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Five-Country Study on Service and Volunteering in Southern Africa

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Five-Country Study on Service and Volunteering in Southern Africa

Introduction

In the context of globalisation, civic service and volunteering is emerging as a growing social phenomenon and a field of enquiry internationally (Moore McBride, Sherraden, Benítez and Johnson 2004; Moore McBride Benítez and Danso 2003). Service in this changing context provides opportunities to foster global cooperation, responsibility, hope and critical understanding to respond to the pressing human development concerns of the 21st century (Lewis 2005). However, despite these developments, the knowledge and practice base of this field of enquiry remains underdeveloped (The Grantmaker Forum on Community and National Service, 2000). Further investigation could inform theory, research, policy and intervention strategies.

Service and volunteering has deep historical and cultural roots in the African context. Shaped by the service traditions in the societies where it emerged, service reflects the complex contemporary social, cultural, economic and political developments globally and in the Southern African region. These large-scale changes have had profound implications for people's everyday lives and their responses to such changes. Worldwide economic integration processes have increased the vulnerability of domestic economies to external shocks resulting in rising poverty levels and social disparity. These global changes coupled with national and regional political and economic problems, civil conflict and instability, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and weak democratic and administrative institutions to enhance social development are challenges facing some of the countries in Southern Africa. Formal and informally organised civic service and volunteering initiatives complemented by the growth of indigenous non-governmental organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa are emerging as a response to the declining human development situation (Patel and Wilson 2004; Fowler 1995). Preliminary research on service and volunteering in the African context suggests that service is a growing social phenomenon and could make a significant contribution to social development regionally (Patel and Wilson 2004). Research to strengthen knowledge and understanding of service and to build research capacity is critical in order to develop service as a field of enquiry and to strengthen its knowledge base and practice.

A North–South partnership between a non-governmental organisation, academics and academic institutions culminated in a five-country study in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This research collaboration consisted of Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA), the Global Service Institute (GSI) at the Centre for Social Development at Washington University in St Louis, USA, and the Centre for Social Development in Africa at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Experienced country researchers enlisted from academia and practice conducted the research in Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. A cross-national

The study was conducted in collaboration with the following country researchers: Morena J Rankopo, Kwaku Osei-Hwedie and Tirelo, M. Moroka (Botswana), Catherine M Moleni and Brenda M Gallagher (Malawi), Helene Perold, René Carapinha and Salah Elzein Mohamed (South Africa), Theresa Wilson and Arthur Kalila (Zambia) and Edwin Kaseke and Jotham Dhemba (Zimbabwe).

study in these five Southern African countries was conducted between 2005 and 2006 with the view to replicating the research aims and objectives of the GSI study (Moore McBride et al 2004; Benítez and Danso 2003). This cross-national study in SADC aims to build foundational knowledge and understanding of the nature and scope of service and the contribution it might make to social development policy, research and practice regionally. More specifically, it was the intention of the researchers that such study and analysis could contribute to developing service as a field of enquiry in Africa and aid in placing service on the social policy agenda as a viable social development intervention.

The research design was exploratory and of a qualitative descriptive nature. There is a dearth of information on civic service in the region, and this favoured an exploratory research design. The five countries were purposively selected based on pre-determined criteria. Forty-six key informant interviews were conducted with representatives from government, non-governmental organisations and donors. In addition, 13 focus groups consisting of 108 respondents participated in the group discussions. Twenty formal and informally organised programmes were identified and five programmes were studied in-depth in four countries. Particular attention was given to studying both formal and structured service programmes as well those that were informal, localised and community-based. The five country reports contain the findings of the study (Rankopo, Osei-Hwedie and Moroka 2006; Moleni and Gallagher 2006; Perold, Carapinha and Mohamed 2006; Wilson and Kalila 2006; Kaseke and Dhemba 2006).

Three related questions guided the research: firstly, what is the nature and scope of civic service in selected countries in the region? Secondly, what are the implications of these initiatives for civic service policy and practice from a social development perspective? Finally, what is unique about service in the African context and what are the issues and challenges in establishing service as a field of inquiry and an agenda for action in the region?

The structure of the report is as follows: Section One reviews the research and literature on service in the five countries and the conceptual framework informing the study; Section Two outlines the history of the development of civic service regionally and the contemporary economic, political and human development situation in the region; Section Three sets out the methodology and the findings of the study; the conclusions and recommendations, including the issues in relation to state–civil society relations and their implications for service policies and strategies, are contained in Section Four.

Section One: Literature Review

1. Review of Research and Literature

There is a paucity of information, research and published works on service and volunteering in the countries where the research was conducted. Civic service programmes are not well documented. Limited country-specific general literature and resources on the subject exist. There is also a lack of academic research on the field, with limited library collections (including journals) on the subject. Documentation centres also have limited databases and no national databases exist of service programmes in the respective countries. Databases on civil society organisations were also limited and, where these exist, they were found to be incomplete. In some countries, few organisations could provide accurate information or up-to-date figures on their programmes, which hampered in-country reviews of the programmes. The situation in Malawi and Zambia was found to be particularly difficult, and this indicates that service, as a field of enquiry, is undeveloped. However, it appears that background papers, programme evaluation reports for donors and policy guidelines are available in some countries in the region, which is a valuable resource. Where literature is available, it has been produced largely by NGOs and international volunteer organisations. In all countries, limited research has been conducted on the impact of the programmes on servers, beneficiaries and their communities, including the value that service adds to social development. Large-scale national empirical research has not been conducted in Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Much of the reported research involves small-scale research studies carried out at a local level and it is therefore difficult to make generalisations for a country as a whole. National household survey studies in the region do sometimes pose questions about volunteering activities. A Malawian household study found that service was indeed widespread, with community-based activities being most prevalent (Pelser, Burton and Gondwe 2004). However, the case of South Africa is somewhat different. After the demise of apartheid in 1994, service emerged as a growing field of enquiry and is featuring more prominently as part of promoting national social development policy and strategy (Perold, Carapinha and Mohamed 2006). Two separate national studies on the non-profit sector and the state of giving conducted at four-year intervals indicated that volunteering in particular is a growing phenomenon in South Africa – and one that is positively associated with a large and growing civil society sector in the country (Everatt and Solanki 2005; Swilling and Russel 2002).

Although social development is endorsed as a regional approach to social policy by the SADC (2003), limited conceptual analyses and research about civic service have been undertaken from this perspective. In the countries where the research was conducted, conceptions of service and volunteering have been shaped by historical, cultural, religious and socio-economic factors spanning many stages in the development of these societies. Pre-colonial ideas and cultural practices of communalism and mutual aid and support and the British colonial tradition of service and philanthropy shaped service in these countries. After independence, many African countries adopted service as part of a national development and nation-building strategy when national youth service programmes were adopted in African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Botswana and Zimbabwe among others (Thupayagale and Rampa 2005; Ikein 1990; Mutambara 1997). Except for the Nigerian National Youth Service, these programmes declined in the 1980s due to maladministration, corruption and nepotism, and financial and political problems – including allegations of elitism, as the programmes were accessible only to university graduates (Patel and Wilson 2004). While these

programmes were government-led and compulsory they nevertheless delivered tangible benefits to the participants and the communities that they served. Service was also constrained at this time by the decline in public funding for social programmes following the oil crisis in the 1970s and the adoption of structural adjustment policies in the 1980s by these countries. Contemporary notions of service and volunteering in particular informed by international development agencies, civil society organisations and governments are increasingly shaping knowledge and practice about service (United Nations Volunteers 2005; 1999; Leigh 2005).

The literature on volunteering suggests that volunteers in industrial societies tend to come from more privileged socio-economic and educational backgrounds and that there is a strong correlation between social class and volunteering (Voicu and Voicu 2003; Flick, Bittman and Doyle 2002; Reisch and Wenocur 1984). The findings of the five-country study indicate a contrary trend in that many volunteers are from underprivileged backgrounds (discussed further in the findings section of the study). This presents particular issues and challenges in the design, management and implementation of service programmes. Gilette (2003:63) has observed that, in recent years, a new phenomenon has emerged whereby 'excluded people are increasingly forging their own futures, and those of their societies at large. In this way, the very people who have been excluded are breaking new ground in voluntary service'. This issue points to the difficulty of uncritically adopting some of the conceptions and trends in international literature where the research is based on service and volunteering in industrial societies with some commentary on the developing world (Anheier and Salamon 1999). However, similarities exist between industrial and developing societies in relation to gender differences, where women tend to be involved more in social care and social services than men, who are more involved in committee work and decision-making activities (Moleni and Gallagher 2006; Nthara 2004; Bacon 2002; Anheier and Salamon 1999). There is some debate as to whether service and volunteer programmes in particular should pay incentives to participants. Some authors argue that compensation is contrary to volunteerism (Brown 1999, cited in VOLSA 2004; Carson, 1999, cited in VOLSA 2004; Handy & Wadsworth, 1996, cited in VOLSA 2004) whilst others argue for some financial and especially social incentives, including skills development, the accumulation of educational credits, scholarships and community recognition of servers (Moore McBride et al. 2003; Tang, Moore McBride and Sherraden 2003). In developing countries, this issue is of critical importance, as the majority of servers are poor themselves. In Malawi, limited financial compensation is provided for volunteers but most organisations offer non-financial incentives in the form of skills training to motivate people to serve (Moleni and Gallagher 2006). Financial compensation has implications for programme sustainability and the management of expectations of servers and those being served (Nhtara 2004; Public Affairs Committee (PAC) 2003). In the Zimbabwean situation, SAFAIDS (2004) notes that where volunteers are themselves vulnerable and would qualify to be beneficiaries themselves, burnout is high, and this impacts negatively on the retention of volunteers. The provision in developing contexts of appropriate incentives and social rewards that are sustainable and morally defensible remains a major challenge (Wilson and Kalila 2006). These issues and dilemmas point to the importance of considering different societal and development contexts in understanding the meaning and nature of service. While it remains important to understand the common patterns of cross-national service, these may mask powerful differences and nuances between countries and regions and between developed and developing nations. Comparative studies across different development contexts and cross-national studies in developing contexts are rare.

In summary, the literature review in the five countries confirmed the rationale for the study. While South Africa has a growing body of literature on the subject, it is still relatively underdeveloped as a field of scholarly enquiry.

2. Civic Service and Volunteering

The concept 'civic service' is not well understood and has emerged more recently to describe a range of service initiatives that include volunteerism and take account of a diversity of forms of local, national and international service that are emerging in the context of globalisation. Service operates under both governmental and non-governmental auspices and in different social, economic and political sectors of society. Patel (2003) argues that civic service is not politically neutral but rather draws on wider ideological, social, economic and political ideas that frame thinking about what kind of service will be promoted in a society. These different traditions may inform policy choices and programme development and the evaluation of outcomes of service activities. The relations between the state, the voluntary sector and the market also shape the way in which service is institutionally organised. Different approaches to social policy also have a bearing on how service is defined and Patel (2003) therefore argues that it is likely that there may be no shared vision or purpose of civic service and that different and competing visions of civic service may exist.

However, a more substantial literature exists on volunteerism and volunteering, although it remains ill-defined across nations (Anheier and Salamon 1999; Tang et al. 2003). The concept has its origins in the seventeenth-century Lockean notion of a self-organising society outside the domain of the state. The link between voluntary action and democracy emerged later and is best expressed in Alexis de Tocqueville's work *Democracy in America* (cited in Anheier and Salamon 2004). The notion that service and volunteering is an expression of communalism and should benefit the public good is also evident in early African associational life where voluntary service was rooted in the culture and traditions of African societies (Thupayagale and Rampa 2005). A broad definition of volunteering is offered by the United Nations, which takes it to refer to 'contributions that individuals make as non-profit, non-wage, and non-career action for the well-being of their neighbours, and society at large' (United Nations 2001). The definition includes mutual self-help and different forms of collective action where volunteering is a service function concerned with addressing social, economic, cultural, humanitarian and peacekeeping activities (United Nations 2001).

The Tocquevillian idea that voluntarism could provide the 'social glue' to hold societies together is relevant in contemporary societies as they grapple with the promotion of social cohesion in increasingly divided and conflict-ridden environments. Volunteerism is also considered a yardstick by which civic engagement, participation in development and social capital can be assessed. Through volunteering, social capital is fostered by investing time to build mutual trust and social connectedness in communities. A close relationship is assumed to exist between volunteering and building social capital and in developing human capital such as skills development (Rankopo, Osei-Hwedie and Moroka 2006; Flick et al. 2002). The notion that volunteering might be a 'powerful force for addressing many development challenges, and that it can and should be strategically promoted' (Leigh 2005:31) reflects current thinking in international and national volunteering. The *International Year of Volunteers* (IYV) held in 2001 advocated the idea of volunteering for development and culminated in changes in the way in which the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) programmes are aligned with global and national development goals (United Nations Volunteers 2004).

