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Third Sector Intervention and Sustainable Rural Development: An evaluation of selected non-governmental organization supported projects in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

By

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Thokozani Patience Moyo (student Number 201103982), hereby declare that this thesis is my original effort; and that where I have used ideas and words of others I have fully and correctly acknowledged all sources.

Signed: …………………………………………….

Date: ………………………………….

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to those close to my heart. My husband, Prof Philani Moyo and our daughters, Asanda Lubelihle and Andiswa Minenhle Moyo also to my late father, Mr Solomon Ncube (may his soul rest in peace) and to my mother Mrs Maggie Ncube who is still with us.

The love you share with me is amazing.

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the impact of Third Sector- supported rural development projects in three rural communities of the Eastern Cape, South Africa. It focusses on how interventions driven by this sector – denoted by, among others, local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) - impact the lives and livelihoods of the rural poor. This is against the background of an established discourse that views NGOs as effective agents in the alleviation of poverty. The thesis contends that praise for the Third Sector is driven mostly by advocacy than based on systematic scientific evidence of the real impact of NGO-sponsored rural development interventions.

Rural agricultural development projects supported by two Eastern Cape-based NGOs (the one a local NGO, and the other international) were selected for the study. A mini survey was conducted in the communities where the projects are located. Survey data were complemented by qualitative data obtained through focus groups, semi-structured and in-depth interviews as well as key informant interviews.

The study found that whereas the projects had been established by the state later went moribund, they were resuscitated by the NGOs through a largely 'bottom-up' model of rural development intermediation. In other words, the interventions were resuscitated through a relatively robust prior engagement with project beneficiaries. As a result, while originally lacking a meaningful sense of local empowerment, ownership, and commitment, the projects had become revived and now played an important role in the livelihoods of some community members – even though social grants remained the primary and main source of income for those community members. Even so, the narratives of community members revealed what may be termed a 'transformation paradox' in the way the projects were implemented. The NGOs seemed to have replaced one kind of lop-sidedness in rural development (the exclusion of women) with another (the exclusion of men), by focussing on community projects that were 'culturally' deemed as 'women jobs'. In this way, the interventions appeared like a systematic attempt to do away with the 'feminisation of rural poverty' and entrench the 'feminisation of rural development interventions'.

The study concludes from these and other findings, that the key to understanding the significance and impact of Third Sector-supported development interventions in the rural arena – especially in the Eastern Cape context – is to go beyond the proliferation of NGOs and NGO-supported projects – and the broad sweep of advocacy that underpins it – and pay equally robust attention to systematically studying how these projects resonate at the grassroots, especially from a beneficiary perspective.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADPs   Area Development Programmes

AIDS   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ANC   African National Congress

CBO   Community Based Organisation

DAC   Development Assistance Committee

DC   Development Cooperation

DFID   Department for International Development

DSD   Department of Social Development

ESAP   Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

FGD   Focus Group Discussion

GEAR   Growth Employment and Redistribution Programme

GRO   Grassroots Organisations

GRSO   Grassroots Supporting Organisations

HIV   Human Immune Virus

ICC   International Criminal Court

ICDP   Integrated Community Development Plan

IDP   Integrated Development Plan

IMF   International Monetary Fund

MDGs   Millennium Development Goals

NDA   National Development Agency

NGO   Non-Governmental Organisation

NPO   Non-Profit Organisation

OECD   Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

RDP   Reconstruction and Development Programme

RDF   Rural Development Framework

RSA   Republic of South Africa

SL   Sustainable Livelihoods

SLA   Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

SLF   Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

SURUDEC Sustainable Rural Development in the Eastern Cape

UK   United Kingdom

UN   United Nations

US   United States

WV   World Vision

WVI   World Vision International

WVSA   World Vision South Africa

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The concept of "development" has witnessed differing iterations and mutations over the centuries. However, it was not until the mid-20th century that "rural" development began to occupy a central place on the socio-economic and political agendas of developing countries. Towards the end of the 20th century, especially since the 1980s, global attention on the development of the rural sector saw an unprecedented increase in the number of local and international conferences, new journals as well as organisations and institutions that were all explicitly advocating for policies and programmes that would bring the rural sector into the mainstream of development (Ukpong 1993:51). Historically, rural development was viewed as the responsibility of the public sector (governments), but soon attention began to be focused on the other sectors as well, but especially the private sector, due in part to government's failure to adequately play its assumed role in development. Interest in the role of the 'third sector' came later on (Corry 2010:11).

Coined by Amitai Etzioni (1978:24) the term 'third sector' refers to "an alternative sector separate from and balancing the state and the market, themselves considered as separate sectors". It comprises charities, NGOs, self-help groups, social enterprises, networks and clubs. The British government uses the term "third sector" to distinguish such organisations from the two other sectors of the economy: the public sector (government) and the private sector (businesses) (NAO 2009). This

means that, properly viewed, a country's economy consists of three sectors: the public sector, the private sector and the "third sector" (Corry (2010:12).

This study focuses on the "third sector", in particular, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – a sector that has for the past few decades played a visible role in developing countries, due in part to their "unique way" of enhancing participatory development initiatives (Ukpong 1993:52; United Nations, 1988) and providing a link between resources that are available in the public and private sectors with the local populations who often do not have immediate or direct access to those resources (Adams 2001:1). Their "proximity" to the rural populace becomes, therefore, an important trait that ensures that they are taken seriously in contemporary analysis of development facilitation and enablement.

Yet, there is a scarcity of systematic studies evaluating the impact of the Third Sector in development. This reality becomes puzzling when it is noted that NGOs typically serve, as stated earlier, as a channel of resources between the resource-rich and the resource-poor, and control resources amounting to billions of U.S. Dollars in public and private funding. The assumption that they are effective contributors towards development began to be questioned in the late 1990s amidst calls to find appropriate methodologies for understanding what motivates them and what impacts they were making (see Ellis and Gregory 2008). Some scholars, like Roelofs (1995:1), even suggested that the Third Sector organisations were nothing but a "protective layer for capitalism" – part of capitalism's stratagem to disguise its ruthless exploitation of society. Third Sector organisations themselves began to be aware of the need for self-evaluation during this period, but this was essentially to assess their effectiveness for organisational learning and developmental planning

purposes (Edwards and Hulme 1995; Ellis and Gregory 2008, Harlock, 2013). Roelof's insinuations in some ways spell an important research agenda.

In South Africa the pre-democratic era saw the crucial need for third sector organisations (in the form of NGOs) in communities that were denied access to resources by the oppressive government. However, after 1994, new priorities began to be placed on the State's developmental agenda as driven by the needs of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). While the new government had a mandate to take over the space that NGOs occupied in the underprivileged communities (Harding 1994), it also meant that NGOs had to position themselves at the cutting edge of the new government's developmental goals in order to remain viable (Hollowes 1999). Today, the country is replete with NGOs, both national and international. The rural and urban sectors have become a vibrant arena in which public, private and Third Sector organisations confront the impact of poverty, inequality, unemployment and disease.

It is based on the contradictory arguments about the role and place of NGOs in the development context that this thesis evaluates the impact of Third Sector (NGO) interventions, focusing on "sustainable development" projects of an international NGO (World Vision) and a local NGO (Ruliv). The study was conducted in three rural villages in the Eastern Cape where the selected projects supported by the NGOs under study are located.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The role of third sector organisations in sustainable rural development is highly contested. While these organisations are assumed to play a critical role in development, particularly in the poor rural communities, their impact and

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effectiveness have generated debates and criticisms. Although some scholars view Third Sector organisations such as NGOs as being drivers of development, with their visions and missions all about the alleviation of poverty and improving the livelihoods of people (see Guler 2008), others view them otherwise. This latter group of scholars argue that the impact of NGOs towards development is minimal. They argue that it is in fact a misnomer to say that all NGOs are good, are doing good and hence are a panacea to rural poverty. In fact, Roelofs (1995:1) suggests that NGOs only serve to strengthen capitalism: "[one] reason capitalism doesn't collapse despite its many weaknesses and valiant opposition movements because of the non-profit sector". In Roelofs' view, this is because NGOs impose developmental needs on the people using a top-down approach rather than bottom-up approach. Thus, Roelofs submits, while NGOs ostensibly bring about change, this may not be the kind of change that people at the grassroots really need. The change appears to benefit the NGOs more than it does the communities, Roelofs argues – an anomaly that has been captured in the cynical phrase, "the development industry" (Hulme and Edwards 1997:3). Put simply, the role of NGOs in sustainable development is questioned.

Beyond the debates, the reality remains that third sector organisations do indeed occupy a vital space in the development needs of many communities, mainly the poor in the rural areas. It is however worth emphasising that the third sector is not only limited to rural communities but extends its services to urban areas. This study has chosen to focus more on the rural communities because their needs are more acute than those of the urban communities. The point therefore is to understand how they operate in this space, and how such understanding can shape a broader understanding of factors that impinge upon effective role performance. In the specific case of South Africa, government has gone beyond recognising the role of NGOs

and accepting them as development partners; it has facilitated the establishment of agencies, such as the National Development Agency (NDA), and other institutional frameworks (see chapter 3) to ensure that NGOs continue to serve as a "bridge" between resources and those who need them.

For a long period of time, Third Sector organisations, in particular, NGOs, have been hailed as drivers of economic development and have been perceived as the universal solution to the problem of poverty (Mercer 1999:247). Their importance was further highlighted through their inclusion in world forums. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank also regarded them as "development partners" (Leite 2001:1). According to one report:

> Partnerships with local NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) enable donors to reach out to otherwise inaccessible regions and excluded communities and to deliver humanitarian assistance. This is because NGOs tend to work effectively with highly vulnerable groups and because their staff is largely local. In situations where donors are obliged to suspend their own developmental assistance operations, working with NGOs is often the only option. (OECD 2009:64).

