD) approach, researched and internationalised by the Coady Institute, has also been drawn upon within South Africa (Schenck, Nel & Louw, 2012: 62). For example, Susan Wilkinson-Maposo (2008) writes about the work in Jansenville in the Eastern Cape as an example of a community development process drawing on the ABCD approach.
- The sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA), diffused by the UK DFID and drawing on the research and writing of Robert Chambers, is used extensively by the Department of Social Development, particularly within their Community Development Practitioner Programme. Drawing on the training of Khanya-acidd they have been integrating the SLA framework as a tool of analysis within a community-based planning approach.

These four 'big' frameworks dominate the discursive field within South Africa and most community workers are familiar with the language of one or several of these organisationally-diffused frameworks.

The REIPPPP does not recognise or appreciate this knowledge, either through outlining even a broad vision or giving guiding principles for the implementation of the stipulated community benefits. In fact, as discussed above, the three distinct community investments (SED, ED and local ownership) represent if not contradictory then certainly diverse notions of development. Within the freedom to interpret appropriate practice as found fit, which is commonly made use of by the energy company that administers the community investments and carries the responsibility of the quarterly spend and reporting, industry conversations are converging towards greater appreciation of principled community development work.

4. Emerging evidence of renewable energy industry practice in communities

Research in South Africa on the community development, company-community relations or broader termed social performance in REIPPPP is in its infancy. Five years into the programme, the research landscape is changing as the first international research funding calls (e.g. from DANIDA) become available for academic research of REIPPPP and its various community implications.

Table 4: Practice frameworks of community development in South Africa (Westoby 2014; Luka & Maistry 2012).

<i>Policy-oriented frameworks</i>	<i>Income framework</i>	<i>Basic needs framework</i>	<i>Sustainable livelihood approach/ framework</i>	<i>Social exclusion framework</i>
<i>Focus</i>	Economic poverty	Access to sanitation, security, clean water, education, appropriate clothing, health, etc	Construction and strengthening of appropriate 'asset base'	Deprivation, vulnerability, inequality
<i>International and local examples</i>	Social protection policy and welfare grants, GEAR, ASGISA, EPWP	RDP policy	Community development Policy framework, Social Development Department	Bill of Rights, SA Human Rights Commission, Commission on Gender and Equality
<i>Organisation-diffused frameworks</i>	<i>Community-driven and community-led development</i>	<i>Rights-based community development</i>	<i>Asset-based community development</i>	<i>Sustainable livelihood approach/ framework</i>
<i>Focus</i>	Self-help, community-driven approaches			
<i>International and local examples</i>	World Bank, Khanya -acidd, People's Housing Process	Action Aid, UN programmes, IDASA	Coady Institute	UK DfiD, Robert Chambers, Community Development Practitioner Programme

Table 5: Community benefit workshops hosted and analysed 2013–2016.

	<i>Workshop topic</i>	<i>No. of participants</i>	<i>Workshop date</i>	<i>Organisers</i>	<i>Facilitator</i>
1.	Addressing the challenges in fulfilling the community benefit requirements in the REIPPPP	22	7 March 2013	Energy Research Centre (ERC) University of Cape Town	Sue Soal
2.	Implementing local community development benefits in the REIPPPP – inspiring good practice	26	12 July 2013	ERC	Sue Soal
3.	Managing community unrest resulting from political lobbying for municipal elections 2016	26	26 April 2016	SA Wind Energy Association, SA Photovoltaic Industry Association (SAWEA, SAPVIA)	Sue Soal
4.	Supporting sound community trusts – establishment, governance and operation	60	23 May 2016	SAWEA, SAPVIA	Sue Soal
5.	Collaboration for scale and impact	42	26 August 2016	SAWEA, SAPVIA	Dieter v d Broeck

Initial research findings, presented in working papers (Wlokas et al. 2012; Baker & Wlokas 2014; Mcewan 2017), student thesis projects (Bode 2013; Tait 2012) and non-governmental research (Wlokas 2015; Tait et al. 2013; Electricity Governance Initiative 2014), share common views on the challenges associated with the programme's community benefit requirements and resulting need for greater attention to planning, monitoring and evaluation of resulting impacts. Thus, there is ample scope and need to advance research to support the successful implementation of renewable energy in social contexts of poverty and inequality. Accounts of the current state of play in the sector provide guiding insights for future research efforts in support of sustainable corporate community development practice.

Since the inception of REIPPPP in 2011, various multi-stakeholder workshops provided platforms for the sector to exchange and reflect on the emerging experiences made in the design and

implementation of community benefits. Two authors of this paper were involved in five such workshops between 2012 and 2016 (see Table 5). Their involvement ranged from overall hosting and facilitating to co-hosting and report-writing. The workshop reports are insightful accounts of the sector's learning (Wlokas & Soal 2016a; Wlokas 2016; Wlokas & Soal 2016b; Energy Research Centre 2013; Wlokas et al. 2013).