In summary, a review of the literature indicates limited reference to the concept civic service in the five countries where the research was conducted. However, the concept volunteerism or volunteering in the context of national and local social and community development activities appears to feature more prominently in the country literature that was scanned by the researchers (Fairley 2006; Everatt and Solanki 2005; SAFAIDS 2004; STRIVE TIMES 2004; Widner and Mundt 2000; Thupayagale and Rampa 2005). The findings of the study and the discussion on the meaning of service confirms this (refer to Section Three of the study).

For the purpose of the study ‘Civic service is a construct, defined as an organised period of substantial engagement and contribution to local, national or world community, recognized and valued by society, with minimal monetary cost to the participant’ (Moore McBride and Sherraden et al. (2004:10-11). The term ‘civic’ is used descriptively to refer to the larger domain that includes different types of service such as volunteering, national service (e.g. youth service) and international service. The term ‘civic’ refers to action that is in the public sphere and that yields positive benefits to individuals, communities, a nation or the world. Service is also understood to occur in an organisational context and may involve both formal and informal programmatic interventions. A continuum of volunteering seems to exist, with informal and occasional forms of volunteering at the one end of the spectrum and more formal, long-term, intensive volunteering or civic service conducted especially cross-nationally at the other end of the spectrum. Service may also be a subset of volunteering (Moore McBride et al. 2004; Patel and Wilson 2004).

3. Theoretical Approaches to Civic Service

Civic service is an emerging field of enquiry that is not fully developed theoretically. An early attempt to theorise civic service was undertaken by Patel (2003) from a social policy perspective. Based on the dominant approaches to social policy, the character of civic service was analysed with reference to these perspectives – namely, philanthropy, institutionalism, conservative/neo-liberalism, social justice and social development. Each approach was analysed in relation to the vision of service, its goals, principles, programme type, access, auspices, views of servers and beneficiaries and the local and global activities that are undertaken. In this way, the salient features of each of the approaches were identified. This analysis demonstrates that different approaches to civic service might be denoted, although in reality there may be a blending of different strands of civic service and a combination of intervention strategies may be observed. The main features of philanthropy, conservative/neo-liberal, institutional and social justice approaches to service are summarised briefly. The social development approach provides the conceptual framework for the study and is discussed further below.

The philanthropy approach is rooted in religious prescriptions and cultural traditions and is largely service-oriented and focused on the individual growth of the servers. Historically, philanthropy is strongly associated with religious philanthropy and the work of missionaries in the developing world, although modern trends also indicate a shift toward a more secular philanthropy and support for social reform. Programmes are informally and formally organised and involve a plurality of service actors that are located mainly outside of the state. Philanthropic service activities tend to be of a local, national and global nature.

Civic service is also increasingly being shaped by economic, geographic and cultural globalisation (Lewis 2005). Globalisation has been accompanied by a resurgence of a conservative free-market approach to economic development advocating limited government intervention and social investment in societies. From this point of view, civic service is associated with a strong civil society, which is perceived to act as a mediating structure between government and its citizens. Civic service is therefore enthusiastically encouraged as part of fostering individual responsibility for meeting needs and curtailing public investment in social life. Service programmes may be remedial, paternalistic and of a piecemeal nature and are delivered under voluntary auspices. Character-building of the servers features strongly as a programme goal, with local and global action being geared to promoting individual and community responsibility for the meeting of needs.

In contrast to the conservative approach to civic service, the institutional perspective conceptualises service as part of a comprehensive public system of social services and a response to market failure in meeting human needs. Service is part of a government-dominant model emphasising citizen rights, social solidarity and social cohesion. Humanitarianism may be strongly emphasised in the service programmes, with beneficiaries viewed as passive recipients of services. Service programmes may be complementary to government action, and in some societal contexts there is limited scope for voluntary action and service.

The social justice approach to civic service is concerned with redress of class inequality and social divisions associated with social and economic exclusion. Service programmes tend to be concerned with advocacy for social and economic justice, democratisation and the transformation of social relations in the society. Programme activities are geared to social change, social justice and empowerment, with servers and beneficiaries working together as change agents. Advocacy against imperialism and the negative consequences of economic globalisation may characterise civic service activities.

These approaches suggest that civic service takes different forms in different societies and is shaped by the social policy models of the societies in which they operate. The political, economic, social and ideological context plays a significant role in what types of civic service evolve in a society. A similar approach is used by Anheier and Salamon (1999) in their attempt to account for the differences in volunteering and the size of the non-profit sector. Cross-national patterns of volunteering were identified. Based on this research, the authors classify welfare states into four 'non-profit regimes', where each model defines a particular role for the state and the non-profit or voluntary sector and the role of volunteers. The first model is the liberal model, which has a lower level of government involvement in social welfare and is associated with a large non-profit sector and high levels of voluntary participation. The United States and Britain are examples of the liberal model. The social democratic model is the second model, which is the opposite of the liberal model, with Sweden cited as an example. This model is essentially state-sponsored, and welfare services are state-delivered with limited space for service delivery by the voluntary sector. However, voluntary input in humanitarian activities is significant, with volunteers playing a more advocacy and personal expression role rather than being involved in service delivery.

Two other models are characterised by strong states. At the one end of the spectrum is the corporatist model, which has high levels of social investment spending and state-sponsored welfare provision in partnership with non-profit and faith-based organisations (as reflected by the German

example). However, volunteering in this type of regime is not as conspicuous as it is in the liberal and social democratic models. Finally, there is the statist model at the other end of the spectrum, where low levels of volunteer participation have been observed (as is the case in Japan), and this coincides also with low levels of non-profit activity. The state seems to retain a strong role in social policy to exercise power on behalf of economic and political elites. Social welfare and non-profit activity remain limited and Anheier and Salamon (1999) contend that developing countries were historically close to the statist model of non-profit development.

How useful are these models in developing contexts? Patel (2005) argues that social democratic or institutional approaches are limited in developing countries where state and democratic institutions are weak and where social spending is low. In some countries such as Zimbabwe, the phenomenon of state failure has also impacted on the growth of the voluntary sector and civil society activity. With the exception of South Africa, in the countries where the research was conducted, the size of the non-profit sector was small but it appears that voluntary activity is vibrant and growing in these societies. These issues, and also the applicability of the theories, are explored further in the findings and conclusions section of the study.

4. Civic Service and Social Development

The conceptual framework of the research study is informed by the social development approach to civic service and volunteering (Patel 2003). The social development approach to social policy was first introduced by the United Nations to address the human development needs in the world's poorest countries following independence from colonialism in the 1960s. In the late 20th century, the approach has re-emerged as a response to unequal and distorted development and was endorsed by the United Nations World Summit for Social Development in 1995 (United Nations 1996). In Africa, there is a resurgence of interest in the social development approach to address the intractable human development problems continentally and regionally (NEPAD 2001; SADRC 2001; SADC 2003; UNDP 2000; Republic of South Africa 1997). This is also reflected by the adoption by many African countries of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals to half poverty by 2015. Currently, the African Union is in the process of drafting a social policy for Africa informed by the social development approach. Essentially, social development is concerned with harmonising economic and social policies and programmes. Social development is a pro-poor approach that promotes people-centred development, human capabilities, social capital, participation and active citizenship, and civic engagement in achieving human development (Patel 2005; Midgley 1995). Social development is a rights-based and pluralist approach that focuses on strong government action and partnership between individuals, groups, communities, civil society, donors, development agencies and the private and public sectors (Patel 2005). The social development approach to civic services provides a useful and appropriate conceptual framework to study civic service in the African context and is a useful framework for the analysis of service programmes at different levels of intervention – namely, individual, family, households, communities and at organisational and policy levels. Table 1 below describes the main features of civic service from a social development perspective.

Table 1: Social Development and Civic Service

Character of Civic Service	Social Development
Vision	Pro-poor change; challenges unequal and distorted economic, political and social development nationally, regionally and globally; proactive involvement of governments in developmentally oriented civic service.
Goals	Promote social and economic development; participation of socially excluded in development; achieve tangible and intangible improvements in the quality of life of people.
Principles	Social and economic justice; empowerment; collective action to promote public benefit, distributive values, social solidarity and reciprocity.
Programme type	Activities connected with human, social, economic and community development; building assets of the poor; local economic development; promote productive employment; strengthen social capital; build human capital; develop local institutions and good governance. Psychosocial support, community care and community development.
Access	Targeted interventions at socially excluded.
Auspices	Service is part of a pluralist system – strong role for state in collaborative partnership with civil society, private sector, donors; development agencies. Government facilitates and supports service development.
View of servers & beneficiaries	Servers and beneficiaries are active partners in social development; both are change agents; service benefits the server and the beneficiary.
Local and global activities	Local, national, regional and global focus on human and social development; active involvement of international and local agencies.

Source: Adapted from Patel (2003: 96-97)

5. Background and Context

5.1 Development of Service

Service has deep historical and cultural roots in the African context. Pre-colonial African societies relied on mutual aid, kinship and community support to meet human needs. Traditional cultural beliefs and practices encouraged collective responsibility, solidarity and reciprocity. All the countries in the study were British colonies and similar economic, political and social developments were observed in these countries. Colonialism resulted in the adaptation of the socio-economic and political organisation of these societies to meet the needs and interests of the colonial powers.

Pressures were placed on kinship and community support systems and the denigration of indigenous cultural practices resulted in the erosion of the service ethos over time. However, some beliefs and practices continue to exist whilst others have been refashioned to respond to present conditions.

After independence in the respective countries, the service ethos featured strongly in nation-building and national development policies and plans. In Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, youth service was most prominent during this period. Youth service programmes declined in the 1980s due to maladministration, corruption and nepotism, and financial and political problems – including allegations of elitism in many African countries (Patel and Wilson 2004). While these programmes were government-led and compulsory, they nevertheless delivered tangible benefits for both beneficiaries and participants. Service was later constrained by the decline in public funding following the oil crisis in the 1970s and the adoption of structural adjustment policies in the 1980s by many governments. In all five countries studied, it was evident that the nature and scope of service and volunteering changed due to economic and political changes in the societies. In Botswana, a shift to free-market policies in the 1990s and the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic resulted in a worsening of the plight of poor people. In Zimbabwe, the declining political, economic and social situation and the failure of government impacted negatively on poor and vulnerable people. This declining situation resulted in a proliferation of service activities outside of the state where civil society organisations and informal community and village level structures emerged to address the gap in meeting the needs of the people. Although the service ethos was strongly established in the social services and anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa, service is a growing phenomenon supported by strong sectoral policies aimed at national reconstruction and development.

5.2 The Regional Socio-economic and Political Context

In 2001, the SADC region, which is made up of 14 countries, had a combined population of 208 million people (SADC 2003). The five countries which form part of the study are all members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Agriculture and minerals play a major role in the regional economy, with 70 percent of people depending on agriculture for food, income and employment – especially in rural areas, where three-quarters of the population reside. SADC has the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa. Economic performance has improved since the mid-1990s because of the improved political situation and management of the economies. However, the overall economic situation remains delicate in some countries owing to the under-developed structure of the regional economies (Noyoo and Patel 2005). South Africa and Botswana are higher-income countries, with a higher Gross National Product per capita than the regional average. Malawi and Zambia, on the other hand, are classified as low-income countries. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund also consider Zambia a Highly Indebted Poor Country, which indicates its under-developed status.

There is a high rural–urban migration rate in the region due to migration and the displacement of populations caused by economic and social under-development and regional conflict. Civil war and political strife coupled with natural disasters have worsened the socio-economic and human development standing of the region as a whole. Although the Human Development Index (HDI) showed an overall improvement between 1995 and 2000 (UNDP 2000), the human development situation is being reversed in some countries as a result of the impact of HIV and AIDS. Botswana

and Zimbabwe experienced the largest decline in life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank 2003). The political crises in Zimbabwe since 1997 have impacted negatively on socio-economic development.

Poverty reduction remains one of the key challenges, with 70 percent of the population in the region living below the international poverty line of US\$2 per day, whilst 40 percent of the region's population, or 76 million people, live in extreme poverty (SADC 2003). The poor also include marginalised groups such as children, older persons, women, people with disabilities, rural communities, youth and displaced people. Poor health indicators, including high infant, child and maternal mortality rates, exist alongside high rates of cholera, HIV/AIDS prevalence, malaria and tuberculosis – all of which impact negatively on the health status of the population. All countries in the region have high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates, with Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe recording some of the highest rates. It has been estimated that over the next decade five to seven million people will die of the disease in their prime years, leaving two million orphans and transforming family structures and the demography of the region (Department of International Development 2002).