Todaro and Smith (2010:560) also agree that the capabilities of NGOs place them in a better position to be solely responsible and execute programmes that drive development and alleviate poverty. The fact that these organisations are close to communities helps to mobilise the kind of social action and sense of obligation to deal with the problems of the really poor. A more hyperbolic allusion to the importance of NGOs is the notion that they are bound to succeed where governments have failed (see Hsu 2011; Hsu 2010). Hsu (2010) articulates the praise of the Dutch Government thus:

> Much of the actual development work on the ground is not done by governments but by NGOs. They are an important channel for many

governments. NGOs can fight poverty in countries where it is difficult to work with the governments either because there is no government to approach or the government pursues extremely bad policies. Another advantage of working with NGOs is that they often collaborate with local partners, who know the needs of local communities and their culture. This kind of expertise is essential if projects are to lead to a reduction of poverty in the long term.

The metaphor of a 'bridge' has also been used to describe the role of NGOs. According to Edwards (2011:11), NGOs are natural bridges, who because of their "intermediary" location in and between different societies and institutions, can work across various levels and strategies for action. Remarkably, however, Edwards warns that "bridging" is fraught with paradoxes: a bridge can fail in its purpose if the agency that plays this role does not carefully explore the neglected middle ground and create genuine connections between the two.

Sentiments such as those of Edwards have been expressed in different ways since the early-to-late 1990s, and have become more prominent in recent years, especially with regard to the need to evaluate the achievements of NGOs. Davies (2000) has noted that despite the "dramatic" increase in the amount of development funding channelled through NGOs by governmental, bilateral and multilateral agencies, their activities are relatively under-evaluated – with most "evaluations" typically being in the form of project reports and financial audits (Riddell, 1990) It is a situation, Davies argues, that has led to public concerns over the real achievements of NGOs.

The contemporary discursive terrain is thus marked, on the one hand, by praise for the role of NGOs as "bridges" between resources and those who need them. On the other hand, it is characterised by concerns about a dearth of evaluative studies as well as possible ideological underpinnings and complex operational dynamics that ultimately might work against the role effectiveness of NGOs (see Roelofs 1995,

Ukpong 1993). The imperative is to deepen the knowledge base about this sector, such that one understands at a practical level how the Third Sector actually supports – or even subverts – sustainable rural development.

Against this background, this study sought to evaluate food security programmes of two NGOs, focusing on specific projects in three rural Eastern Cape villages. The evaluation sought to highlight factors that ultimately impinge on the role and effectiveness of NGOs within the context of sustainable rural development.

1.3 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

i. What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development, and how do the modes of project implementation impact on project viability?

ii. How effective are the non-governmental organisation sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods?

iii. What factors impinge on the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects?

1.4 Research aim and objectives

The central aim of the thesis is to evaluate the effectiveness of Third Sector interventions in sustainable rural development, focusing on the food security programmes of two NGOs, as implemented in three rural Eastern Cape villages. The specific objectives are as follows:

i. To identify the projects supported by the selected non-governmental organisations within the context of sustainable rural development and to find out how the modes of project implementation impact on their viability.

ii. To measure the effectiveness of non-governmental organisation sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods.

iii. To identify factors that impinge on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these projects.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study highlights the effectiveness and impact of Third Sector organisations in particular NGOs in sustainable rural development. NGOs have for a long time been operational in mainly the developing countries but their unique yet so significant contribution to development is not measured. These organisations are believed to be the drivers of development more than governments yet there is a dearth of independent empirical studies backing such claims. Even so, some of the criticisms levelled against NGOs are peddled as insinuations and anecdotes, with no supporting scientific data. The present study fills this gap. At the theoretical level, the study also contributes empirical evidence to support some of the assumptions embedded in the Sustainable Livelihoods framework which posits that particular livelihood assets or forms of capital are accessed by different households and used to construct livelihood strategies. This study informs of how rural communities can sustain their livelihoods through the assets or capitals which are available to them such as human capital, financial capital, social capital, physical capital and natural capital.

1.6 Organisation of the study

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter two presents the review of literature pertaining to third sector organisations with particular reference to South Africa. While third Sector organisations have been hailed as drivers of economic development and have been perceived as a universal panacea to the problem of poverty, there have been public concerns over the real achievements of these organisations. Despite the dramatic increase in the amount of development funding channelled through NGOs by governmental, bilateral and multilateral agencies rural people still continue living in poverty, so what are these organisations doing? The chapter presents the contestations between those who regard the third sector as beneficial and those who regard it as another waste of resources.

Chapter three focusses on the different paradigms and concepts that have evolved around the concept of development starting from around the 1950s to date. The following chapter, chapter four presents the theoretical framework and conceptual framework which have been used in the analyses and presentation of findings. The main theoretical framework used in this study is the Sustainable Livelihoods concept. This concept is supported by the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. While the Sustainable Livelihoods concept is invaluable in informing development and monitoring development initiatives, the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria brings in the actual standard of measure for the success or failure of development projects. Used together, the two concepts guided the research on the evaluation of NGO supported projects. Chapter five is a sociological portrait of the two communities under study as well as profiles of the two NGOs involved.

It describes the characteristics of the communities as well as giving out profiles of the two organisations selected for the study. Chapter six presents the various methods and methodologies that were used to collect data for the study. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the form of focus groups, key informant interviews, semi-structured in-depth interviews and a mini-survey. The chapter also justifies the choice of these methods and highlights how their shortcomings were addressed. The following two chapters (seven and eight) were devoted for the presentation of the empirical data of the study, with chapter seven presenting the first question of the study as stated in section 1.3 of this chapter. Chapter eight presents findings on the third sector interventions and rural development in communities supported by the NGOs under study. It presents findings on the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the projects to the rural communities and also presents the criteria for measuring effectiveness. The final chapter, chapter nine which is a summary, discussion and conclusion chapter assists the readers to comprehend with the research findings. It summarises the whole thesis in line with the objectives and conceptual framework and makes sense of the whole research. It also includes some recommendations, the thesis' contribution to knowledge and some areas for further research inquiry.

1.7 Writing style

This thesis has adopted the UK English style of writing and has used the APA style of reference as required by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at the University of Fort Hare.

CHAPTER TWO

NGOS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT INTERMEDIATION: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

There is a plethora of literature about the Third Sector in development, particularly that of sustainable rural development. Most of this literature focuses on how the Third Sector has been significant in working within the developing countries which still have very high poverty rates. This chapter traces the loci of thinking on this subject. Development practitioners have noted how the developing countries, mainly the African states have failed to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and are faced with challenges to transform and improve the livelihoods of their citizens. According to Lewis and Kanji (2009:8) it is due to the failures of state-led development that influenced the international donor community, in particular, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to seek alternative means to assist poor. The Third Sector emerged as the only alternative after the private sector proved to be too corporate and market-oriented to be fully engaged. The Third Sector originates from the fact that the world of institutions can be divided in three ways: the first sector is the government (public) sector, the second being the economic (private) sector and the third group are the civil society organisations that do not fit into either of the two sectors (Lewis and Kanji 2009:8).

Green and Haines (2008:259) trace the history of Third Sector organisations to the failure of the Green Revolution. It led people to be critical of large aid-funded government projects that were meant to promote development. Government bureaucracies were accused of mismanaging the aid and turning it for their own use.

It was further alleged that there was little evidence that the poor actually benefited from the projects. Because of this, the new trend for the aid community was to form partnerships directly with community based organisations and bypass the national governments entirely. The amount of aid channelled in this manner doubled over the years such that even the multilateral and bilateral aid organisations were using the same method. NGOs were thus seen as an alternative institutional approach to development. The rise of the Third Sector as a strong institutional alternative was an indication that the central government and the private sector lacked the capacity to deal with the challenge of poverty alleviation.

2.2 Third Sector Organisations

The Third Sector is by nature supposed to be 'not-for-profit', voluntary and non-governmental. It is thus both a group of organisations and a social space between government and the market (Lewis and Kanji 2009:9). Shah (2005:16) thus describes this sector as comprising: charities, self-help groups, community based organisations, civil society groups, social enterprises, charities and NGOs. NGOs are a subset of this wider family of Third Sector organisations although it is generally used as the umbrella term for all the different types of organisations within the third sector. In this framework, the umbrella term NGOs will also be used to refer to the different groups and organisations that fall under the Third Sector.

Having identified the Third Sector as the alternative meant that the NGOs received funds from the international community for development projects and intervention. The failure by the state gave rise to NGOs in assuming developmental responsibilities that were the domain of the government (Michelo 2007:1). Since then, the Third Sector, in particular NGOs, working in development increased their

profiles at local, national and international levels. They are recognised as important and high profile actors in the field of international development both as service providers to the poor and vulnerable communities as well as campaigning policy holders. Although present the world over, they are more pronounced in the developing countries mainly because these countries are still faced with challenges such as high rates of poverty and high levels of illiteracy which are key factors that hinder development. However, it is not all doom and gloom because, according to some reports, African countries did make some steady progress toward attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (see MDG 2013). It should also be pointed out that NGOs are also active in a wide range of more roles, such as emergency response, conflict resolution, human rights and democracy building as in the case of South Africa where NGOs were involved in the fight against apartheid.

Studies show that the numbers of NGOs have grown dramatically in Africa and around the world. In South Africa alone, there are more than 100 000 registered NGOs (Matthews 2017). NGOs have become a powerful player in politics and development facilitated by the increasing funding from public and private grants (McGann and Johnstone 2006). The funding of NGOs comes from different sources and is also distributed and redirected in every possible way to try and alleviate poverty and suffering all over the world. Although the presence of NGOs seems to be everywhere, they still remain a challenge to fully understand their phenomenon because they are very diverse in nature, playing different roles in different countries. While NGOs are supposedly independent organisations that are not run by government and also not for profit, some of them receive a large amount of funding from governments and companies, and therefore have acquired the characteristics of the professionalised private sector. This makes them rather complex to fully

comprehend. According to Lewis and Kanji (2009), this has generated complex debates about who these NGOs really are as well as trying to find suitable approaches to analyse their contribution to development.