Analysis of the workshop reports reveals five major trends. Firstly, there is a growing realisation of the magnitude of the challenge to implement meaningful, lasting positive change through development interventions and funding in communities. Secondly, the absence of government oversight and guidance in support of quality and direction of interventions and funding allocation results in a wide range of community engagement practices and development initiatives. Thirdly, it is possible to report compliance on all community investments without creating much impact on the ground. Real

change requires companies to attend with time and sensitivity to the place- and people-specific conditions for development. Fourthly, these determining conditions are dynamic and demand responsive capacity from companies and communities to maintain quality relationships over time. Finally, the workshops repeatedly identified a need for processes and structure (through an independent entity for example, community trust association, or similar) to be established to support the sector's community development work over time, allowing lessons to be shared amongst and across communities, industry and government.

5. How REIPPPP can adopt theoretical and practice lessons

In Section 3 it was argued that there is a long tradition of community development practice that can be drawn on for lessons learned by the REIPPPP industry. There is no need to learn by trial and error, or to reinvent the whole field of community development as a specialised and skilled terrain of practice. There is merit, however, in drawing on the insights from the field of community development and those emerging out of the REIPPPP's experience, notably the insight that there is no 'silver bullet', no single method for community development that will work in all circumstances. Whatever modality, sector or emphasis is ultimately chosen, some basic practices reveal themselves as essential: relationship, observation, listening, consultation, responsiveness, adaptability,

This is not to say that all past and present experiences of community development can be drawn upon to distill good practice. Therefore it is useful to draw on research that has already distilled such

good practice, and a valid starting point is the work by one of the authors of this paper - Westoby's (2014) case studies from South Africa. Drawing on five closely studied examples of community development Westoby identifies the practices shown in Table 6 as crucial for 'creating the conditions' that support effective practice. The 'creating the conditions' clause alludes to the complexity of social phenomenon in which there is no guarantee of 'success' in any social intervention. However, such studies show what gives the best chances - hence 'optimal conditions'. It is worth noting the overlap, in lessons and tone, between Westoby's work and those emerging out of the reflections of those in the renewables sector, as detailed in the accounts above. Table 6 summarises key practices, and readers can learn about practices in detail through the primary source.

Kemp's work on extractive industry-community relations can also be useful, again highlighting what seems to be working best in such corporate-community relations. Strongly promoted is the asset-based community development (ABCD) approach. This approach, tailored to the community relations needs of the extractive industries, allows for 'an understanding of what can be done in a community to improve its standing, how it can be done, and with which combination of individuals and assets' to emerge (Owen & Kemp 2012). ABCD, and its version tailored to the mining industry, is just one example of the existing work, drawing on decades of experience, which industries with less entrenched social performance legacies, like renewable energy, fisheries and forestry, can and should tap into. The role of academia, in the form of engaged scholarship or transdisciplinary research, is critical in mak-

Table 6: Community development practices collected in South Africa (Westoby 2014).

- Understanding the significance of time in community work
- Foregrounding observational skills - 'to see what the people see'
- Applying the wisdom: 'start anywhere, go everywhere'
- Nurturing cooperative leadership
- Fostering group analysis via dialogue
- Building analysis 'beyond where people are at'
- Understanding the practitioner role as accompanying, and the corresponding 'delicate relationship' between practitioners and other characters in the event/story
- Drawing on action-learning and action - research approach
- Enhancing emotional capacities
- Providing on-going support, training and organisational development with the goal of institutionalising a learning organisation
- Utilising the practices of community-based education/training and horizontal learning
- Structuring the work for sustainability
- Drawing on a co-creative approach to community-state relations
- Recognising the trade-offs within scaling-up and scaling-across
- Understanding the dilemmatic space of practice, becoming politically literature in complex political and instrumental spaces and enhancing reflective navigational capabilities.

ing this knowledge available and conveying it to the relevant stakeholders through training, publications and practice examples.

7. Conclusions

In this article we introduced the South African case study, the REIPPPP programme that is implementing a unique version of pro-poor renewable energy policy. The programme promotes three avenues of potential (community) developmental impact, requesting energy projects to implement all three within the context of each individual power plant. The alignment of the community development requirements with the existing policy and development context is open for interpretation, at best. While promoting community benefit or development it nevertheless ignores established community development traditions and frameworks, thus allowing industry to determine its qualitative impact in local communities.

The financial resources associated with the community requirements are significant, making it necessary for industry, local communities and government to build quality relationships to successfully convert these investments into sustainable developmental impacts. In this context, the industry and concerned and affected stakeholders within government, financial institutions and civil society avidly participate in topical conversations and workshops.

The insights of five such multi-stakeholder workshops were highlighted. Reviewing the workshop reports led to the apprehension that the implementation discourse amongst REIPPPP stakeholders, through increased experiences on the ground as well as gentle learning-space facilitation, has already grown into a greater appreciation of the non-negotiable good practice principles associated with community development. Hence, and with continued reflection, learning and adaptation, there is ground to expect that the developmental impacts of community renewables might outperform the achievements of the extractives sector in times to come. This is an emerging field of research in which engaged research can play a key role, if designed to systematically analyse and facilitate resulting learnings about the practices employed in the implementation of large-scale renewables plants, in South Africa and internationally.

In conclusion, we urge that this momentum and willingness to learn amongst REIPPPP stakeholders needs to be fostered. Existing knowledge grounded in South African practice and policy experience can guide the sector's development understanding and vision, and academia's role and responsibility lies in supporting this through engaged and transdisciplinary research.

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