Regional co-operation and development is being driven by the SADC, which transformed itself into a development community based on market integration in response to the regional, political and global economic context. The major challenges facing the region are to promote high economic growth rates, eradicate poverty, effect improvements in the delivery of social services and place the region on a sustainable development path (SADC 2003). The SADC is structured into clusters focusing on various sectors that include Social and Human Development and Special Programmes. The mandate of this cluster is to harmonise policies, strategies and standards, including education, skills development and training, social welfare with a focus on vulnerable groups, health care, social security and employment and labour standards. Whilst the SADC Framework of Integration (SADC 2003) reflects these priorities, it is constrained in implementing these social policies owing to a lack of institutional capacity and fiscal constraints. The regional agenda does not specifically recognise and actively involve the private sector – which is small in most of the countries except South Africa – and civil society organisations that play a significant role in civic service and volunteering (Noyoo and Patel 2005). In fact, in some countries in the region civil society groups are not viewed as development partners but as a threat to the existing political order. There is scope for national and regional co-operation between state and non-state partners in achieving social development. This brief overview of the development of civic service and the regional context shows that the wider historical, socio-economic and political reality of the societies in which service operates shapes the direction that service takes.

Section Two: Methodology

The research design was a cross-sectional study that was both exploratory and of a qualitative descriptive nature. There is a dearth of information on civic service in the region, which favoured an exploratory research design. The five countries – viz. Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe – were purposively selected as there were sufficient civic service initiatives that could be studied. The principal researchers identified an expert in each of the five countries who had academic and research experience and knowledge of the field. The identified expert became the lead researcher in each country and solicited the assistance of experienced co-researchers. The principal researchers based at VOSESA and the Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg, and the Global Service Institute, Centre for Social Development at Washington University, St Louis, approved the researchers after scrutinising their curriculum vitae.

1. Data Collection

The fieldwork was conducted between April and December 2005. The research methods included literature searches, key informant interviews, focus groups and an in-depth analysis of service programmes.

Literature review. This consisted of the collection and the study of secondary sources, including library searches, internet searches, national databases on the voluntary sector, policy documents, organisational information, reports and country research.

In-depth interviews with key informants: A minimum of five key informant interviews were to be conducted in each country. The key informants were purposively selected using the following criteria: firstly, they had to be drawn from governmental and non-governmental organisations, including community-based organisations, and donor agencies; secondly, they had to be people who were knowledgeable about service policies and programmes in the respective countries; and, thirdly, they had to be involved in facilitating or supporting civic service initiatives. Forty-six key informant interviews were conducted with representatives from government, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations. In the main, researchers identified a key informant and thereafter snowball sampling was used to identify the other key informants. Researchers were not always able to secure interviews with respondents from government and in all countries more non-governmental, faith-based and community-based organisations were interviewed because of the diversity of the country programmes. In two of the countries, only two key informants from donor agencies were interviewed as it proved to be difficult to secure interviews. Many international donor agencies have withdrawn from Zimbabwe because of the political situation in the country.

Focus group meetings: Thirteen focus groups consisting of 108 respondents participated in the group discussions. The number of participants in the focus groups in Zimbabwe ranged between six and 18 people, and one group had 65 people. The service programmes studied were drawn from urban and remote rural areas in Zimbabwe. In view of the fuel crisis in the country, it made more sense to conduct the focus groups in the areas where people were located. The researchers were not able to group the focus group respondents together as the participants were arranged according to the organisations with whom the volunteers were affiliated. At village and local level, the field workers

also found that people became suspicious if they were excluded from participation and hence one group had 65 people. In Zimbabwe all the participants were drawn from non-governmental organisations. With the exception of Zimbabwe, the number of participants varied between two (South Africa) and 18 for the five countries. Since a poor response was achieved in South Africa, more key informant interviews were conducted with a cross-section of governmental and non-governmental organisations.

As was the case with the key informants, more non-governmental agencies participated in the focus groups in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Malawi, however, had an even distribution of governmental and non-governmental organisations and between urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

In-depth analysis of service programmes: A minimum of five service programmes were to be selected and analysed in-depth. The programmes were purposively selected from formally and informally structured programmes. Twenty formal and informally organised programmes were identified across four countries. Botswana did not provide specific data on the in-depth analysis of the five programmes but analysed data across all the programmes. A limitation was that not all the programmes had information available, and this made comparisons difficult. Particular attention was given to studying both formal and structured service programmes as well those that were informal, localised and community-based.

2. Research Tools and Administration of the Instruments

The research instruments consisted of a generic interview schedule, which guided the in-depth interviews with key informants in the respective countries. Guidelines were provided on conducting the interviews. A focus group discussion guide was also provided to ensure that the researchers gathered the same type of information as far as possible. The research instruments are contained in Annexure A. The research questions were developed on the basis of the Global Service Institute's study (Moore McBride et al. 2004). The questions and issues to be explored, however, were adapted for the purpose of this study. The country researchers in turn were guided by the generic interview schedule and discussion guide, but made adaptations to country-specific conditions and nomenclature. For instance, the term 'service' was not well understood across four of the countries and specifically in Malawi, where the researchers used the term 'volunteer' in their interactions with the respondents. The generic instruments were used flexibly by all the country researchers in order to maximise the opportunity to gain in-depth information and to collect the same type of information. A conversational style was used: questions were asked, issues were further explored, and responses given by the respondents were followed up where necessary. The questions were also not necessarily asked in sequence. The researchers ensured, however, that the range of questions was covered, as this would aid data collation and analysis. The instruments were used flexibly as the country situation varied and some information gaps existed. Consent of the respondents was obtained from the respondents before the interviews and focus groups were conducted.

In all the countries, experienced field workers were used and trained by the lead country researchers. In a few instances, the interviews and discussions were tape-recorded, but this was difficult as it created suspicion in some situations and other respondents found it too intrusive. The interviews and focus group discussions were all transcribed and these were made available to the principal researchers.

The research questions included the following:

- What is the meaning of civic service and volunteerism and how is it shaped by the historical, social, cultural, economic and political context in the country where the research is being conducted?
- What are the nature, form, scope and age of service programmes in the respective countries?
- What are the goals, strategies and target groups of the programmes?
- What are the service role, time commitment and compulsory/voluntary nature of the service?
- Who are the servers, and what are the service areas?
- What are the institutional dimensions of service in relation to access, incentives, information and facilitation of the programmes?
- How are the programmes administered and by whom?
- Are there policies and legislation that inform service?
- What are the factors promoting/hindering service?
- How can countries in the region collaborate to strengthen service initiatives?
- What might a future research agenda be in the SADC region?
- Are there country-specific socio-economic, political and cultural conditions or issues and challenges that are relevant to service that have not been addressed?

The research administration, management, and co-ordination of the data-collection process and liaison with country researchers were conducted by a research assistant from VOSESA and supervised by one of the principal researchers.

3. Analysis of Data and ‘Trustworthiness of the Study’

The country lead researchers analysed the data. This included data reduction and categorisation, data display, identification of key themes and conclusion drawing. The research questions provided the themes for the analysis of the data. The country lead researchers produced country reports that were reviewed by the principal researchers. The country research reports included the transcripts of the fieldwork and were verified with the country reports as a check for internal reliability. The country lead researchers also conducted literature reviews locally and internationally and interpreted and discussed the findings accordingly. The principal researchers provided written comments on all the country reports and revisions were made to the reports. The final reports were reviewed and approved by the principal researchers.

In July 2006, the principal researchers convened a regional workshop attended by four of the lead country researchers. The principal researchers conducted a preliminary analysis of the data. The aim of the workshop was to review the preliminary data collected, probe critical issues in the methodology of the study, and assess the findings and the emerging approach to civic service in the region. Research gaps were also identified. At this workshop participants also reviewed the emerging categories and themes and this process served to validate the data analysis process. The overall final analysis was conducted by one of the lead researchers to ensure consistency of the application of the categories and themes. An assistant researcher assisted with the preliminary categorisation of the data under the supervision of the principal researcher.

A set of criteria devised by Lincoln and Guba (1985) paraphrased by Marshall and Rossman (1995) and cited in de Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2005) was used to validate the findings of the study. The criteria are: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. The participants at the regional research workshop considered each of criteria and the extent to which the research process conformed to these criteria. The criteria are discussed in turn below.

Credibility. The researchers considered the question as to whether service was accurately described in each country. The interview strategies that were used to describe service were key informant interviews, focus groups, literature searches, and the in-depth analysis of the service programmes including the production of field notes and or transcripts. These strategies were employed in all countries except the in-depth analysis of five programmes in Botswana, where an overall analysis and synthesis of programmes were undertaken. Generic research tools guided the data collection. (Refer to the description above for a discussion of the sampling criteria, research tools and the data-collection process.)

Transferability. Was the data collection and analysis guided by the same concepts, definitions, models and theory? The researchers were satisfied that the study met this criterion. The research was tied into a body of theory of service even though this is limited in the African context. The key literature sources on service elsewhere were consulted and the study attempted to replicate the aims of the study conducted by the Global Service Institute in 2004. The data analysis and findings were compared with the findings of the Global Service Institute's study (Moore McBride et al. 2004); in this way the analysis of the data, the findings and interpretation of the findings were corroborated, elaborated upon and refined.

Dependability. The researchers also considered the question as to whether they took sufficient account of the changing conditions in the respective countries. Country-specific conditions were taken into account and these are reflected in the discussion of the findings. Changes in the research design had to be made in order to accommodate country-specific conditions. In this regard, the number of key informant interviews varied between countries. More respondents participated in the focus groups in some countries than in others. For example, in Zimbabwe one focus group in a village had 65 participants, which ended up as a village meeting. The field workers accommodated this situation and decided to be inclusive, as they judged that this would in turn build rapport and trust and yield more accurate data. Furthermore, the sectors were not uniformly represented in the sample across all countries (that is, governmental, non-governmental, faith-based organisations, community-based organisations and donors). As explained above, respondents from government and international donors were not readily available to participate in the study, and this resulted in the non-governmental sector being better represented. The researchers corroborated the information gathered with published documents from governmental agencies and other data, however. The data confirmed that non-governmental organisations were by far the larger sector in many countries. In South Africa, the structured national programmes were government-led in collaboration with NGOs, but it was noted that SA has a large non-profit sector. In Botswana a government–community partnership model exists.

Conformability. Could the research protocol of this study be replicated by another researcher? The protocol can indeed be replicated, as sampling procedures, research tools and data-collection

methods and definitions of terms are documented. Literature was used to ensure uniformity in the application of the approach. Transcripts/field notes of interviews and focus groups and country reports and records of the research process will be archived by VOSESA and the Centre for Social Development in Africa. This will facilitate the replication of the study by another researcher should there be an interest in doing so. Finally, the data confirms the general findings and the implications of such findings are discussed in this report.

4. Limitations

The following limitations were identified by the country researchers.

- A lack of knowledge of the nature and scope to inform the study design was considered a limitation in both Botswana and Zambia. In the *Zambian* situation, the paucity of research and documentation on service and service organisations made it difficult to identify participants in the study. Another study on volunteering involving the same respondents was conducted before this study started in the capital city in Botswana, which made it difficult to attract respondents. Tape recorders were not used because of the discomfort of participants but field notes were kept. The researchers felt that some information may have been lost as a result.
- The Malawian lead researcher identified a possible problem with a bias in the selection of respondents as some sectors were well represented while other key sectors, such as rural livelihoods and health at the national level, were not represented. Women were also under-represented among respondents. This was possibly a reflection of the absence of women from decision-making and leadership positions. Insufficient numbers of possible participants fitting the required criteria led to a decision by the lead country researchers to combine the focus groups. This situation proved to be positive, however, and a good mix of participants was secured, which made for lively debate. The interviews were too long and lasted over an hour, which resulted in respondent fatigue. The last questions were answered rather hurriedly and only brief responses were elicited. Government officials were busy with their duties and often interviews were interrupted as they were required to attend to other urgent tasks.
- While SA has a wealth of experience in the field, the lack of availability of documented works hampered the contextualisation of the study and corroboration of findings against published literature. Problems were also encountered in securing the participation of busy people in the focus group meetings. Differences between urban and rural areas and the full range of the service sector could not be captured in the study. The focus was on structured national programmes and the community-based sector was not covered as the field is wide in South Africa. Further research will be needed in this regard.
- The limitations identified by the researchers from Zimbabwe were discussed above in the assessment of the ‘trustworthiness’ of the study.
- The lack of research on service in Zambia meant that the findings could not adequately be interpreted. Dr Ndangwa Noyoo was the lead country researcher for the *Zambian* study. He left the project at the end of October 2005, and Theresa Wilson, assisted by Arthur Kalila, completed the study. Some valuable information may have been lost in this process.
- International organisations were under-represented in the study.