NGOs are a complex mixture comprising large or small, formal or informal, bureaucratic or flexible, businesses or charities and conservatives or radicals. When it comes to funding, the majority are externally funded while others are locally funded. Some many funders and thus affluent and well-resourced while others on the other hand merely struggle to survive. In terms of human resources, some NGOs have highly professionalised staff while others are dependent on volunteers and community support members (Lewis and Kanji 2009:4). In addition to the above, Hall-Jones (2006) states that NGOs also differ in terms of policy, where some focus on a single policy objective like HIV/AIDS, while others may have multiple policies like the eradication of poverty, focusing on objectives such as education, health and nutrition. Despite the complexity and controversy of who and what comprises an NGO, NGOs are seen and accepted as significant contributors to the development process by governments and official agencies (Adams 2001:1). They have been hailed as the universal solution to poverty hence their choice as alternatives to state-led development and their inclusion in the world forums.

In the developing countries, some NGOs gained legitimacy because they were part of the struggles against dictatorship or because they provided support and assistance towards independence from colonialism. In South Africa, for example, the support for locals had an impact on the demise of the apartheid regime (Hall-Jones 2006:157). NGOs were actively involved in assisting South Africans in various ways, which eventually saw the end of the apartheid regime.

2.3 The rise of NGOs in development

NGOs assumed a greater role and profile in development from the late 1980s. At this moment, donors viewed them as being able to bring fresh solutions to the long standing challenges of development problems. NGOs brought new concepts such as participation, empowerment, gender and a variety of people-centred approaches which had not been tried before and were at that time viewed as the solutions to complex development issues. They were seen as a 'quick-fix' to the disappointments that had been left by the state-led development programmes (Lewis 2008:25).

By the early 1990s NGOs had gained more prominence in development and moved into mainstream position in development policy. By the mid-1990s NGOs became the most 'favoured child' of the development donors (Edward and Hulme 1995). Due to their interaction with international organisations, they also began to be slowly acknowledged by governments and multilateral institutions such that they began to see them with a different eye as more important actors in development than they had been previously viewed. In South Africa, they began to be recognised as partners in socio-economic development by the democratic government.

Lewis and Kanji (2009) argue that the rise to prominence of NGOs towards the late 1980s was caused by four clusters of interrelated factors. Firstly was the theoretical 'impasse' in development theory. Early theories of modernisation and dependency theory which had once dominated the development ideas for decades had lost its appeal after realising that they did not bring any solutions in the developing countries. The emergence of NGOs at this time were thus seen as sources of alternative ideas which would open up new theories and practice which would be of use to those countries that were still under developed. Development practitioners

were excited about NGOs bringing new ideas so much that they became attracted to the concept of NGO-led 'people-centred' approaches to development.

The second factor according to Lewis and Kanji (2009) is the issue that governments had failed dismally in the fight against poverty and had rather contributed to growing levels of bureaucracy and corruption. The so called 'intervention' was not reaching the targeted poor of the poorest yet the gap between the rich and the poor was growing and this was an issue of concern to the development practitioners. NGOs then became an alternative to government and donors began to increase their funding with the hope that NGOs would be more effective and reach out to the needy thus reducing the high levels of poverty.

Thirdly, NGOs contributed positively by bringing in new ideas to development. As the development debates began to expand and include concepts such as the environment, gender and social development, NGOs became active and moved closer to the aid system. Lewis and Gardner (2000) use an example of how NGOs were influential in campaigning for poverty reduction which made the UK 1997 White Paper on International Development so popular. Other NGOs also became very influential in their own campaigns in different countries.

The fourth factor towards the prominence of NGOs was caused by the end of the Cold War. At the end of the war, NGOs provided a flexible framework for a new type of development work – to reconstruct and reshape those former socialist societies and economies which were then transforming to liberal capitalist societies. The new space that was left by the collapse of the totalitarian regimes was taken up by some citizens in these countries as organizing spaces creating new forms of associational

life and civil societies. These new organisations needed aid and were of course supported by the Western aid (Lewis and Gardner 2000).

Edwards and Hulme (1995) note that, by the early 1990s the development industry was characterised by the 'new policy agenda'. This new agenda is described as combining the so called alternative development in the form of participation, people-centred and empowerment together with the neoliberal ideas of privatisation, democratic governance. Once again NGOs were identified by the mainstream development organisations like the World Bank as the suitable vehicles for advocating for good governance both as public actors supporting democratic processes in the political atmosphere and market based actors supporting economic liberalisation. This would achieve efficient service delivery more than the state.

While the above show how NGOs rose to the state they are in today, Turner and Hulme (1997) also state that 'new public management' also contributed significantly. New public management was all about reforming the delivery of services with the emphasis of markets, incentives and targets. The idea was to improve service delivery and try to match the standards of the private sector and so some ideologies from the private sector were adopted leading to new policy agenda. Some of the adopted ideologies include: the use of agency contracting to link performance and incentives, use of transparent indicators to measure output and purchaser/provider split in public service. This therefore meant that new opportunities were opened in NGOs to be involved in service provision since government structures and roles were reduced. This was a breakthrough for NGOs because from then on they became partners with government and have worked alongside in development issues to improve the lives of the poor people.

According to Hall-Jones (2006), the journey of NGOs has taken several milestones, from the humble beginnings of being mere volunteers providing humanitarian aid to being partners with government and advocates for the poor. From working with communities at the grassroots level to being policy makers, their growth in size and number is also worth mentioning as well their struggles with funds from volunteers to funding from multi-national organisations like the World Bank and IMF. NGOs have moved from being in the background to having a presence in the midst of world politics and exerting their power and influence in policy making with the hope of making the world a better place for all. The question one might ask is, what contributions do these organisations bring to development if they are so highly spoken of?

2.4 Contributions of NGOs to the development discourse

Third sector organisations, in particular NGOs, are hailed as the drivers of economic development and are perceived as the universal solution to the problem of poverty (Mercer 1999:247). Their importance is recognised through their inclusion in world forums and their acknowledgement by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank as development partners they have been looking for in the fight against poverty (Leite 2001:1). NGOs have been recognised as organisations which will succeed where governments have failed in fifty years of 'developmentalism'. Hsu (2011) supports this point when he also states that NGOs are key actors in development assistance related project implementation, fulfilling critical roles on the frontline of combating abject poverty and world hunger and promoting Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs). In South Africa, the democratic government also

acknowledges the strong role played by NGOs and regards them as partners in socio-economic development.

Lewis and Kanji (2009:16) assert that when NGOs became popular in the late 1980s, they appealed to different sections of the development community for various reasons. For the international donors who had been failed by the governments' ineffectiveness, NGOs were an alternative with potential to deliver positive outcomes in the context of development agendas. They had the capacity and ability to implement local-level development and grassroots participation. Cernea (1988:8) also postulates that NGOs recognised the centrality of people in development policies. They were aware that development was meant for the people and as such those people had to be involved in their own development. For these reasons, they were a better option to work with than government and the private sector.

Furthermore, NGOs fostered local participation because they were more locally rooted organisations. They understood the needs of the local people better and were therefore much closer to the impoverished and marginalised people than the government and the private sector. People from the marginalised regions were often left out by the government mainly because there was a shortage in resources for service delivery and decision-making was done by the elites meaning they are the ones who benefitted and the poor were then left out. NGOs were therefore seen as filling in the gaps that were left by the government as supported by Robbins (2001:128) when he states that: *It has been noted how there are many NGOs than ever before trying to fill in the gaps that government that either will not or cannot.*

In essence they were able to reach out to more people than the government more especially the poor in the marginalised regions. In support of this assertion is the fact

that in the 1980s, the World Bank actually realised that it was much better to work with NGOs because they were more effective and less corrupt than the typical government channels (Berthoud 2001:76).

Todaro and Smith (2008:560) state that the capabilities of NGOs and community based organisations (CBOs) place them in a better position to be solely responsible and execute programmes that drive development and alleviate poverty. The fact that these organisations are close to communities helps to mobilize the kind of social action and sense of obligation to deal with the problems of the really poor.

Furthermore, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank beautifully remarked about the NGOs for the work they do in developing countries. The OECD report (2009) remarkably stated that:

> *Partnerships with local NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) enable donors to reach out to otherwise inaccessible regions and excluded communities and to deliver humanitarian assistance. This is because NGOs tend to work effectively with highly vulnerable groups and because their staff is largely local. In situations where donors are obliged to suspend their own developmental assistance operations, working with NGOs is often the only option ..."* (OECD 2009:64).

For the above reasons, Hall-Jones (2009) asserts that public surveys indicate that NGOs often have public trust as compared to government and that makes them a useful proxy for societal concerns. NGOs were operating as a counterweight to balance public interests, more specifically those of the more disadvantaged groups against the excesses of the state and the market. In addition to this, NGOs have the ability to maintain institutional independence and political neutrality. Some NGOs are able to stand their grounds even in highly political situations and only do what they believe will benefit the poor people. They do not take political factions which may jeopardize their work but they work in communities which are in need and assist

members of that community regardless of the political association. This again is an added advantage of the NGO neutrality because unlike government which has been accused of neglecting certain communities due to their political affiliation, they work with anyone who is in need.