Section Three: Findings

1. Meaning of Civic Service and Volunteering

The research findings indicate that there is limited recognition and understanding of the concept 'civic service' as defined by Moore McBride et al. (2004) and Sherraden (2001). This is in keeping with the different meanings and nomenclature associated with the term. Nieves Tapia (2003) captured the historical, cultural and political meaning of the term in the South American context and the difficulty associated with translating the term into Spanish. The respondents in the five-country study used the terms service and volunteering interchangeably. In some instances, service was confused with the public service, the civil service and social welfare services.

However, the concept volunteerism or volunteering is better understood in Botswana, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia, where reference to volunteerism featured more prominently and was used operationally to describe civic service activities.

Since the idea of 'service' has taken greater root in South Africa, the term service is better understood, although the concept volunteering is more easily recognised. The idea of service is embedded in local languages and a diversity of interpretations and meanings are associated with the term across the five countries. In some contexts, such as Botswana and Zimbabwe, service has strong cultural and religious meaning, while in South Africa it is associated with service in the struggle for national liberation and reconstruction and development of the society.

Although different meanings are associated with the term, common elements in defining service emerged from the study. Firstly, the idea that service should provide tangible benefit to individuals, families, neighbours, the communities and the wider society and that such benefits should accrue to the most disadvantaged was widely accepted across the five countries. A second idea commonly supported among the respondents was that service involves giving of oneself freely with limited or no expectation of financial gain.

Thirdly, the meaning of service was also strongly associated with a philosophy of reciprocity between the server and the beneficiaries, the achievement of self-reliance and the empowerment of individuals and communities and the fostering of civic responsibility. Fourthly, there was consensus among the participants on the notion that civic service should be related directly to development. Finally, service appeared to have a social meaning that is shaped by the wider historical, socio-cultural, economic and political reality of the societies in which it operates. Civic service in the five countries is discussed further with reference to four themes, namely: (a) its social and cultural meaning; (b) service and national development goals; (c) motivation to serve; (d) philosophy of civic service.

1.1 Social and Cultural Meaning of Civic Service

The Batswana have a long history of volunteerism and collective action as exemplified by practices such as *Letsema* (work parties), *letsbolo* (donation of time and other resources) for the benefit of other

community members, and *mafias* (donation of livestock to underprivileged members)'. Rankopo, et al. (2006:12).

In Botswana, volunteering and service has a cultural meaning and is embedded in the local languages. A number of words and phrases, such as *tirelo* (something done for others) or *go thusa batho* (helping people), describe service. The term *letsema* reflects mutual self-help and *mephato* refers to participation in creating community infrastructure that was traditionally organised by age regiments. The term 'volunteering' or *boithaopo* is the act of helping other people without expecting payment. However, gifts as appreciation of investment of time and effort are acceptable. The terms *tirelo* and *boithaopo* are often used interchangeably and when taken together the expression means 'doing something for others without expecting payment'.

Service is also considered to be about delivering something 'intangible' such as providing social support or feeling empowered and cared for. The delivery of 'tangible' benefits such as material provision is also implied. Apart from its social meaning, service is also about fulfilling religious obligations. Phrases such as *mabogo dinku a thebana* (work together for a common purpose); *go direla setshaba* (selflessness in community and national service); and *boineelo* (commitment and humility to serve) are other words and phrases that describe the service ethos in Botswana. The principle of reciprocity and mutual aid is captured in the word *mafisa* (lending of cattle to the poor), and *molaletsa* (mutual self-help to enable people to be productive and self-reliant).

The Setswana proverb, *se tshege yo oleng mareledi go sale pele*, implores people not to laugh at those who fall first, but rather to help them because they may have the same problem in the future.

Volunteering also has a use value to the server in that it is viewed positively as a 'means of avoiding idleness and being useful to others'. All these words and phrases symbolise the dignity and worth of those who need support and care.

In the Zimbabwean context, the term 'volunteer' may also refer to volunteer caregivers involved in caring roles such as village caregivers (also known as *vabatsiri*; *vanozvipira*; *vanetsiyenyoro*). Most volunteers are motivated by their religious or cultural traditions – *humbu* means to be a responsible human being. In the community empowerment programmes run by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), service had a religious meaning: it was understood as 'putting one's faith into action'. Similarly, the orphan-care volunteer programme run by the Child Protection Society and the Family Aids Counselling Trust's home-based care programme invoked the scripture of Galatians 5.3, which states that an act of love is to 'serve one another', which is taken as the foundation of the volunteer programme (Kaseke and Dhemba 2006).

1.2 Service as Part of National Goals

In South Africa and Zambia, service was defined as being closely connected to national social development goals and as part of national social welfare policy (Ministry of Community Development and Social Services 2004; Republic of South Africa 1997). In this regard, a representative of the National Youth Commission (National Youth Commission) stated the following:

‘Young people can contribute to the reconstruction of the country without expecting more from the country’ (Respondent National Youth Commission).

‘Service assists to deliver the government’s objectives’ (Respondent ECO-City).

In the 1980s, community organisations, faith-based organisations, trade unions and political organisations engaged in mass struggles against apartheid. Service was understood largely in the context of the struggle for national liberation and democracy. Following the demise of apartheid in 1994, grassroots organisations had to reorient themselves from activism to overthrow a government to participation to promote reconstruction and development. A respondent from the National Youth Commission commented on the fact that both white and black people served their country during the apartheid era, although for different reasons.

‘White South Africans did compulsory military service as part of their service to their communities; our heritage as Africans is about returning to the community: you helped me grow; I will help you grow’ (Respondent National Youth Commission).

A respondent from the Department of Social Development said that in the past ‘we understood volunteerism and service only to have meaning in a context of struggle, a political base a new meaning of service is taking shape service gives you the opportunity to acquire skills and experience’.

Botswana has a wider range of national policies and strategies that address social development directly. An overall country vision – *Vision 2016* – guides socio-economic development. Seven major themes are identified that the nation should strive towards: an educated, informed nation, a prosperous productive and innovative nation, a compassionate and caring nation, a safe and secure nation, an open, democratic and accountable nation, a moral and tolerant nation, and a united and proud nation (Presidential Task Group for Long Term Vision for Botswana 1997). Policies pertinent to social development and service include HIV/AIDS and vulnerable groups. Social and community development services are guided by policy on rural development and service also features in criminal justice policies and the promotion of community policing.

Although the concept volunteerism is not referred to directly in the *Zambian Social Welfare Policy*, the role of families and communities in meeting welfare needs is highlighted (Wilson and Kalila 2006). The Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (2004) in Zambia defined service as activities undertaken to provide care and support to persons regarded as vulnerable – for example the aged, the widowed, orphans and vulnerable children, people with disabilities and the those who are chronically ill. *Zambian welfare policy* perceives service to be the provision of external assistance provided by government agencies and NGOs, faith-based organisations (FBOs) and community-based organisations (CBSs) in the form of food, clothing, shelter, education and health-care support, among other things. Service also meant different things to urban and rural people in Zambia. Wilson and Kalila (2006:26) found that ‘rural respondents linked the idea of service to something that complements the work of the extended family with the desire to help others as the underlying motivation. In contrast, respondents in urban areas tended to view service as a means or a tool to achieve social welfare’. In this instance, service is clearly considered to be government-led, although much of the service activities are also delivered by non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations.

All the country reports reflected on how service and volunteering has changed owing to economic and political changes in the respective countries. In Botswana, a shift to conservative free-market policies in the 1990s has resulted in a worsening of the plight of poor people. In Zimbabwe, the declining political, economic and social situation and the failure of governance has impacted negatively on poor and vulnerable people in the society. This declining situation has resulted in a proliferation of service activities outside of the state, where civil society organisations and informal community- and village-level structures have emerged to address the gap in meeting needs.

In summary, service has meaning also in relation to national development goals, where development is defined as a 'process of economic, social and political change that produces improvements in standards of living, social well-being and political participation' (Hall and Midgley 2004:x). The case of Zimbabwe demonstrates how state failure and poor governance impacts negatively on human development. State failure, however, led to the mobilisation of communities for development and action.

1.3 Motivation to Serve

The understanding of the meaning of service could be approached from the perspective of what people's motivations are to serve. Pawlby (2003) argues that the motivation at the one end of the spectrum to serve may be informed by an expression of altruism and at the other end by self-interest. Pawlby poses the question as to who benefits from the service. Is it the giver or the receiver of service? The author concludes that there is no single motive but that a combination of motives may be evident although there may a dominant one.

The findings across the five countries raised more questions about the motivations of servers than answers. As indicated previously, cultural and religious motivations were prevalent in all countries and were a significant motivator of servers. In South Africa, the desire to contribute to building a new democratic nation was also a strong motivating factor, which is an expression of citizenship responsibility (Pawlby 2003). While community and societal benefits motivated most servers in the study, individual benefit also featured strongly in server motivations. Many servers, and especially youth, were motivated by the opportunity to develop skills, gain work experience and the likelihood of obtaining gainful employment. In some instances, stipends were paid to servers and in others where service was part of a scheme, it involved an exchange in kind of resources. Kaseke and Dhembha (2006:22) point to the mutuality of the benefits derived from giving and receiving in the Zimbabwean situation:

'Participants in the Zunde raMambo (Chief's granary project) reported that they do not consider themselves as volunteers or those who help others, rather the programme helps them. In essence, they are helping themselves . . . service . . . is understood as a mutual relationship where the community works to alleviate its own suffering. Fulfilment comes from being able to solve community problems'.

Wilson and Kalila (2006) observed the complexity that enters the relationship between the server and the beneficiaries when stipends are paid to servers. For some proponents of service this is not service, as the benefits to the server outweighs advantages to the recipient. Across the countries,

large numbers of poor people volunteered their time and effort without remuneration, whilst, increasingly, service-provider agencies involving volunteers are paying servers a stipend. Wilson and Kalila (2006) in their country report raise issues about the sustainability of such programmes and the morality of depending on unpaid volunteers to provide welfare services to communities while they were unable to support their own families.

A further dimension that is pertinent to server motivations is related both to the poor socio-economic conditions of the servers and their perceptions of international servers in comparison with local servers. In this regard Kaseke and Dhemba (2006:23) state the following:

‘Respondents from the different organisations noted that the concept of volunteerism is based on true altruism unlike the Western volunteers who have a lot of resources and are “richer than the President”. This serves to point to the fact that African volunteers tend to be persons of low socio-economic status. They engage in daily struggles to survive or meet their basic needs. In some instances, they seek to benefit from the programme by accessing part of the benefits that accrue to the beneficiaries’.

Pawlby (2003) points to the tension that may exist between the value that is placed on the act of giving versus the value of the service given. Whilst this tension was found to exist in the above country situations (Zambia), in the Zimbabwean context the act of giving provided an opportunity for collaboration and mutuality where both servers and recipients are poor and are dependent on each other for survival and support. However, servers were also viewed negatively in some situations as their activities constituted unpaid work.

1.4 Philosophy of Service

Service values

The values and beliefs of service guide the behaviour of servers as to what is right or wrong, good or bad. Values are also derived from the societal context and in constitutional democracies such as Botswana, Malawi and South Africa the values of the society originate in the constitution. The constitutions of these countries emphasise social and economic development, participation in development in the case of Malawi and the building of a participative and caring society, as emphasised in Botswana’s vision for the future. The values underpinning service could be distilled inductively from the meaning of service for respondents. There seem to be common principles that were generally valued across the five countries in the study. These were based on the belief that service should:

- be voluntary
- be offered with no expectation of financial gain
- benefit individuals, groups, communities and the nation at large
- improve the quality of life and well-being of the poor and those who are vulnerable; and
- foster communal or collective responsibility and self-reliance.

Role of government

The philosophy of civic service is shaped by what a society believes a government’s role and responsibility should be towards its citizens and what the role and responsibility of citizens and civil society is in achieving development. Where service is conceptualised as part of national goals,

governments are likely to promote service actively through social policies. However, none of the countries had specific formal social policies and legislation on service and volunteering. Where these existed, they were integrated into other social policies and national strategies such as social welfare/development, health, HIV/AIDS, orphans and vulnerable children and rural development. In some countries, youth development policies also provided for service and volunteering. The country researchers were in agreement that a lack of policy was a barrier to the development of the field and that it limited the visibility of service resulting in societal benefits not being acknowledged in economic and social development policy and planning. In poor countries, where public financial resources are constrained, service is a form of social engagement in the society and draws on local human and social capital as key assets to achieve social development.

A significant number of respondents in the country studies expressed the concern that the service ethos is being eroded as governments and foreign donors have become more involved in service delivery. Where governments have not done so, there was nevertheless the expectation by the people that governments should provide social services and safety nets to meet people's needs. A tension is perceived to exist between increasing state responsibility for human needs and retaining and promoting active citizen engagement in social development through service. The dominant social policy models discussed in the literature review suggest a trade-off between these principles. Civic service policies and programmes that intend to achieve social development will need to find solutions that will reconcile these tensions. Box 2 captures the comments of the respondents about the tension between public provision of services and the service ethos.

Box 1: Tensions Between Public Provision and the Service Ethos

- 'An important issue that negatively affects service and volunteering is the dependence of service beneficiaries on government and other providers to the extent that they expect someone else to provide for their needs' (Rankopo et al. 2006).
- The meaning of service has changed over time and this was perceived to be directly linked to the shift from a dictatorship to democracy in Malawi. A consequential shift was observed 'to people being less self-reliant and community orientated and more government and NGO dependent' (Moleni and Gallagher, 2006: 40).
- 'In the past people were just volunteering without expecting to get something, I should say no monetary issues, but right now most of them they volunteer with an aim to getting something'. Focus Groups Participant, Malawi (Moleni and Gallagher, 2006).
- '[people] may volunteer to address problems which they have identified in the community, but mostly it is because of the coming of several donors who are giving out money'. Focus Group Participant, Malawi (Moleni and Gallagher, 2006).
- 'service in Zambia is viewed as assistance or support that is provided free of charge (to the beneficiary) . . . This meaning has origins in the provision of free services by government after independence, so people are conditioned to view service as free. However, the situation has started to change and [public] services nowadays increasingly involve payment of some kind . . . for example secondary school education and health' (Wilson and Kalila, 2006:23).

Salamon and Anheier (1999) contend that state-dominant models have low levels of volunteer participation, low levels of non-profit activities and limited social welfare provision. The latter authors are correct in their observation that developing countries were historically close to the statist model in the post-independence periods when they adopted national development plans, which were largely government-led. Free basic education was provided and in some countries free health care. Although statist in their orientation, many of the countries in the region placed great value on the principles of self-reliance (*boipelelego* – Botswana) and self-help (Malawi), and African communalism played a key role in promoting the service ethos. In the contemporary period, many countries are being impacted by economic globalisation and the dominance of free-market thinking with its orientation towards liberalisation, privatisation and pressures to decrease social spending. Other factors resulting in this shift are declining economic conditions and the effects of drought on the economy, high HIV/AIDS prevalence and persistent poverty and growing inequality. In the latter context, service and volunteering is being re-emphasised.

Box 2: The Shifts in Volunteering and Service in Botswana

The country researchers explained the shifts in service and volunteering as follows: Social service provision is the main responsibility of government which they [respondents] believed negatively affected the spirit of volunteerism. The focus shifted from popular participation to top-down approaches to social provision. Since 1985, the spirit of volunteering was on the decline partly due to the absence of men in villages as a result of migrant labour to South Africa. Women became the key participants in rural development. Since the 1990s, the government is emphasizing more neo-liberal ideologies and this factor together with the effects of the AIDS pandemic has resulted in increased community responses and a re-emphasis on volunteering.

Source: Extract from Botswana country report. (Rankopo et al., 2006)

To what extent is service related to the size of the voluntary or non-profit sector in the countries where the research was conducted? There is clearly a growing voluntary sector in all countries, although the size of the voluntary sector is small in the countries outside South Africa, which has historically had a large voluntary sector, but here too the sector is growing (Evaratt and Solanki 2006). This confirms the hypothesis that service is positively associated with a large non-profit sector. In Zambia and Malawi the creation of more open societies has resulted in increasing voluntary activity, whilst the failure of governance has stimulated voluntary activity in social development in Zimbabwe.

2. Form, Scope, Age and Type of Service Programmes

2.1 Forms of Service

Local, national and international service programmes were identified, with local and national service activities being most prevalent across the five countries. Voluntary service was the most widespread, with the exception of compulsory community service for health-care professionals in South Africa.

Local community-based service activities were predominant in all countries. In Malawi two-thirds of volunteering activities were community-based, according to a large household survey (Pelser et al. 2004), with 69% of servers being actively involved in one or more community-based organisation with large numbers being involved in Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). The majority of volunteers involved in local community-based organisations also tended to live in the communities in which the organisations operated. The community-based organisations, however, have links with large national, international and governmental programmes. Botswana, however, reported that there were few independent indigenous community-based organisations, with most organisations being extensions of government or religious efforts.

Some of the community-based programmes were part of nationally organised programmes run by non-governmental and faith-based organisations. National NGOs were also affiliated to international NGOs operating in the respective countries. In some countries, large programmes were government-led and collaborated with community-based organisations and village-level structures. There is a multi-layered cooperation between government, NGOs and CBOs linked from the village level, through district structures up to national levels in Botswana (Rankopo et al. 2006).

Inadequate information existed on international volunteer programmes. Zambia reported 19 international NGOs, with no information on the number of volunteers, whilst Malawi had 400 international volunteers working in the country in 2005/2006.

The form of service was also studied in relation to the formality and informality of the structure of the programmes. A distinction was made between formal and informal service, with formal service being more structured and requiring an intensive commitment of time (at least one week full time), and informally structured service being defined as localised, community-based, flexible in time commitment and responsive to local needs.

The data on Botswana suggests that there are two types of volunteering programmes: informal and formally organised programmes (Rankopo et al. 2006). The informal programmes are common, are informed by socio-cultural, religious and community values, and have a limited reach. The formal programmes have a wider reach, may be informed by a combination of cultural, religious, community values, and tend to be more aligned with national development goals and needs. The features of the two forms of volunteering programmes are set out in the box below.

Table 2: Features of Formal and Informal Volunteering Programmes

Informal volunteering programmes	Formal volunteering programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operate at micro level • involve family, friends and close neighbours • include activities such as weddings, burials, farming, psycho-social support; building houses and cleaning up campaigns • organised by a leader who may also be a headman at village level • operated by the community members themselves; • roles and rules are informally determined • time commitment is flexible • involves minimal external facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operate at local levels • organised by a hierarchical management structure • have a recognised membership • official registration • run by NGOs, FBOs, CBOs • roles of servers are defined • length of service is determined (at least one week full-time) • service projects extend beyond a single community to district, regional or national levels with some international linkages • informed by government or NGO policy • involve significant external facilitation

The above classification provides a useful way of thinking about volunteer programmes in the region. The research team debated the above features and concluded that a continuum of formal and informally organised volunteering activities may be discerned from the data and that a hybrid of the two forms may exist in practice. The research on South Africa suggests that service programmes are largely voluntary and formally structured and organised. Informal programmes may have a comparative advantage over formal programmes in that they are locally responsive and emerged organically through community mobilisation efforts. However, where informal programmes collaborate with formal programmes it is important that their comparative advantage is not compromised. As social development programmes modernise in a society, local informal initiatives may disappear over time. The challenge for service policy and programmes is to build on the strengths of local informal service activities without compromising their efficacy (Patel 2003).

2.2 Scope of Service and Age of Programmes

There are no accurate aggregated figures on the number of servers across the five countries. However, the data suggests that service is widespread and expanding in the region. Volunteering is the dominant type of service. Table 3 provides some indication of the extent of service (data was not available for Botswana). The information available for the programmes studied in-depth showed that there were on average 83 volunteers per programme in Malawi, 156 in Zimbabwe and 1 598 in South Africa. The last figure is high because one of the organisations had a disproportionately large number of servers. Limited information was available on the age of the programmes. In Malawi, the age of the programmes ranged between 10 years and 21.6 years, whilst the average for the Zimbabwean programmes was 19.6 years, which suggests that the programmes are more established. In contrast to these programmes, the SA programmes post-1994 were newer initiatives that were on

average less than four years old. However, volunteering is well established in the social services in South Africa.

Table 3: Indicators of the Scope of Service

Country	Indications of the extent of involvement in service
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 69% of households were involved in community-based organisations, village, church, school, CBOs; self-help groups, interest groups (Household survey – Pelsler et al. 2004) • 33 000 volunteers involved in the Malawi Red Cross
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated 17% of SA population volunteer time (8 million) (Everatt & Solanki 2006) • 12 768 servers were involved in eight organisations studied • 5801 compulsory community service professionals in 2004/2005 • 11 892 National Youth Service participants
Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 627 servers in six community organisations
Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 060 volunteers Public Welfare Assistance Programme • 20 000 organised volunteers in organised programmes and thousands in unorganised socio-economic programmes (Zambia News Agency 2005)

Note: Data was not available for Botswana

2.3 Types of Service

Three types of service were identified by the Global Service Institute's study on the prevalence and forms of civic service in 2002 – namely, youth service (40%), faith-based service (6%) and senior service (2%) (Moore McBride et al. 2002). More than half of the programmes analysed had no explicit type and could not be classified. Youth service was the most dominant type of service that was identified. Other types of service identified particularly in the South African context included service learning provided by higher education institutions, community service in secondary schooling, community service by health professionals and employee service. The latter programmes were voluntary except for the health care professionals who are required by law to complete a period

of community service as a requirement to be registered. Finally, community service as an alternative sentencing option is emerging in the region and was initiated by the Malawian government. This type of service programme also exists in South Africa. Large numbers of programmes were of a generic nature and could not be explicitly classified.

3. Goals, Areas of Service and Servers

3.1 Goals of Service

Whilst social and human development goals featured in the global study, programme goals were oriented more to developing the skills, employability, knowledge, cultural understanding, self-esteem and the character of the server (Moore McBride et al. 2002). In sharp contrast, the five-country study highlighted the importance of achieving the dual benefits to servers and beneficiaries. This however depended on the nature and type of programme, which is illustrated by examples from Zambia and South Africa.

Box 3: Programme Goals in Zambia and South Africa

<p>Goals of five service programmes in Zambia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote human well-being and health Promoting human rights and peace-building Facilitating sustainable livelihoods Increasing employment opportunities Creating/improving public facilities Promoting educational development Facilitating community development Promoting environmental protection <p>Goals of youth service programmes in South Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inculcate a culture of service and nation building among youth Promote the role of the youth in achieving civic awareness and national reconstruction Develop the skills, knowledge and ability of youth Improve youth employability Harness the nation's untapped resources <p>Goals of community service for health professionals in South Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the scarcity of human resources in the health sector, especially in less-developed areas of the country Improve access to health care Further the professional development, knowledge, skills and service ethos among health-care professionals

3.2 Areas of Service

A wide range of areas of service were identified, which accords with the findings of the GSI study (Moore McBride et al. 2002). Additional areas of service emerged that reflect local needs and are a

response to the human development context in the region. Health, particularly HIV/AIDS programmes, and human and social service programmes were most prevalent followed by social and community development programmes, education and services for children and youth. The range of areas of service is set out in Box 4 below.

Box 4: Areas of Service

Human and social services
Health
HIV/AIDS (care and psychosocial support; education and prevention)
Social and community development
Education
Youth development
Child welfare
Gender and development
Services for poor and vulnerable groups
Environmental protection
Nutrition and food security/agricultural extension
Crime-prevention, protection and victim support
Civic education and democracy-building
Emergency relief/response
Employment and economic development
Infrastructure development
Social and financial security
Spiritual healing
Personal development
Sports and recreation
Cultural heritage/arts

3.3 Servers

With the exception of health professionals, the profile of the servers was mainly adult women who were of a low socio-economic status, who originated from the target communities being served and who were thus poor and vulnerable themselves. This led to a blurring of the lines between the server and the beneficiary. The age of the servers differed by programme type, with HIV/AIDS programmes favouring more mature women who could cope with the care-giving roles that reflect traditional gender norms and stereotyping. There were fewer male servers and they tended to be involved in skilled and or manual labour, leadership roles and served on local committees. In countries where youth service programmes were more prevalent, such as in Malawi and South Africa, youth participation was strong and in Zambia more youth volunteered owing to unemployment. The age range of the servers varied greatly (from 14 years to 72 years), with youth service recruiting young people and HIV/AIDS programmes favouring more mature and older persons.

With regard to the service experience, both positive and negative experiences were cited. Servers were of the view that the service experience improved their curriculum vitae, provided a valuable

learning experience and the possibility of benefiting financially in the future. Servers were well received by the communities that they served and felt that the community recognised their service. Some servers felt that the working conditions were difficult and that they had limited support and resources to render service effectively. Incentives were also found to be too little or non-existent (discussed further below).