McGann and Stone (2006:225) further add that NGOs have shown leadership in promoting sustainable community development. They are capable of mobilizing the populations in the poor and remote communities and empower these communities with the ability to regain control of their lives. In addition, they can carry out projects more efficiently at lower costs than government agencies. Because most NGOs are aimed at reducing human suffering and developing poor communities, their roles include counselling and support services, raising awareness of problematic issues, advocacy and educating the people. This is achieved through activities such as capacity building and self-reliance done by funding projects, contributing to awareness as well as promoting the self-organisation of various groups. The point here is that NGOs are able to provide microfinance, capacity-building and self-reliance which are essential for sustainable development.

According to (Lewis 2007), NGOs also play a crucial role in service delivery. Although regarded as the third sector which is not necessarily obliged to deliver services, as compared to government whose obligation is to provide services to its citizens, NGOs however find themselves actively involved in this type of work. The service delivery role played by the NGOs involves: providing healthcare, microfinance, agricultural extension as well as human rights. It is argued that service delivery work has since improved as NGOs have been contracted by governments to carry out specific tasks in return for payment. Through partnership with governments, NGOs are able to carry out tasks which they could not do on their own. Partnership

with governments, the private sector and donors enables NGOs to even be more effective in assisting the needy because these partnerships bring in more resources than what the NGOs would normally have. According to Seabe (2010:8) governments and NGOs are perceived to be in a complementary relationship; governments provide the finance and NGOs deliver the public goods. This being the case implies that NGOs are able to reach out to more people in need of any form of intervention especially in the rural areas. In fact, Lewis and Kanji (2009) argued that NGOs were once seen as a cost-effective and efficient alternative to public sector service delivery.

The World Bank defines NGOs as "private organizations that pursue activities to remove suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social or undertake community development services" (World Bank 2005:12). In brief the definition above summarises the general role played by NGOs. Even though NGOs are highly diverse organizations, the one common goal they have is that they do not focus on short term targets; they usually devote themselves to long-term issues that tend to have an impact on people's lives. Their role can be characterised as three main clusters: service delivery, advocacy and partnership. While these may have been mentioned already, this section will focus deeply on how NGOs play each of these three roles in development. It should be noted that these roles vary distinctly but in some cases some NGOs tend to combine the roles and be involved in more than one role (Lewis and Kanji 2009:92).

2.4.1 Service Delivery

Service delivery is an obligatory role of the state, meaning that government has a mandatory role to look after its people by rendering services appropriately, but in many cases especially in the developing countries government tends to fail its people by either providing poor service delivery or lack of service delivery at all. It is because of such incompetency by government that NGOs come in to intervene to remove that suffering. In fact, Carroll (1992) quoted in Lewis and Kanji (2009) explains it clearly when she states that the implementation of service delivery by NGOs is important simple because many people in developing countries face a situation in which a wide range of vital basic services are unavailable or of poor quality. NGOs have mushroomed all over in the developing countries trying to assist the poor where government has failed.

However, while government is being made scapegoat for the growth in numbers of NGOs, it should also be remembered that neo-liberalism also has its contribution towards this growth. Neo-liberal ideologies were to minimize and limit state involvement in direct service provision like health and education. Under the instruction of the World Bank and IMF known as the Washington Consensus, most developing countries were told to decrease the role of government as service providers. The 1980s and 1990s' Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) prescribed by the leading donors resulted in African governments cutting down on service provision in order to reduce government expenditure but this had serious implications. This move left the citizens without basic services such as health and education, and on seeing this happening NGOs which were capable moved in to pick up the pieces and fill the gaps which had been left by the government. In fact, NGOs

and other organizations received funding as alternatives to the state. Countries such as Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda and Malawi were mainly affected in the health sector and church-based NGOs and other non-state organizations took over providing healthcare services to the rural people who had been left in the open. Up to this day, some rural areas in these countries still receive their health care services from the non-state organizations (Robson and White 1997).

In other situations however, NGOs become service providers after being actually contracted by the government to provide the specific services to the people. In cases where government has funds but no capacity to reach the intended beneficiaries, there is a tendency to contract NGOs to provide the service and the government pays them for their services. NGOs are known to work well in grassroots development than government because of their flexibility, commitment and innovation as well as being cost-effective and so government would contract them to initiate projects of this kind. Shah (2005:5) further adds that in some countries, government officials have set up their own NGOs as a way to work more creatively, access different resources and gain new opportunities. This goes to prove that working with NGOs does indeed yield better results than dealing directly with government. Despite all the positivity that NGOs have on their service delivery role there are also some major concerns about it.

Although NGOs have been argued to be better service providers than government, it should be noted that not all of them hold this high reputation. While some NGOs have proved to be highly effective and efficient, others have been found to perform poorly. In a study carried out by Robinson and White (1997) on service provision, it was found that NGOs did not always perform to standard. They were often challenges such as quality control, limited sustainability, poor coordination and

general amateurism. Robinson and White (1997) point out that for every case of an effective NGO, there is a possibility to point to another NGO which has administrative challenges hence become less effective. In a case like this, choosing an NGO to deliver services will be more about cutting down on the costs rather than delivering quality services. However, Shah (2005) argues that donors choose NGOs because they believe that NGOs will function to mediate and balance the power of the state and market and maintain the democratic dignity of the state. Furthermore, there is an assumption that external donor agencies will nurture and strengthen the Third Sector in the developing countries.

Another cause of concern about NGOs being service providers is that, they define themselves as being 'independent from government and not-for-profit organisations' and are characterised by altruism and volunteerism. But their contractual relationship with government now seems to be driving them to being more of the private organisations than the voluntary sector. Robbins (2002) also asserts that NGOs must operate as non-profit groups and are also meant to be politically independent yet they receive funds from the government and other institutions. He further argues that this must be difficult because some of these institutions may have direct or indirect political weight on decisions and actions that NGOs make. In other words, when NGOs provide services under government 'contract' government has control of how and where services are provided and in that way NGOs are no longer independent and promoting the interests of the poor but rather operating under the instruction of the government. In support of this assertion is Hulme and Davids (1997) in Lewis and Kanje (2009:94), who state that this relationship between NGO and government is 'too close for comfort'. Their concern is on NGOs losing their independence and autonomy because of their close relationships with government

and other donors. They become very dependent on them such that there is a danger of compromising their legitimacy through following what the donors and government say instead of doing what they feel is right and meeting the needs of the people. As a matter of fact, a study conducted in Pakistan by Bano in 2008 found that NGOs which had started off well on voluntary basis ended up losing touch with their localness once they were sponsored by donors or government. This then proves that donors or the government do have influence in decision making over the NGOs they support. Asamoah (2003) further states that, NGOs at times even face the dilemma of either violating their neutrality position or failing to provide services to the people to the extent that some have had to leave if they resist government instructions.

One key question raised in the concerns of the service delivery role of NGOs is 'how long are NGOs supposed to play this contract role in service provision?' One begins to wonder whether this arrangement temporarily exists while government has no capacity to provide the services itself and will come to an end once government is fully capacitated. Or is it a permanent solution by government to bridge the gap by using NGOs? Looking at it from the permanency angle may suggest that government acknowledge that they cannot cope without NGOs meaning that NGOs are part and parcel of the development process which could also explain the formulation of policies and frameworks explained in the earlier section of this chapter. However, others may see it rather as a way of encouraging governments to take a step back in its service delivery role and thus neglecting its obligation of providing services to its people (Lewis and Kanje 2009:96). Being that as it maybe, NGOs are playing an important role in filling the service delivery gap regardless of the concerns discussed. In fact, Shah (2005) contends that the rising numbers of NGOs should be regarded

as relating to the failures of state and market in providing all the requirements of society.

2.4.2 Advocacy

One World Trust writes "from the abolition of slavery, the drafting of the UN Charter and its subsequent formation through to the campaign for the International Criminal Court and the ban on the anti-personnel mines, NGOs have made a critical difference to our world". The above quotation briefly describes the advocacy role of NGOs. Advocacy involves being the 'voice of the voiceless' pertaining to issues that affect their well-being as defined by Lindenberg and Bryant (2001:173) as quoted in Lewis (2009) when he states that:

> *Advocacy work entails moving beyond implementing programs to help those in need, to actually taking up and defending the causes of others and speaking out in public on others' behalf. In our analysis of NGO advocacy we further define the term to refer specifically to speaking out for policy change and action that will address the root causes of problems confronted in development and relief work, and not simply speaking out to alert people of a problem in order to raise funds to support operational work.*

As described in the quotation above, NGOs have an adversarial role as watchdogs to ensure that government does not act in a manner that is detrimental to the population. Development NGOs try and find ways to influence and change policy in support of development objectives. They influence policy decisions from the stage of planning up until implementation stage, by becoming the mouthpiece of the local people and representing them. Advocacy also involves the mobilization of the public and organizing campaigns to raise awareness of issues to even more people and try to get them involved. According to Lewis and Kanji (2009) a good example of NGO advocacy and campaign is "The Jubilee 2000 Campaign'. This campaign encompassed NGOs, church groups, trade unions and other civil society groups and

their aim was to raise awareness about the problem of Third World Countries debt. It was a successful campaign which led to the cancellation of the debt at that point. Although it was a small amount cancelled it was a big relief to the affected developing countries who are still struggling to pay off the debt to this period. This move shows that NGO advocacy does help, even locally NGOs have done successful campaigns that have helped the poor and have also been able to influence government and other donors pertaining to policies that affect grassroots development.

Despite some success stories of NGOs as advocates of development there are also other disappointing scenarios. Edwards (1993) cited in Lewis 2009 postulates that NGO advocacy can fail due to lack of clear strategies, failure to build strong alliances and inabilities to come up with alternative ways of dealing with donors. NGOs are encouraged to work with each other and have strength in numbers if they want to run successful campaigns and bring the type of change which people will benefit from.