However, not all beneficiaries welcomed the servers. Wilson and Kalila (2006:29) reported that ‘volunteers were seen to be under pressure from recipients especially where the demand for support was huge but resources were minimal’. When support was not forthcoming, beneficiaries become suspicious that maybe they – the volunteers – had diverted the resources to themselves: ‘Beneficiaries don’t trust volunteers. The beneficiaries of the programmes are not the initiators and they want to control the resources’. Servers in Zambia reported some hostility from community members and were not trusted. For example, in the cholera-sensitisation programmes servers were called ‘cholera’ and in the Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) campaigns community members were suspicious about the collection of blood samples and labelled the servers as ‘Satanists’. In this regard, Wilson and Kalila (2006:29) explain the negative reactions of the communities to the servers as follows:

“These negative perceptions usually only occurred when the programmes were started by NGOs without consulting communities, resulting in a situation in which communities were not well informed. Also some communities had seen various interventions being implemented in their areas but their lives had changed little, so they were tired of being approached by people claiming to come and “better their lives””.

3.4 Time-commitment of the Servers

Civic service is an organised period of substantial engagement in service. How much time does the server spend in service and does this qualify as service? The time-commitment of the server is an important indicator of the intensity of the service role – that is, the number of hours that the server is engaged in service. The GSI study (Moore McBride et al. 2002) found that 80% of servers were engaged in full-time work amounting to 40 hours per week. A very small percentage (9%) were engaged on a part-time basis and only 6% were involved in both full and part-time time service. National and international service tended to require full-time participation, with national service programmes (average of 10 months) producing more service hours per year than any of the programmes followed by international service. The duration of the latter programmes was between 1 and 3.5 years, with the median average time spent being 5.3 months.

Limited data in this study was available on the time spent in service. However, for the programmes where data was available it was found that national and international programmes were more structured and tended to be more full-time, resulting in a large time commitment – and thus supporting the findings of the GSI study. In contrast to the latter programmes, the local community-based programmes tended to be more flexible about the amount of time required to serve. These programmes were also voluntary and were of a part-time nature. The time commitment ranged between one to two weeks per year or a few hours amounting to one or two days per week. In Malawi, an average of three hours per week was estimated by respondents of the time spent on the programmes, whilst in Zimbabwe the service time varied depending on the nature of the

programme. For instance, in the Home-Based Care programmes, three hours per day or two days per week was required. Since the servers lived in the communities, they were often called upon at all hours to assist. In the *Zunde ra Mambo* programme, where community members worked in the fields for those who were not able to tend to their crops, one day per week was set aside specifically for this purpose. An orphan-care programme required two hours per week.

National survey data on South Africa indicated that 11 hours was spent on service per month per respondent, amounting to a total of 6 000 hours per month (Everatt and Solanki 2005:10-11). Women volunteered more time than men, with African volunteers giving a greater time commitment than other population groups. Poor respondents were more likely to have volunteered than non-poor people and the authors concluded that volunteering in SA was not the preserve of the middle class. Gender differences in time spent on service were also recorded in a research study in Malawi, which found that such differences were related to the type of programme, the level of incentives provided and the urban–rural location of the programmes. Male involvement in volunteering in rural areas appeared to be the result of lack of employment, which increased their availability to serve whilst women were heavily involved in family, farming and household activities. Focus Group Respondents in Malawi attributed gender differences in time spent on service also to cultural factors that endorsed women’s caring roles as acceptable forms of women’s participation in community activities (Moleni and Gallagher 2006).

4. Institutional Dimensions: Access and Incentives

4.1 Access

The selection criteria of the programmes are a sound indicator of who is eligible to participate in civic service programmes. Few programmes had formal eligibility criteria to select participants. However, where such criteria existed, they varied depending on the nature of the programme. The following selection criteria informed programme design across the five countries: age, gender, experience, religious affiliation, language, nationality, educational level, qualifications and skills. International programmes and professional community service required certain formal qualifications and/or experience. Formal national programmes also had set criteria and community-based programmes included other criteria – for instance, that the servers should come from the local community and should be able to relate to the beneficiaries. In some instances, community members were involved in the selection of the participants and they sanctioned who was suitable to volunteer.

4.2 Incentives

Financial and non-financial incentives: A range of financial and other forms of non-financial incentives were provided by most of the programmes. Different programmes provided financial incentives in the form of allowances or stipends, which were popular among servers involved in home-based care in the HIV and AIDS field and youth service. The level and type of incentives varied from programme to programme. Community service professionals in the health sector in South Africa received remuneration for their service and registration as health-care professionals after the completion of a year of community service. Non-financial incentives included training, transport refunds, the provision of resources to be used in the programmes such as fertilizers, T-shirts, uniforms, food parcels and certificates. Servers also were of the view that the service experience

increased their chances of obtaining employment. Positive community perceptions and enhanced status of servers are also intangible forms of recognition. Students involved in service learning programmes in higher education also received academic credits for service learning courses passed. International volunteers received living allowances and other benefits such as travel insurance and resettlement stipends.

Issues and challenges: Incentives are a sensitive issue. The benefits of providing various forms of incentives were considered by the country studies. Incentives served to attract and retain servers. For some servers, financial incentives contributed to improved livelihoods. Incentives also served to recognise the value of volunteer effort. Skills development and experience gained through service were considered significant benefits to the servers. However, the challenges identified related firstly to the socio-economic status of the servers. The fact that servers themselves were poor, vulnerable and unemployed resulted in organisations reviewing their stance on the non-payment of stipends and the provision of in-kind support such as food parcels. The stance that servers should not receive some monetary compensation or non-monetary benefits was questioned by some organisations. There appears to be growing support for the idea that the service experience should be beneficial to both the server and the recipient. However, participants also argued that stipends form part of income generation for some servers who do not have other employment opportunities. What is the dividing line between paid work and stipends for service, especially where the stipend is almost equal to the wage rate? Some participants pointed out that incentives could increase server commitment to the programme, but it could also alter server motivation.

Secondly, tensions arose in communities where different policies on incentives were adopted by the respective service programmes. There is a need for the harmonisation of service policies at local level with respect to the provision of incentives. The sustainability of the programmes is also affected by incentives, as these may increase programme costs. It is therefore important that these issues and challenges be taken into account in programme design.

5. Programme Administration

Service programmes are delivered by two types of administrative bodies, namely governmental and non-governmental organisations and some community-based organisations (CBOs) in collaboration with government and international NGOs. A collaborative partnership approach seems to exist, although the lead administrative agency varied between programmes and was determined by country-specific conditions. The GSI study (Moore McBride et al. 2002) found that the majority of programmes were administered by NGOs. This could not however be confirmed in this study as the data was uneven across the five countries. In Zimbabwe, the programmes are administered largely by NGOs and CBOs, which is due to the prevailing conflict situation.

From the country reports, the following trends emerged:

Zambia: government and national NGOs administer national civic service programmes, while local civic service programmes were administered by NGOs or CBOs. There is no private sector participation in the administration or funding of service programmes. International donors provide financial and material support to both government and NGO programmes. The Zambian government, however, provides some financial support to the Public Welfare

Assistance Scheme and CBOs such as community schools and traditional birth attendants, although financial support was limited. Participants were of the opinion that programmes were efficiently administered and reached poor and vulnerable groups (Wilson & Kalila 2006).

Malawi: government provides advice and technical support and an enabling environment, but service is funded to a limited extent by government. National policies in the broad field of social development make provision for community participation through CBOs and clubs and societies to deliver services, much of which are carried out on a voluntary basis. District youth and social welfare offices co-ordinate and supervise services. CBOs and clubs and societies register with government departments and these structures work directly with governmental extension workers. Local committees also collaborate with traditional leaders to mobilise additional community members to volunteer their services for self-help projects (Moleni and Gallagher 2006).

Botswana: faith-based organisations and NGOs are involved in programme administration but here too there is collaboration with government in a wide-range of community development, health and HIV/AIDS and community safety initiatives. Overall, it appears that a government–community partnership approach exists where government is involved in funding and administration of services in collaboration with NGOs, FBOs and CBOs. Village Development Committees (VDCs) and the Department of Social and Community Development work closely with local communities to address social conditions. Volunteers are recruited to participate in the programmes. VDCs and District Multi-Sectoral AIDS Committees (MDASCs) and Home-Based Care Committees are supervised by government departments at village and district levels. The programmes appear to be efficiently administered owing to the fact that the service providers are either professionals and are skilled and experienced (Rankopo et al. 2006).

Zimbabwe: NGOs and CBOs were the lead agencies involved in programme administration. Organisations are required to register in terms of the Private Voluntary Organisations Act of 1996. Participatory management practice seems to inform the administration of the local community programmes. Factors promoting success included having structured local level programmes, volunteer training, ongoing supervision, good communication between all the parties and direct involvement of community participants and volunteers in decision-making. The decentralisation of programme administration to local community level was found to be important, as day-to-day decisions were taken at a local level, which resulted in greater responsiveness to local concerns. In some instances, the volunteers also reported directly to a community-based committee made up of local representatives. This form of local accountability was good, although it could be abused as some community representatives tended to focus on their own needs at the expense of the common good (Kaseke and Dhemba 2006).

South Africa: the service programmes in this study were mainly shaped at national level and implemented by provincial and local level service providers such as youth service, community service for health care professionals and Home-Based Care (HBC). The national programmes are informed by national policies and programme guidelines for implementing agencies.

Placements for youth service may be in the public and NGO sectors, while community-health professionals are placed in the public sector only. HBC programmes are carried out in collaboration with governmental and NGO partners. The non-governmental agencies are contracted to deliver service programmes on behalf of government. In some provinces where CBOs are the main partners with government, they were found to lack capacity to deliver efficiently. Capacity-building initiatives are however in place but need to be expanded. In the HIV/AIDS field, there is a growing collaboration between government and civil society organisations. Government provides financial support, e.g. stipends for volunteers, support for caregivers and mentoring to build sustainable organisational structures. Financial support comes from a variety of sources: government, international donors, private sector organisations and national agencies such as the Umsobomvu Youth Fund. A private sector organisation, the Business Trust was involved in administering service programmes and some programmes were funded by the private sector.

In summary, the country programmes described above provide support for the idea that a collaborative partnership approach exists with lead administrative agencies being either government and/or national and provincial NGOs or FBOs, who in turn partner with CBOs. Governmental roles vary from being a direct initiator and implementing agency to the provision of advice and technical support. Some government funding is provided but the nature and extent of it differed across the countries. In some country contexts, NGOs and CBOs implemented programmes on behalf of government and in other instances, NGOs were the lead administrative agencies independent of government. NGOs also compete with government for donor funding of service programmes and to deliver services via CBOs. In this regard a respondent remarked rather negatively on the NGO–CBO relationship: ‘CBOs are the unpaid volunteers of the NGOs’. The current data shows that CBOs partnered with other agencies. However, data was not available to study CBO activities that are independent of government and established non-governmental national and international agencies. This will need further research.

6. Policy and Legislation

None of the countries had specific overall formal social policies and legislation on service and volunteering. Where service is conceptualised as part of national goals, governments promoted service actively through other social policies such as in Botswana and South Africa. Service featured strongly in other social policies and national strategies pertaining to social welfare/development, health, HIV/AIDS, care of orphans and vulnerable children, rural development, Home-Based Care, youth development, community service for health professionals and in education policies among others. International conventions protecting vulnerable groups also shaped service initiatives. Table 4 below describes the ranges of policies, plans and legislation that mandates and facilitates the implementation of service in the respective five countries.

Service policy in the region appears to be underdeveloped. Where it exists, an integrative approach has been adopted by some countries, where service policies are mainstreamed through existing sectoral policies. The integrative approach is most developed in South Africa, where service is incorporated in different sectors – notably education, health and youth development. This approach facilitates the effective implementation of service programmes and may have a wider impact. The disadvantage of the approach is that there is firstly a lack of overarching policy to guide the

implementation of service. Secondly, inadequate policy coordination and a lack of sharing of knowledge and best practice to build service as a field of enquiry and a strategy to achieve social development are further limitations. Finally, future service policy in the region needs to build on existing policies and plans that are in place, including the integrative approach where service is mainstreamed across different government departments and social and economic sectors.