In addition to and closely related to the role of NGOs as advocates is also their role as watchdogs. NGOs play a very crucial role as monitors of policies which are either unimplemented or are poorly implemented. The idea is to make sure that all policies are followed properly by everyone regardless of their power. Lewis and Kanji (2009) give an example of such an NGO as the US-based NGO CorpWatch whose aim is to watch over corporate violations of human rights, environmental crimes, fraud and corruption all around the world in order to bring out global justice. Organizations such as these are very helpful as they usually pick out injustices done by governments on its citizens and tend to get away with it but with NGOs watching over them they try to implement their policies accordingly.

2.4.3 Partnership

Another fundamentally important role of NGOs is their partnership role. Lewis and Gardner (2008:9) define partnership as "an agreed relationship based on a set of links between two or more agencies within a project or programme usually involving a division of roles and responsibilities, a sharing of risks and the pursuit of joint objectives." As discussed earlier in this chapter, NGOs enter into partnership with various other institutions for different reasons. The important thing however is that they both have similar objectives. Partnerships can be between countries, donors, government, business and other civil society groups. The most common type of partnership with NGOs is normally between government and the private sector although other partnerships also exist. NGOs partner with governments and business so that they can acquire the necessary resources they need to help people and usually they lack capital and government always has capital but lacks the skills so they enter into a complementary partnership with the objectives of helping the people. Evans (1996) cited in Lewis and Kanji (2009) contends that rather than NGOs and government merely complementing each other's work or even competing against each other, a more useful relationship can be established if they reinforce each other based on division of labour and acceptance of their specified roles.

Theoretically, the three roles discussed above of service delivery, advocacy and partnership are essentially what NGOs do as organizational specialization but practically NGOs combine these roles so much that there is a thin line between service delivery and advocacy because one NGO can combine the two roles smoothly without even realizing that they are performing two different roles. Some NGOs however deliberately use service delivery as an entry point for the role of

advocacy. They first provide what the people need in order to gain their trust and legitimacy to do advocacy work. It is in fact argued that successful NGOs are those which combine their roles compared to those which specialize on one particular type of role.

2.5 Typology of NGOs

As discussed above, NGOs are a very complex mixture performing and combining various roles at a time. However, Korten (1990) classifies them into three categories which he terms generations: generation one, two and three. Each generation focuses on certain types of interventions. This section will thus deal with the different types of NGOs as according to Korten.

2.5.1 Generation One: Relief and Welfare NGOs

Generation one NGOs are those which are involved in humanitarian services. These provide relief and welfare services to immediate situations and needs. They tend to act quickly in responding to emergencies such as natural disasters, refugee situations, floods, famines and wars. Their objective is to provide immediate but temporary assistance through direct action such as the distribution of food, the fielding of health teams as well as the provision of shelter to give the victims a form of hope that they will survive till the next day. While this is part of the government mandate, response from government tends to be slow due in part to the lack of resources. NGOs on the other hand usually have the means to offer that urgently needed assistance and have become known as the humanitarian relief organisations. According to Korten (1990) these were the original roles of Northern NGOs such as Oxfam, Catholic Relief Services, CARE, Save the children and World Vision also began in that category.

Korten (1990) further argues that as these organisations brought their expertise to bear in non-disaster situations they gave birth to a first generation of private voluntary development assistance involving direct expression of a human desire to share with those less fortunate. However, while the type of assistance they offered was appropriate to an emergency situation, it created a special temporary need. It contributed little or nothing to the ability of the poor to meet their own needs on a sustained basis. While relief and welfare NGOs remain an essential part of humanity because they will forever be emergencies and there will always be those individuals in a community who will always rely on welfare services, but as a development strategy relief and welfare organisations offer little more than temporary alleviation of the symptoms of underdevelopment.

2.5.2 Generation two: Small-scale self-reliant local development NGOs

On realising the limitations of the relief and welfare organisations as a development strategy, generation two NGOs undertook to focus more on improving and uplifting communities to be self-sustainable. They achieve this through working with people at grassroots level in the form of community development style projects in areas such as preventative health, improved farming practices, local infrastructure and other community development strategies. They empower local people through skills development and education on how to harness the locally available resources for their own benefit. In addition to these they also provide them with the necessary resources to start up small projects which should at least generate some income for them or assist them towards their livelihoods. According to Korten (1990:119) the objective of generation two NGOs is to help communities realise their full potential through education, consciousness raising, small loans and the belief in themselves.

The main differences between the generation one and generation two NGOs is that generation two emphasises on local self-reliance with the intent that the benefits would be sustained beyond the period of NGO assistance. In most cases, second generation NGOs give priority to communities or vulnerable groups within these communities such as women, children, the disabled and the poor. Partnerships with local people are formed and they are provided with financial and other resources to form co-operatives and start up projects which will assist them for a long time in the future. The idea is to make these people self-reliant and not always rely on government or other organisations for their survival.

2.5.3 Generation three: Sustainable Systems development NGOs

This generation of NGOs looks beyond individual communities and tries to bring development at a bigger scale. As opposed to generation one and two NGOs which provide temporary and small scale intervention, generation three seeks permanent solutions to the development agenda by focusing on creating sustainable systems at local, national, regional and international level. This generation of NGOs evolved after realising that more needed to be done than what was offered by generation one and two NGOs. As already stated, generation one interventions are temporary in nature and although generation two seems more stable, research has proven that the intervention at this level is unsustainable especially when NGOs involved cease their operations. Projects at this level do not last as long they are expected therefore generation three organisations aim at more than that. In fact Korten (1990) states that at the heart of the realisation is the fact that when working on their own they cannot benefit many communities, and self-reliant development initiatives will not be achieved without support from government or other organisations. They therefore

seek to work with major national and international agencies with the aim of influencing policies. They have realised that they need to exert greater leadership in dealing with aspects of policies and this is achieved through focussing on facilitating sustainable changes on a wider scale of regional and national levels.

However, these generation three organisations are less directly involved with working with communities at grassroots level but rather they advocate for them and their needs. They become more involved with organisations (public and private) that control resources and formulate policies that have a lot of bearing on local development issues. Generation three NGOs cease operating as service delivery organisations but become more of catalysts in making the delivery of services to take place.

While Korten (1990) successful classified the NGOs into these three categories, it is worth noting that these three generations do not represent precisely defined categories and are appropriately applied to programmes than the whole organisation. Their intervention may sometimes overlap into another category for example one NGO can purely be defined as generation three yet some of its programmes may fit into generation one or two categories depending on how it responds to different needs. An NGO can start off by offering emergency services to people in a crisis which is typically generation one but after some time they begin to see the need for programmes of the second generation that will leave the community self-sustained after they leave them. However, these two generation efforts may prove futile without a generation three organisation that will advocate for the former generations' interventions. The table below gives a summary of the types of NGOs as discussed above and the key role players as well as how they operate.

Table 2.1: Types of NGOs and their development programme strategies

Type	First Generation	Second Generation	Third Generation
Defining features	Relief and Welfare	Small scale self-reliant local development	Sustainable systems development
Problem definition	Shortages of goods and services	Local inertia	Institutional and policy constraints
Time frame	Immediate	Project life	Indefinite long-term
Spatial scope	Individual or family	Neighbourhood or village	Region or nation
Chief actors	NGO	NGO + beneficiary organisations	All public and private institutions that define the relevant system.
Development education	Starving children	Community self-initiatives	Failures in interdependent systems
Management orientation	Logistics and management	Project management	Strategic management

Source: Adapted from Korten (1990:148)

Fisher (1998:4) on the other hand defined two types of NGOs in the Third World; the grassroots organisations (GROs) and grassroots supporting organisations (GRSOs). GROs are located in communities and have a local membership while GRSOs are located at the national or regional level and are staffed by professionals, and channel international funds to GROs. It is noteworthy that although NGOs are classified differently by the two scholars, the scope of their work is similar. For example, GROs are the generation two organisations while GRSOs are the generation three organisations. Fisher limited the classifications to those of the developing countries while Korten included the relief organisations mainly from the developed countries. NGOs have been broadly defined as 'organisations involved in development' with reference to the GROs (generation two according to Korten) because they have

locally based membership and work to develop their own communities hence being the main focus of the thesis. It focuses on the second generation NGOs or GROs which try to empower local communities to self-sustainability. Green and Haines (2008) also state that the community based NGOs have several strengths and weaknesses that should be considered; they are closer to the people and have a stronger sense of community needs. They can easily make rapid decisions and support local needs through their actions. Good as this may sound, there are usually some concerns about how they operate, for example, their size is usually a limiting factor and they are often fragmented in their approach to local problems. The following section focuses on the concerns of NGOs in development.

2.6 Critique of the third sector – Critical realism

It is without doubt to argue that NGOs as a sector have for the past few decades played a visible role in developing countries, due in part to their "unique way" of enhancing participatory development initiatives (Ukpong 1993:52; United Nations, 1988) and providing a link between resources that are available in the public and private sectors with the local populations who often do not have immediate or direct access to those resources (Adams 2001:1). Their "proximity" to the rural populace becomes, therefore, an important trait that ensures that they are taken seriously in contemporary analysis of development facilitation and enablement. However, there is a scarcity of systematic studies evaluating the impact of the Third Sector in development. This reality becomes puzzling when it is noted that NGOs typically serves, as stated earlier, a channel of resources between the resource-rich and the resource-poor, and control resources amounting to billions of U.S. Dollars in public

and private funding. Despite their success claims, some scholars began to critique their effectiveness in development endeavours.

 The assumption that they are effective contributors towards development began to be questioned in the late 1990s amidst calls to find appropriate methodologies for understanding what motivates them and what impacts they were making (see Ellis and Gregory 2008). Having been once regarded as the 'magic bullets' in development, criticism began to emerge about what exactly they were doing better than government and the private sector. In fact, evaluation evidence began to convince development donors that NGO performance had in many cases been over estimated (Lewis 2007:56). This had obvious implications on the NGOs as donors shifted their focus to recipient governments. This meant that donors were choosing to work directly with government departments by funding government policies and poverty reduction strategies. The 're-governmentalisation' of aid moved attention away from the NGOs and off the centre-stage which they had once occupied in the 1980s to the 1990s (Lewis and Kenji 2009:43). One may argue that donors had realised that NGOs were not the 'magic bullets' after-all and were not satisfied with their work, hence their move back to government implying that NGOs were not as effective as had been assumed.