Table 4: Service Policies and Legislation

Country	Policy and Planning	Legislation
Botswana	Vision 2016 – <i>Towards Prosperity for All</i> guides socio-economic development 1997; Second Medium-Term Plan for HIV/AIDS 1997-2002 Revised national policy for Rural Development 2002; Community policing policies	Informed by national and international conventions on the rights of children;
Malawi	Guidelines on international volunteers; ‘Government ...to develop guidelines ...to demonstrate its full commitment to community participation’ (Government of Malawi, 2003)	No legislation
South Africa	Reconstruction and Development Programme 1994; White Paper for Social Welfare 1997; Education White Paper 3 1997 National Youth Service Policy Framework 2003; National guidelines on Home-Based Care and Community-Based Care 2001; National guidelines for Social Services to Children Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS 2002; Community service in secondary education Community service sentencing	Higher Education Act 1997 Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Professions Amendment Act (No 89 of 1997) Criminal Procedure Act No 51 of 1977
Zambia	Draft policy developed on NGOs, but contested by civil society	Process established to review draft national policy & legislation on NGOs
Zimbabwe	Signatory to the UN Convention of Rights of the Child & African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; National Orphan Care Policy; national action plans regarding HIV/AIDS	Private Voluntary Organisations Act 1996; Current Act is under review; service activities are prescribed in the amendments as a means of control of the sector. National legislation pertaining to child protection

7. Factors Promoting Service

From the data, it was apparent that there was a range of factors that contributed positively to the growth of service in the five countries. Social and cultural factors, including strong religious beliefs, supported the growth and development of service. Where government policies incorporated the service ethos in national policies and plans and where service was partly institutionalised, valued by society and given visibility and public support, programmes seemed to flourish. In some countries where multi-party democracy has been introduced, as in Malawi and Zambia, the political system was regarded as being favourable for the promotion of service.

The nature and scope of service was positively correlated with the size of the voluntary sector. The Zimbabwe situation demonstrates clearly that where governments viewed service and the voluntary sector as a threat, the sector did not do well. It is apparent that enabling policy environments also contribute to a thriving voluntary sector.

Community ownership was enhanced where volunteers came from local communities and this was cited as an important factor contributing to the success of the programmes and to building social capital and community assets. Service formed part of local community-development intervention strategies and contributed to local institutional development. Community ownership was enhanced by knowledge or evidence of the positive impact of service programmes. In Zimbabwe, competition between villages to demonstrate success also increased commitment by servers and beneficiaries. Visits from outsiders created a sense of pride in community action. Other positive factors identified in service programmes in Zimbabwe were: linking communities with resource systems that could provide practical support; unity among community leaders; capacity-building and regular meetings with staff and the communities. Networking between service agencies was also cited as a positive factor.

8. Challenges for Service

The key challenges facing service agencies are related to (a) contextual factors; (b) policy and institutional issues; (c) gender issues; and (d) administrative and resource issues.

Contextual factors: The declining human development situation, reflected by high rates of poverty, unemployment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the low standards of education and high illiteracy rates, coupled with declining social cohesion in communities were cited as key challenges for service initiatives. Environmental factors such as changing weather conditions impacted adversely on the capability of communities to enhance food security. This overwhelming social situation affected server motivation negatively.

Political, policy and institutional issues: In some of the countries political interference in service programmes was cited as a hindrance to the advancement of service, especially where voluntary initiative was perceived to be a political threat to the government of the day. Nepotism and political interference was also cited as another problem, where programme administrators were pressured by politicians to register those who do not qualify (Rankopo et al. 2006).

The absence of a comprehensive policy and guidelines on service and volunteering was cited as another factor that impeded service development. The shift from statist to more market-oriented economic policies that could result in the abrogation of government responsibility for human development was another issue. Some country researchers reported a growing concern at the rising dependency of beneficiaries on government and external service providers and foreign donor aid, which increased in some countries. In Zimbabwe, donor support dwindled considerably as a result of the declining political situation. Competition for programme funds was also observed between government and NGOs, and this further hampered programme effectiveness. It is vital that governments view NGOs as partners and not as competitors.

Gender issues: Servers were mainly poor women and in many instances also older women. The tendency of service programmes to reinforce the sexual division of labour in social care was identified as a significant challenge. Women were more involved in care-giver roles, while men tended to fulfill more decision-making and community-level governance roles. Not only did service reinforce gender roles, it also placed additional demands on women servers who were already overburdened by poverty and finding it difficult to meet their social reproductive roles in the home, in the family and the community. Community service of the nature discussed in this study places a further burden on women servers. Feminists (Patel, Triechaart and Noyoo 2005; Hyde, 2000) have drawn attention to the extent to which society relies on women's unpaid work in the family and the community. This study provided rich insight into women's involvement in community service, which supports the latter critique. The development of gender-sensitive service policies and programmes is a major challenge. However, women appeared to also derive some benefits from their involvement in service activities, such as strengthening their social networks and building social relations of trust with members of the community. This enhanced their standing and the likelihood that they would be supported when they were in need. In short, they gained in social capital. Other benefits were related to women's personal empowerment and growth in knowledge and skills (human capital). Some also received in-kind resources and stipends where these existed, which contributed to household livelihood activities. However, examples of women's involvement in advocacy were limited in the study. Service from a social development perspective needs to grapple more with promoting gender equity and gender sensitivity in its policies and programmes on the one hand and maximising the positive opportunities and benefits for women involved in community service programmes on the other hand.

Administrative and resources issues: Organisational challenges identified related to a lack of knowledge of programmes and how they operate; the bureaucratic nature of organisations; inappropriately stringent procedures for community-based organisations; and the lack of discretion of service providers to innovate and develop locally responsive programmes. Favourable incentives for international volunteers were also cited as a negative factor that may create tensions between local and international servers.

The lack of management and administrative capacity and inadequate monitoring of programmes and supervision are further challenges. The design of service programmes needs to grapple with other issues such as the high turnover of servers; negative perceptions of volunteering; high expectations of beneficiaries; the poverty of volunteers; the lack of funding and sustainability of service programmes; and a lack of infrastructure. In countries with large rural populations, a lack of public communication and broadcasting services and inadequate infrastructure were cited as key barriers to

service delivery. A lack of opportunities to develop volunteer management capacity and structured opportunities to volunteer were other issues of concern.

9. Regional Collaboration

Limited collaboration in the form of exchange of information, ideas and best-practice experience exists between the countries and within the countries. There appears to be a lack of opportunities, capacity and resources to promote collaboration and no regional service networks exist. The country researchers supported the idea of establishing a regional network to promote civic service research, policy and practice in the region. The importance of greater South–South service and volunteer exchange programmes was emphasised including fostering collaboration through existing SADC structures such as HIV/AIDS forums, the NEPAD Youth desk and the African Union Inter-Ministerial Forum for Youth provided opportunities for collaboration. National umbrella bodies to which some of the organisations belong also provide opportunities for strengthening service networks in the region.

10. Future Research

The study was of an exploratory nature and confirmed the hunch that service was an emerging phenomenon in the SADC region. A future research agenda should include a quantitative study to validate the findings across the remaining countries in the region. A study of this nature could inform a policy agenda and contribute to developing a regional plan of action to promote service as a field of enquiry and to inform policy and action. The social development approach to civic service has evolved from this study and research into how to implement such an approach could be of interest to other African countries and internationally.

Other research priorities could also include research to inform programme design, administration, monitoring and evaluation of service programmes, including impact assessments of service programmes on the problems they purport to address. Research of this nature could also inform the development of guidelines for programme development and implementation and document best-practice experience in the field. Limited research appears to have been conducted to evaluate the quality and efficiency of service programmes and their impact on both servers and beneficiaries. Little is known about the actual experience of servers and the conditions under which they function. High drop rates were identified, which suggests that problems were experienced with the retention of servers. From the perspective of the beneficiaries of service, an exploration of beneficiaries' attitudes towards servers and volunteers could also contribute to improvements in service programmes. It may also be important to identify the critical success factors in the management of service programmes.

Furthermore, research is also needed to examine some of the critical issues and challenges that emerged from this study. These include the debate about whether financial and non-financial incentives should be provided to servers, gender issues and the impact of institutionalising local community-based forms of service on the willingness of people to serve. Research on government–NGO relations could also be important in shaping service policy. Two other areas that were considered important by country researchers were the need to examine the relationship between volunteering and future success in learning and work. Service in educational settings is based on the

premise that service promotes a culture of civic engagement and civic responsibility among youth and students and that it might be a long-term investment in building active citizenship and civic responsibility. Longitudinal research will be needed to assess whether such positive benefits are sustained in future generations. It was argued in the literature review that the extent of involvement of the people of a nation in service and volunteering could be an indicator of social cohesion and social engagement in a society. This could also provide interesting insights on the role of service in building democracy.

Section Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Conclusions

Civic service as a field of enquiry internationally and regionally is underdeveloped. Its meaning, concepts, knowledge base, methodology, best practices and its pitfalls and challenges are not well understood in developing contexts. Much was learnt about the nature and scope of service, its uniqueness in the African context and the implications of civic service for policy, research and action. This is particularly pertinent, as literature on service has emerged in developed societies and the applicability of this body of knowledge and practice to developing societies is receiving increasing attention.

This study has demonstrated that civic service and volunteering in particular is emerging as a viable social development intervention in the SADC region. Service is widespread across the five countries. The average number of servers per programme ranged between 83 in Malawi and 1 596 in South Africa. The age of service programmes varied, with the Zimbabwe programmes being older while the South African programmes studied were newer and were established after a democratic society was created in 1994. Voluntary service was most widespread with the exception of compulsory community service for health professionals in South Africa. Programme goals were oriented to achieving dual benefits for servers and recipients. The service areas covered a wide range of sectors and were multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral in nature.

The structure of the programmes included formal and informally organised programmes with a hybrid of the two types of programmes. Informal community-based programmes were prevalent and these were in some instances associated with district level/national programmes. Caution needs to be exercised to ensure that the strengths of local community-based programmes are not lost as they become incorporated or aligned with larger, more formally structured service initiatives. Community mobilisation and volunteering in the fight against HIV and AIDS emerged as a viable indigenous social development intervention, where community-based care, community development and education and prevention emerged as significant local-level interventions in partnership with established non-governmental organisations to address the pandemic in the region. Youth service is re-emerging in African countries and is part of a wider international trend with the benefits of youth service being increasingly recognised through civic education and programmes promoting youth capabilities in citizenship and youth development and community action (World Bank, 2006). The Malawian and South African findings point to the growth of youth service and challenge the prevailing assumptions about low levels of youth involvement in service. In these countries, youth view service as an opportunity for realising personal development through skills transfer and preparation for work whilst contributing at the same time to community development.

Although the concept civic service was not well understood, it has strong historical, cultural and religious meanings for those involved. Service is also deeply embedded in local languages, which demonstrates its cultural roots. Both 'traditional' and 'modern' notions of service seem to co-exist, and this may support the service ethos whilst simultaneously serving to undermine it. This was found to be particularly relevant in regard to the gender, class and age profile of servers. The question was correctly posed as to whether service programmes do not reinforce gender inequalities

and other class and social divisions in these societies. Service was also considered highly relevant in promoting the achievement of national social development goals and priorities. Interestingly, in contexts where both servers and beneficiaries are poor, a greater emphasis was placed on collaboration and mutuality of benefits where servers and recipients are reliant on each other for survival and support. The study provided strong evidence of the significant extent of involvement of poor people in civic service, which is an asset and may be an indicator of the level of social capital in a society.

A positive relationship was found to exist between the size of the voluntary sector and the extent of service activities. A large and thriving voluntary sector contributed to the growth of service in some of the countries in the study. However, it has become apparent that where states have failed, service has flourished. Neo-liberal solutions that lead to the abrogation of state responsibility for human well-being cannot be supported, whilst a state-dominant approach that does not recognise the role of actors outside the state in achieving social development is similarly flawed. It is in this respect that the social development approach to civic service, which acknowledges the roles of the different parties in a collaborative institutional arrangement, provides a greater opportunity for the growth of the field in the region. The social development approach to civic service provides a well-developed set of ideas to inform service policy and may yield positive benefits to society and return on social investment (Sherraden 2001). However, service policy and legislation were poorly developed. An integrative approach is emerging where service is mainstreamed through different sectors in government and in the non-governmental sector. This approach may be a viable way forward for service policy in the region. In the post-apartheid context, service policy has been transformed and aligned with national reconstruction and development. Four nationally organised service programmes are being implemented in education, health and the youth sector facilitated by national policy.

Key challenges for the development of the service field emerged from the study. Firstly, the applicability of the collaborative partnership model may be limited in countries faced with political and economic collapse and a polarisation between state and civil society institutions. Secondly, the question needs to be posed as to whether service amounts to shifting of responsibility from the state to poor people, women, older persons and disadvantaged communities. Thirdly, the implications for programme design and service policy need to be debated when the servers are themselves poor. Finally, incentives emerged as a critical issue in the development of service policies and programmes. The notion that financial incentives should not be paid to volunteers in a society where both the servers and beneficiaries are poor and disadvantaged was questioned by researchers. The role and impact of incentives need to be better understood in under-resourced developing societies.

This unique North–South partnership between a non-governmental organisation, academics and higher education institutions resulted in the pooling of expertise and resources. Research networks were built between the colleagues in the SADC region and through this process the research team expanded their knowledge about the nature of research on service in the region. The study highlighted the lack of published literature and academic resources on the subject in the countries where the research was conducted. A substantial collection of documentation, knowledge and practice experience exists that is not published in scholarly publications. This situation demonstrates the importance of research partnerships to bridge the divide between researchers located in

academic institutions and society. A valuable learning experience awaits the researcher who is willing to traverse this terrain.

In conclusion, the study provided a rich overview of the shape of service in the region. The direction that service is taking in the region is also consistent with the key objectives of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which are aimed at achieving regional cooperation, eradicating poverty and reaching high levels of social and human development. The emergence of service presents African countries with the opportunity to build the service field with a development agenda where service contributes to equitable social and economic development and active citizenship.

2. Recommendations

Future research

A research agenda to promote service in the region needs to be developed. Some of the pointers for such an agenda include the need for a quantitative study to assess the size and scope of the service sector in the region, since the benefits of service and the contribution of the voluntary sector to national social development in the SADC have not been determined. A cost-benefit analysis of service programmes and their contribution to national economic and social development will go a long way in demonstrating the efficacy of service. There is also need for an evaluation of the quality of service programmes and their impact. Research of this nature could inform future policy and programme development and could make the case for 'strong policy' (Sherraden 2001) in the SADC. Action research of this kind with a social change focus could aid the setting of a service agenda in the SADC. Limited collaboration exists between the countries in the SADC, and a regional service network might be an effective vehicle to advance the field and to advocate for a service agenda. Research into international collaboration in the region is needed; the study provided limited information in this regard.

Social development and service policies and programmes

The social development approach provides a viable framework to inform service policy and action in the region. The profile of the servers – mainly poor women and older persons – presents a particular policy challenge. More gender-sensitive service programmes are needed, including policies and programmes that take account of the growing burden of care among women, older persons and poor communities. The appropriateness of the payment of financial incentives and other forms of non-monetary incentives needs to be explored further.

Service policies also need to be informed by policy models that take account of emerging policy models, local conditions and policies that are feasible, and can be efficiently and effectively implemented. Policies and institutional arrangements that build and strengthen the collaborative partnership approach to service are vital. Service policies should actively support and strengthen non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations and community-based organisations as critical partners in the wider service network in a country.

Management and administrative capacity needs to be developed to deliver service programmes in the SADC. Best practice lessons also need to be more rigorously documented and shared regionally. Service programmes also need to be better resourced. Funding partnerships between governments, donors, faith-based organisations and the private sector could aid service development regionally. However, donor conditions need to advance the service ethos rather than weaken it. The contribution of time and effort by poor people with minimal financial gain should be taken into account in the costing of programmes.

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Appendix A: Interview Schedule

VOSESA

FIVE-COUNTRY STUDY ON SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Compiled by: Patel, L.
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4 May 2005

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Moore McBride and Sherraden et al (2004:10-11) state that 'Civic service is a construct, defined as an organized period of substantial engagement and contribution to the local, national or world community, recognized and valued by society, with minimal monetary cost to the participant'. The authors point out that the word 'civic' is a descriptor; it refers to the larger domain that includes different forms of service such as volunteering, national service (e.g. youth service), and international service. 'Civic' refers to action that is in the public sphere and that yields positive benefits to individuals, communities, a nation or the world. Service is also understood to occur in an organizational framework and involves formal programmatic interventions. A continuum of volunteering seems to exist with informal and occasional forms of volunteering at the one end of the spectrum and more formal, long-term, intensive volunteering or civic service conducted especially cross-nationally and comparatively. Service may also be a subset of volunteering or something quite distinctly different.

In the African context, we find that service also takes place in informal community/village settings. In light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, different forms and types of service may be emerging in the African context. We are particularly interested in finding out more about these and other forms service or any other indigenous forms of service in the African context. What is its meaning and how is it different and why? (Patel and Wilson 2004). The social development approach should inform the conceptual framework (refer to research proposal).

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RECOMMENDED READING

A copy of the *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* journal is being posted to you this week. I suggest that you study the above articles as part of a background orientation.

In addition, please also refer to the chapters in the first edition of *Service Enquiry* which is available free of charge on www.service-enquiry.org.za.

For your information I am also attaching a concept paper issued by the South African Department of Social Development at the end of 2004, dealing with the notion of forming an African Volunteer Corps.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE FIELD WORK

The research methodology includes three methods of data collection:

1. *Literature searches* will provide a useful overview that will inform the study. This is usually an ongoing process as the participants may refer the researchers to further sources.
2. *In-depth interviews with key informants*. The key informants are purposively selected according to defined criteria. A lot of data may already have been gathered through the literature study so that when the researcher conducts the interviews, he/she will be fairly knowledgeable about the issues to be covered in-depth in the interviews and discussions in the focus groups. An interview schedule is attached which can be used as a guide. If the information was collected in the literature study, move on to the next question. The interview schedule is simply a guide to the information that should be collected. It is, however, important that the interviewer prepares thoroughly for the in-depth interviews. You need to have a good idea of what information was already collected and what to focus on to probe in-depth. A dialogue or a conversation is probably more appropriate, but it depends on the interviewee. Interviews should be recorded and notes made as a backup. Ideally the recordings should be transcribed for the purposes of data analysis.
3. *Focus group discussion*. If possible, it is suggested that steps 1 and 2 be completed first. Further, that the focus group discussion be used to solicit more information in areas where there are gaps, where information is contradictory and where views and opinions may be exchanged. In some instances, you may want to verify information. A discussion guide is attached. You will need to adapt the questions in the interview schedule and use those that are appropriate in the focus group discussion. Instructions to guide the focus group discussions are set out below. These are basic group facilitation processes. I am confident that all the researchers are acquainted with these processes. They are nevertheless set out and may be used flexibly.

Instructions

- The researcher and participants introduce themselves
- Thank participants for their attendance
- Clarify expectations

- Ensure that each participant has signed a consent form (attached to project proposal circulated in March 2005). If not, the consent form should be signed prior to the start of the group discussion.
- Researcher provides an overview of the aims and approach to the study
- Clarify use of terms and any other issues and queries, including how proceedings will be recorded.
- The guide to the focus group discussion contains an agenda of the key aspects to be covered.
- Based on the analysis of the information gathered through the literature review and the interviews, the researcher identifies a set of key issues that will be deliberated upon in the focus group discussions.
- Questions need to be identified prior to the meeting to operationalise the key issues. These would need to be drawn from the interview schedule.
- An open discussion is always good to start with, but the researcher needs to ensure that the key issues are addressed. It will be important to steer the discussion back to the key issues.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(In-depth interviews with key informants in the respective countries)

1. What is the meaning of service in the country where you are conducting the research?

Prompts:

How is the word 'service' understood?

How has it developed historically?

Does it have a cultural, religious, philosophical, social or political meaning?

What words or phrases are used to describe service?

Has the concept been defined for the purpose of a specific programme e.g. national youth service; a volunteer programme; work camps; a community-based HIV/AIDS service programme?

What other connotations are attached to the idea of service?

If service has a particular meaning in a country, why? Explore the reasons.

2. Key features: Form, scope and age of service programmes in the respective country

What form and types of service programmes exist?

Prompts:

- Do the programmes take a local, national, international or transnational form? (form refers to the scope and arrangement of the service programmes)

Note: Transnational service refers to programmes that span two or more countries

International service is more unilateral - servers move from one country to another

National – service as a national country programme

Local – service is in a local area and may be organised as part of a local community development/action e.g. HIV/AIDS care and support

What types of service exists?

Prompts:

- Youth
- Senior
- Faith-based service
- Other

For how long have the service programmes been in existence?

Prompts:

- 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3- 5 years
- 5- 10 years
- 10- 15 years
- 15 – 20 years
- 20 years and above

What is the geographic distribution of the programmes?

Prompt

- Urban/peri-urban/rural spread

3. Service role: time commitment and compulsory nature of service

How much time are the servers expected to serve?

Prompts:

- How many hours are they expected to serve?
- For how long do they serve?
- Is it full-time or part-time?
- Is it flexitime?
- What is the average amount of time that they serve?

3.2. Are the programmes on which they serve compulsory or voluntary?

Prompts:

- What types of programmes are compulsory?
- What types of programmes are voluntary?
- What are the problems and issues with compulsory and voluntary programmes?

4. Servers, service areas and goals

- 4.1 Who are the servers? e.g. children, youth, adults, older persons/seniors etc.
- 4.2 What other server groups are there? e.g. people with disabilities, low income, college students etc
- 4.3 What is the gender of the servers?
- 4.4 What types of service activities are they engaged in?

Prompts:

- Human and social services
- Education
- Community development
- Personal development
- Environmental protection
- Cultural integration
- Health
- Employment/economic development
- Infrastructure development
- Peace/human rights
- Cultural/heritage/arts
- Sport and recreation
- Emergency response
- Other

- 4.5 What are the goals of the programmes?

Prompts:

- Increasing the server's motivation to volunteer after the service experience
- Increasing the server's skill levels
- Increasing the server's social skills
- Promote cultural understanding
- Increase the server's confidence and self-esteem
- Influence and expand the server's career choices
- Increase employment rate of servers
- Create/improve public facilities
- Promote well-being and health
- Promote educational development
- Promote human rights, peace building
- Facilitate community development
- Facilitate sustainable livelihoods
- Promote sustainable land use
- Promote environmental protection
- Increase employment opportunities
- Do the programmes have multiple goals? What are these?

- Other

4.6 What is the nature of the service experience?

Prompts:

- What are the experiences of the servers?
- Are they positive? Describe.
- If negative, give reasons
- How have the servers been received by the communities?
- What are their attitudes to service?
- How do the beneficiaries of service perceive them?
- How are the roles of servers and beneficiaries defined?

5. Institutional dimensions: Access, incentives, information and facilitation

- 5.1 Are there criteria that determine who is eligible to serve? Elaborate on what the criteria are e.g. age; skills; language proficiency; income, organisational or religious affiliation, race, class, gender.
- 5.2 Why are these criteria used?
- 5.3 What is the effect of these criteria on access?
- 5.4 What incentives are provided? e.g. housing, transport, health insurance, stipend or living allowance (how much?); rewards (certificates or community recognition); academic credit for participation; scholarships, training etc.
- 5.5 What information and facilitation support do they receive while serving?
- 5.6 What supervision and or mentoring do the servers receive and how does it work?
- 5.7 Are there opportunities for critical reflection on their experience?
- 5.8 If yes to 5.7, what does it involve?
- 5.9 How do the servers experience the above in 5.1 – 5.7?

6. Programme administration

- 6.1 Who administers the programmes? e.g. government, non-governmental organisations, private sector or is there a collaborative arrangement between the parties?
- 6.2 If there is a collaborative arrangement, describe how it works
- 6.3 Which types of programmes are more inclined to be governmental or non-governmental in nature?
- 6.4 How many are governmental or non-governmental, private or collaborative?
- 6.5 How efficient and effective is the administration of service programmes?

7. Policy and legislation

- 7.1 Are there policies and legislation that inform service?

Prompts:

- Explore if service is referred to in some policies such as welfare policies; community policing; criminal justice; health, education etc.

- If yes, explore the nature of these in greater depth
- Explore whether policies and service guidelines exist for specific programmes.
- Is there scope for the institutionalisation of service?
- How might the above impact on informal, localised and community-based forms of service?

8. What are the factors promoting/hindering service

Prompts:

- What are the country specific factors? e.g. political and economic environmental; institutional and organisational issues; the nature and extent of development of civil society organisations in a country; capacity to deliver; tradition of service etc
- What are the factors that are pertinent to the SADC region?

9. How can countries in the region collaborate to strengthen service initiatives?

Prompts:

- Some examples might be: regional networking; research collaboration; capacity building etc

10. What might a future research agenda be in the region?

Prompts:

- To extent has research been conducted on service?
- What type of research has been conducted? e.g. evaluation studies
- What are the research gaps?
- What research needs to be conducted develop to knowledge of service, policy and practice?

11. Are there country-specific socio-economic, political and cultural conditions, issues and approaches to service that have not been addressed above? Please elaborate on these if necessary.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

(Refer to the Instructions on pages 48-50)

1. Introductions and welcome (15 minutes)
2. Brief overview of the research (15 minutes)

Issues to explore in discussion:

3. Meaning of service
4. Form, scope and age of service programmes
5. Service role: time commitment and compulsory nature of service
6. Servers, service areas and goals
7. Institutional dimensions: access, incentives, information and facilitation
8. Programme administration
9. Policy and legislation
10. Factors promoting or hindering service
11. Regional collaboration
12. Future research