Furthermore, some scholars contend that NGOs are not really who they make out be. They are portrayed as benevolent organisations whose whole aim is helping the poor yet in reality they have other hidden motives behind. Scholars like (Roelofs 1995) and (Temple 1997) suggested that the Third Sector organisations were nothing but a "protective layer for capitalism" – part of capitalism's stratagem to disguise its painful exploitation of society. They are viewed negatively as a continuation of colonial missionary traditions and handmaidens of the capitalist

destruction of the non-Western societies. They are further viewed as modernizers and destroyers of local economies and communities which were once based on age-old systems of reciprocity into which NGOs introduce undesirable Western values (Lewis and Kenji 2009). Roelofs and Temple's insinuations in some ways spell an important research agenda.

The arguments above suggest that despite singing praises about NGO performances, there came a time of realising that NGO work had been over stated after all. This came after evaluations proved that NGOs were not the 'magic-bullets' once assumed to have been and brought about the demise of the once popular and trusted NGO sector. However, this did not mean the end of the NGOs in development but their popularity began to slow down after this realization about them. NGOs still exist in both the developed and many developing countries and continue to serve the poor people as they used to do but they are no longer a 'favoured child' like the 1980s -1990s period. This thesis therefore tries to find out which of the above arguments about NGOs is true – are they effective in promoting sustainable development or are they used as a cover of capitalism to carry out other hidden missions. In a bid to understand about the operations of NGOs in South Africa, it would be relevant to look into how they developed in this country.

The following section will focus on the NGOs in South Africa prior to and after the attainment of democracy.

2.7 Historical perspectives on NGOs in South Africa
2.7.1 Role of NGOs prior to 1994

South Africa's history is rooted on apartheid. The apartheid ideology was characterised by racial discrimination and inequality prevailed. During apartheid,

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institutions were built along racial lines and served only the privileged members of society while excluding blacks and other minority groups and ensuring that they remained in under privileged positions. The under privileged groups were denied even the most basic services such as healthcare and education. Camay and Gordon (2000:107) quoted in Hendrickse (2008) postulate that:

> *The concept of racial discrimination and segregation has figured throughout the South African history and its impact has been since the 17th century, in society as a whole and in the evolution of civil society organisations. It has divided communities and affected their relative economic, political and social power and influence, as well as their respective ability to address community development issues. It has led to extreme disadvantage and suffering for South African people of colour, a consequence which will take generations to be remedied. Not only was racial discrimination applied by successive governments as a means of maintaining political control and economic exploitation, but it also led to huge disparities on the availability of financial and human resources which could be put to use by communities through civil society organisations. It has therefore accentuated their differential access to services such as education, health and other aspects of human welfare.*

The lack of basic services forced the third sector particularly NGOs to step in and assist those underprivileged groups who were excluded by the public sector. According to Mazibuko (2000) as quoted in Hendrickse (2008), The Black People's Convention is one example of such organisations that provided medical care to the black people in the excluded communities.

In addition to the local organisations were international donor organisations which were anti-apartheid and funded locals to fight against the government of the day. Kihato (2001) sums it all by stating that civil society organisations that mobilised against apartheid were favoured by international donor organisations. Kihato (2001) further suggests that countries such as Denmark and Sweden supported liberation movements while the United States of America and Britain provide education grants

to the underprivileged members of society. It ought to be mentioned that the relationship between donors and the recipient organisations was based on trust where the local organisations would decide what needed to be funded and the donors would pay out as long as it was anti-government.

According to Smith (2001) there was a dramatic increase in the number of local NGOs in the late 1980s and early 1990s because international donors were funding local development initiatives. The NGOs offered services that were denied the underprivileged communities such as support to trade union formations, legal welfare and development services as well as educating them on understanding the challenges they faced in negotiating with the apartheid regime. Camay and Gordon (2000) assert that South Africa saw numerous third sector organisations dealing with basic adult education, vocational and small business skills, life skills as well other skills related to job creation. Also in the early 1990s religious communities of Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jews began to establish their own organisations that protected their own interests against oppression (Camay and Gordon 2000).

It is therefore worth noting that the development and operation of third sector organisations in South Africa is closely linked to its political history of apartheid (Mazibuko 2000). However, there were significant changes after the democratic government took over and that had serious implications for NGOs.

2.7.2 South African NGOs in the new democratic dispensation

After the 1994 elections there was a new government in power which was democratically elected and brought an end to apartheid. The new democratic government of South Africa under the leadership of the ANC brought about fundamental changes to the governing of the country. One of its priorities was to

redress the inequalities that had left the country scarred. The new government under a new constitution also changed the form and function of the state which involved the establishment of structures and institutions that would facilitate effective and efficient service delivery to all (Levy and Tapscott 2001). Since the abolition of apartheid, one of the key objectives of the South African government has been to reduce the level of poverty and to improve the quality of life for all South Africans (MDG Country Report, 2013:21).

Upon attaining democracy, major donors also diverted their funds from NGOs to the government following the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which was meant to include the formerly excluded groups. With all these changes that were taking place under the new democratic government, the third sector NGOs were left in the open with no clear direction of where to go to or what to do next. New priorities were placed on the state's developmental agenda as driven by the needs of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. The new government had a mandate to take over the space previously occupied by NGOs in the underprivileged communities. These changes meant that NGOs had no positions and had to find new means to maintain their existence. They had to align themselves with the government's developmental goals in order to remain viable and continue to work with previously disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

Owing to the change in the governing system, many NGOs were faced with significant challenges as to their continued existence and Mehl (1995) even questioned their future in South Africa. Mehl (1995) felt that it was the end for NGOs as the new government would provide all that the people ever needed (Mehl 1995:39). NGOs further suffered setbacks from a brain-drain during this transitional period when those who occupied the leadership positions shifted from this sector to

work for the government. It meant that NGOs were left with no leadership as well as the skilled personnel who had joined the new government. However, Anderson (1995) argued otherwise. This author insisted that despite a change in government it was impossible for South Africa to work alone to provide for the social wellbeing of the whole country. Many areas of the country had been severely affected and impoverished by the apartheid government such that the new government could not easily redress and remedy the situation. As a result, the third sector NGOs were still needed to provide social services immediately after the 1994 elections (Anderson 1995).

Other scholars (DuToit 1994, Kihato 1999, Smith 2001), also argue that some organisations continued to exist after they changed their strategies around soon after realising that apartheid would be coming to an end. The anti-apartheid NGOs repositioned themselves and decided to work with the new government. They began to offer complementary roles to the state in the form of policy formulation and implementation and the improvement of service delivery being delivered by the government. However those NGOs which were relying on political skills than technical ability to deliver services were not able to survive. The above mentioned challenges encountered by NGOs during the transition period indicate that despite the change from an apartheid government to a democratic government, the need for NGOs continued to exist hence their presence up to the present day.

NGOs were slowly accepted in the new democratic government to the extent that they were made partners in development initiatives. In order to maintain good working relations, legislative and policy frameworks were established to accommodate NGOs in government. This was to create a political environment that facilitated the development of a collaborative relationship between NGOs and the

state (Hendrickse 2008). The following section focuses on these policy frameworks and how they were meant to be implemented in order to fully engage and monitor the activities of civil society organisations and NGOs in development.

2.8 Institutional frameworks for NGOs in South Africa

South Africa has witnessed a complete transformation on the roles of NGOs from one extreme to the other. At first they were anti-government but now they are working in partnership with the government. Prior to 1994 NGOs which existed are mainly those which were fighting against the government of the day to end apartheid. However, the post 1994 NGOs are working with the government to build and develop the country. During the transition to democracy, NGOs found themselves in a dilemma because their cause of existence which was fighting apartheid had been met. Funding from the donors began to dwindle and be withdrawn as donors were instead funding the democratic government with its new programs which were trying to redress the past injustices of poverty and inequality. This therefore meant that NGOs had to find ways to fit in and survive and also to continue getting funds from donors and some of them found that working with the government was the only way to continue their existence.

Government on the other hand also realised that the damage left behind by the previous government was beyond their means hence they decided to work in partnership with the NGOs in order to try and develop those areas mostly affected by the apartheid regime. NGOs had been working with those who were affected by the exclusion by providing basic services so it was a matter of continuing where they had left. They had that advantage over government because they had already been in the ground working with the poor and so they knew what exactly those people lacked

and understood them better. This partnership worked out well and complemented each other because government had the funds and the NGOs had the capacity to deliver services to the poor.

 It was noted that NGOs in South Africa contributed significantly to the socio-political and economic development of the country with the intermediary role they played in society. Most important as their ability to provide particular goods and services where government was failing. As a way of acknowledging that they could not work alone, the democratic government under the wing of the African National Congress (ANC) had new policies which promoted working in partnership with NGOs for the betterment and development of the country. Unlike the previous government which discouraged private businesses from funding NGOs, the democratic government implemented policies and frameworks that promoted working together. According to the MDG South Africa Report (2013:16), from 1994 the democratic government introduced and implemented development and planning frameworks that would sustain democracy and progressively root out all forms of discrimination, in particular the race based discrimination which was the corner stone of apartheid. Below is a brief outline of the development and transition frameworks that were developed which promoted government and NGO partnership.

2.8.1 The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) 1994

The RDP was adopted as the first socio-economic framework implemented by the ANC in 1994 after consulting with various partners including NGOs on how to redress the immense socio-economic problems created by the apartheid regime. Its main aims were to alleviate poverty and address the massive shortfalls on service provision in health, education and electrification across the country. This program

and policy marked the stage for the role that was to be played by NGOs in South Africa. NGOs would be involved and partake in all forms of development initiatives together with the government (O'Malley 1994:8). The RDP White Paper acknowledged the role that was played by the non-profit organizations when it stated that:

> *The social movements and CBOs are a major asset in the effort to democratize and develop our society. Attention must be given to enhancing the capacity of such formations to adapt to partially changes roles. Attention must also be given to extending social movement and CBO structure into areas and sectors where they are weak or non-existent… Numerous non-profit non-governmental organizations are also developing in South Africa and many of these NGOs play an important capacity-building role in regard to CBO and the development process. NGOs are engaged in service delivery, mobilization, advocacy, planning, lobbying and financing. Thus NGOs have an important future role in the democratisation of our society. However, NGOs must also adopt transparent processes and operate in a manner that responds with accountability and democracy to communities they serve.*

2.8.2 Growth Employment and Redistribution Program (GEAR) 1996

Following the implementation of the RDP was yet another program which equally promoted government partnership with the NGOs. GEAR is a macro-economic strategy aimed at strengthening economic development, creation of employment and redistribution of income and socio-economic opportunities in favour of the previously marginalized groups (Knight 2001). As a way of meeting the targets they had set, the government decided to split the responsibilities to all its three sectors and growth and service delivery was assigned to the private sector while NGOs were given the responsibility of social welfare services (GEAR 1996:15).

2.8.3 Non-profit Organisations Act 71 of 1997 (NPO Act)

In recognizing the important role played by the non-profit sector, South African government enacted the Non-profit Organisations Act 71 of 1997. This was part of

the legal framework to create an enabling environment for the non-profit sector (Policy framework 2012:7). The general purpose of this legislation was to provide a policy framework on regulating non-profit organizations. Its aim was to enhance the existing enabling environment for the NGOs to flourish and protect the sector from abuse as well as misuse undue disruptions to many of its positive contributions. It was therefore meant to promote governance and accountability among NGOs.

2.8.4 The National Development Agency Act 108 of 1998 (NDA Act)

After seeing the development efforts of the NGOs and the way they struggled with funding, the government sought means that could help the NGOs with funds so that they could continue with their good work. The National Development Agency was therefore established whose main purpose was to act as a channel to direct funds to organizations such as NGOs which were actively involved in development initiatives. The act was aimed at promoting an appropriate and sustainable partnership between the government and civil organizations to eradicate poverty and its causes (Republic of South Africa 1998:4). After donors diverted theirs funds to the government, NGOs were out of funds yet the work which they were doing on the ground was significant and the government had to find ways to ensure that they supported the NGOs and so the NDA was established for that. Seabe (2011:14) asserts that the establishment of the agencies was premised on the idea that government alone cannot solve the issues of poverty and underdevelopment in South Africa but required the assistance of the communities and other civil organizations such as NGOs. Once again NGOs proved a useful assert to the government worth working with indeed.

2.8.5 The Lotteries Act 57 of 1997

The Lotteries Act was also enacted as one of the means of meeting the funding challenges that were faced by the Third Sector in South Africa. In this Act, there was be a National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund that was established whose task was to distribute funds to various organisations of charity, sports and recreation and arts and culture (Seabe 2011:14). According to the Act, this would fall under "charitable expenditure" which was defined as "expenditure by any organisation or institution established for charitable, benevolent, or philanthropic purposes, including friendly societies, welfare organizations and conduit organizations or trusts established in respect of any such organization or institution" (Government Gazette 1997).

These policy and legal frameworks were set up with the aim of assisting NGOs carry out their developmental work through raising funds for them. However, according to Swilling and Russell (2002) in (Seabe 2011:14) there are concerns about these institutional frameworks where NGOs operate. They argue that the frameworks were established without proper research on the NGO sector in South Africa. As a result the capacity of the government to implement these policies was not considered and challenges were met upon implementation to the extent that these legal frameworks have not yielded the expected outcomes.

Furthermore, it is also argued that failure to implement these policies was also due to inefficiency, contract failure as well as corruption. Heynes, Benjamin-Lebert and lebert 2011:5) cited in Seabe (2011) also assert that the NDA did not distribute funds accordingly and not in line with the country's developmental agenda. They also point the failures of these legal frameworks to fraud and corruption which is a challenge faced by South Africa when it comes to development issues. The funds intended for

development initiatives usually end up in the hands of a few undeserving individuals without reaching the beneficiaries and that way development is never achieved.

2.9 Social Policy and Community development

While the above mechanisms were used to source funding for the third sector, the government also had other means of developing the nation after being crippled by the apartheid era. Swanepoel and De Beer (2006) assert that the government is responsible for putting in place structures or mechanisms that regulate the environments and to create the circumstances that will facilitate development to occur. The government thus used social policy to redistribute resources among its citizens as well as to facilitate development. Social policy is a practice of social intervention aimed at securing social change to promote the welfare and social well-being of citizens. According to Aliber (2010) cited in Gedze (2011:16) social policy consists of various interventions which directly affect the transformation of social welfare, social institutions and social relations in the communities. Social policy is thus seen as a key factor in rural development as it plays a huge role in facilitating development and change in the rural communities.

Gedze (2011:16) states that, a number of social policy tools have been deployed since 1994 to address the challenges of inequality and poverty in the country. These include the social security system in the form of grants which are allocated to individuals and households which are in dire need. These grants come in various categories such as child support grant, old age grant, disability grant, grant in aid, foster child grant, care dependency grant and the war veteran's grant. Those who qualify register and are paid monthly to at least support themselves. These social welfare grants are a very popular source of income especially in the rural areas

where there are limited employment opportunities. It was in fact revealed in the 2015 Budget Speech for Social Development that close to 30% of households in the Eastern Cape rely on these social grants as their main source of income. Despite this type of intervention being the most common and regarded as successful it has been criticised a lot for putting pressure on the limited government funds and for breeding a culture of laziness where poor people want to rely on these handouts and not work for themselves.

The second was the social policy poverty alleviation mechanism in the form of 'micro-enterprises'. These were aimed at supporting the unemployed to create small enterprises that would generate some income for them. Triegaardt (2007) cited in Gedze (2011:17) postulates that the micro-enterprise was a success in countries such as Bangladesh and Nigeria by giving opportunity to women to set up their own projects and earn some income as well as to support their households. In these countries the micro-enterprise projects increased food production, enabled self-support of women and off course opened opportunities for income generation which also had wider implications in the development of the communities. This micro-enterprise is what South Africa adopted under the Department of Social Development through the initiation of projects in the fight against poverty. Various government supported projects were initiated both in the rural and urban areas of South Africa all in an effort to develop skills, fight poverty and generally improve the citizens' livelihoods. They were community driven and therefore meant to help in developing those communities. The idea was to contribute towards the eradication of poverty through creating job opportunities, empower the communities with skills that would enable them to be self-reliant and reduce the reliance on social grants.

The idea of 'micro-enterprise' system is similar to what NGOs promote in communities, in fact it is one and the same thing except that one is offered by the government and the other by the third sector. The success and impact of these micro-enterprise projects is what this research seeks to find, but focus is on those that are supported by NGOs. It has however been mentioned earlier in this chapter that there is a thin line between these projects supported by government and those supported by NGOs since government in some cases uses NGOs to pursue their missions. Either way, it is crucial to measure their impact on the livelihoods of the poor people.

Critics on social policy argue that South African social policy has put a lot of attention on how to support the poor which is called a maintenance driven strategy which only addresses secondary effects of poverty at the expense of its root causes. Triegaardt (2007) cited in Gedze 2011 in line with other critics further suggests that a more appropriate strategy would incorporate economic development and other support services that that would equip the poor to be self-reliant. The answer to this is participatory development programmes that cater for the poor especially in the rural communities to participate in rural and community development as discussed earlier in chapter two of this thesis. Furthermore, what is advocated for here is what the NGOs try to achieve in the communities which they have penetrated.

While the South African government policy is open towards NGOs, Fisher (1998:39) postulates that most government policies are wide ranging and depend on various factors within a country. Such factors include how democratised the country is, how stable the government is and the strength of political ability to implement policy. According to Fisher, there are five general government responses to NGOs that have been observed in the developing countries. There are those which are

oppressive and fear NGOs and their activities. Such governments make it difficult for NGOs to work in their countries, they may close them down, arrest and imprison their staff, keep NGOs under a close watch, subject them to harassment or make some difficult laws that NGOs find it difficult to remain open. A good example is Zimbabwe where some NGOs have been accused of being sponsored by the Western countries to destabilize the peace in the country. As much as the people of Zimbabwe needed help from NGOs since their government has totally failed in service provision, some NGOs were forced to close down by the government.

Another approach used by other governments is to ignore NGOs, they completely shun the efforts made by NGOs to work with communities, and without permission from government it becomes difficult for NGOs to operate there. This according to Fisher is due to the fact that many governments fail to implement policies that affect NGOs and their work. While some NGOs are ignored, another approach rather favours some and ignores others. Certain NGOs are chosen over others, and those which are chosen are given grants so that they can be controlled on what to do and how to do it. The tendency is to choose those which they view as harmless to the people as opposed to those which may be considered as having other motives besides helping the people. On the other hand, some governments take advantage of NGOs for financial reasons. They are aware that those NGOs have funding from aid organisations so when they let them operate in their country there will be a constant cash flow which they can convert to their own uses. They allow these NGOs to work under certain conditions and use part of their funds for own purposes.

Finally, the last approach according to Fisher (1998) involves cooperation and learning with the NGOs. Some governments accept NGOs because of budgetary pressures; they are well aware of their limitations as a government in funding and on

the contrary NGOs are well funded and so they use NGOs to implement policy and to reach out to more people which (as a government) they fail to do. Despite this approach being the more reasonable one, it is argued that very few governments use it. However, the South African government adopted it and works in partnership with NGOs and have been able to reach out and assist more people.

2.10 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of literature on the growth and development of the NGO sector in South Africa, the roles played by the NGOs and the typology on NGOs. In particular, attention was paid to the changing roles of the NGOs prior to 1994 as well as the new dispensation due to the damage that had been left by the demise of the apartheid regime. Several changes took place when democracy was achieved as a way of redressing the past, starting form a new constitution which advocated for an inclusive government and partnership with the civil society organisations meant to be inclusive of everyone and these different sectors were encouraged to work together to try and rebuild the country.

Survival strategies used by NGOs towards and soon after 1994 were explored where they had to redefine their roles in order to continue their existence. After NGOs realised that they would be irrelevant with the attainment of democracy, they had to find new ways to continue helping the poor people because the new government would now take over the space which they had occupied. One way of doing this was to align themselves to the government and work with them as partners, that way they would be able to continue offering their services but this time working with the government. The South African government also realised that civil society organisations played a critical role as development partners and began to

accommodate them into the constitution and formulated policies which enabled them to operate in a free environment and encouraged them to flourish and that in turn enhanced the state's service delivery capacity. In terms of funding, NGOs were beginning to feel a pinch after donors diverted their funds to the new government instead of them. However, the government established the National Development Agency and the Lottery Commission which were mandated to fund legitimate non-profit and civil society organisations.

The chapter further explored the legal environments and policy frameworks that the NGOs operate in. These include the Reconstruction and Development Program where government and other sectors engaged in ways that would redress the socioeconomic problems that were created by the apartheid regime and address the massive shortfalls on service delivery across the country. As a way of moving forward, the government and NGOs would work together in partnership. NGOs would be involved and partake in all forms of development initiatives together with government. Another legal environment for NGOs to operate was Growth Employment and Redistribution, which was a macro-economic strategy aimed at strengthening economic development, creation of employment and redistributing of income and socioeconomic opportunities for previously marginalised groups. The government decided to split the responsibilities for accountability purposes and the NGOs were given social welfare services.

The roles of NGOs in contemporary development were also discussed and these have been pointed out as service delivery, advocacy and partnerships. NGOs are at times contracted by the government to offer services to the people because government has the funds but not the capacity to do so and the NGOs may have the capacity but not the funds so they enter in a contractual relationship. The contractual

relationship benefits both the government and the NGOs in that government gets the job done through hiring the NGOs and NGOs get the funding they need to deliver services but the winners out of it all are the citizens who get the services which they rightfully deserve. Not only does the funding come from the government but other outside donors prefer to work with NGOs as well because they are well known to be better than government when it comes to grassroots development. However, questions about the autonomy of NGOs are asked when they work closely with government and rely on them for funding but this issue is not of significance when services are delivered to the people. NGOs are also involved in advocacy and become the voice of the voiceless by standing up for the poor in issues which they feel affect their lives (the poor people) but have no means to voice them out to the right people. NGOs pick out the injustices and voice them out as well as making sure that government carries out its policies appropriately. Lastly is the role of NGOs as partners with various stakeholders actively involved in development issues. They partner with them not only to benefit themselves but for the benefit of the people who need their services.

CHAPTER THREE

A REVIEW OF THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND DEBATES

3.1 Introduction

The field of development studies is a veritable jungle inhabited by theories, counter-theories, approaches, paradigms and programmes of all sizes, shapes and colours (Burkey 1993:27).

Following the above quotation, this chapter is an overview of theories and paradigms that have influenced the concept of development. Development is a concept that has no single meaning; it means different things to different people. Green and Haines (2008:256) view the term development as a goal and a process. As a goal, they define development as an end state, for example a developing country will aim to achieve a level of economic growth that makes outside aid unnecessary. They further argue that for a community, development might entail a high quality of life that includes every child getting a good education, a healthful and safe environment, full employment as an adult, and little or no poverty. As a process, development refers to progressive change in the society's status quo. The generally accepted meaning concurs with development as a process, in that it brings positive change or progress to people (Gardner and Lewis 1999). Edwards (1999:4) in Lewis and Kanji (2009) define development as "the reduction of material want and the enhancement of people's ability to live a life they consider good across the broadest range of possible in a population".

Furthermore, development also has different meanings depending on which side of the globe you live, for example many theorists from the developed countries see it as economic based. According to them, the primary forces driving this development are

technology and economic growth and they tend to ignore culture and values of the communities. On the contrary, those from the developing countries interpret it to mean people-centred entailing the cultures and values of those people. Although the economic aspect of development is still crucial, this view is being challenged by the later theorists who place more emphasis on participatory methods. These later theorists prefer the so called 'alternative approaches' to development as opposed to the development theories of the 1950s which were economy based.

According to Lewis and Kenji (2009), the emergence of the alternative approaches introduced new ways of thinking in terms of addressing poverty and development. They sought to challenge the unequal relationships, structures and organisational cultures which promoted the mainstream approaches. They critiqued the mainstream, top-down type of approaches in favour of new theories. Central to their arguments was the fact that development issues should be people centred and encourage participation of the ordinary people rather than being recipients of outside influenced development. These alternative approaches emphasised the fact that people themselves are the experts of their own problems and should be actively engaged in working out their own solutions.

In this chapter various theories and concepts (both from the old school and the alternative approaches) are reviewed following Ellis and Biggs' timeline (2001) which offers the changing views on development from around the 1950s to date. These include: modernisation theory, dependency theory, basic needs approach, participatory approaches, sustainable and human development as well as sustainable livelihoods. It is worth noting that the concept of development is as old as mankind and has been viewed differently over the years leading to the different paradigms which are discussed in this chapter. Ellis and Biggs however, warn that

these transitions did not happen smoothly to the next one but there was cluttering and overlapping and should therefore not be overemphasised (Ellis and Biggs 2001:439).

While a number of theories and concepts are discussed in this chapter, it ought to be clearly stated that the main conceptual framework utilised in this study is the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) and the concept of evaluation by OECD/DAC. The SLF is used principally because it dwells on how the poor people cope with their poverty – how they use their assets to construct their livelihoods in an environment constrained by external institutions and processes (Moyo 2009:2). The concept of evaluation is used because the study is all about evaluating the success of NGO intervention projects. Both the sustainable livelihoods framework and the concept of evaluation fit into this study because they deal with how the rural populations work with NGOs to sustain their livelihoods. Sustainable livelihoods alone looks at the survival of the poor people and the concept of evaluation focuses on NGOs and therefore complement each other in this study which seeks to find the effectiveness of the NGOs in the rural communities. These two theoretical concepts are explained in detail in the following chapter. However, it is crucial to follow how this concept of development has evolved over years up to the current state of sustainable rural development. Various theories and paradigms are discussed briefly leading to the main theory of sustainable livelihoods.

3.2 Modernisation theory

The 1950s were dominated by industrialisation and this influenced the thinking of the development practitioners at that time. The main theory was modernisation theory which held the view that growth and capitalist led development was the solution to poverty. According to Rostow, development was viewed as a process consisting of

The Stages of Economic Growth. In this theory, Rostow (1971), identifies five stages of economic growth: the traditional society, the precondition for take-off, the take-off, the drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption. He argued that traditional societies would have to go through these stages in order for modernisation to occur and eventually climb the developmental ladder to reach the age of high mass consumption. He postulated that in order for poor countries to develop, they had to achieve economic take-off and free themselves from traditional, social and cultural impediments. This approach focused on economic growth and capital accumulations and dismissed the socio-cultural values and traditions of the developing countries as being obstacles to development (Phuhlisani 2009). The theory further states that the benefits from this economic growth would eventually trickle down from the rich to the poor members of the population. According to Rostow, there was only one development path possible that could guarantee a good life for all and that was Western capitalist democracy. However, this theory was criticised by economists who later argued that development was a social phenomena more than just about the economy (Seers 1989). Despite the theory being criticised, disputed and no longer fully recognised as part of the development discourse some of its characteristics still exhibit themselves even today. Fukuyama (1990) argued that the ideological evolution of human societies had ended with the universal acceptance of Western style liberal democracies. In other words, development is still measured using the standards of Rostow's stages of development hence countries which have not reached a certain level are still considered as underdeveloped.

3.3 Dependency theory

In an effort to explain why the developing countries were in a state of underdevelopment and poverty, scholars from United Nations Economic

Commission for Latin America (ECLA) Raul Prebisch (1976), Peter Evans (1979) and Andre Gunder Frank (1976) critiqued capitalist development as being the root cause of the inequalities between the Northern and Southern countries. Influenced by Marxism, they constructed a new and distinctive concept of underdevelopment. They argued that economic growth in the developed countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the developing countries. In fact they suggested that economic growth in the richer countries led to serious economic problems in the poorer countries. Their criticisms against modernisation saw the birth of the dependency theory. The main argument is that poverty and underdevelopment in the third world countries was caused by the exposure to the advanced countries, thus it was created by an intrinsic part of the process of western capitalist expansion (Bernstein 1979). Poor countries were not poor because they had not been given access to modernity, but they have been underdeveloped by historical processes of colonisation and by the imposition of unequal terms of trade by the rich countries. They further argued that contrary to what modernisation asserted, the rural sector of the society was being underdeveloped by the urban sector for cheap products and would therefore not necessarily modernise as quickly as its urban counterpart (Michello 2007:14). Such being the case, development would never have been possible for poor countries which were caught in unfavourable terms of trade to suit the economic requirements of the Western Capitalists countries. Conyers and Hills (1984) had earlier observed that underdevelopment had been caused by an outside force; the First World Countries who maintained an unequal power relationship by keeping the Third World countries indebted to the First World through loans, trade and foreign aid.

3.4 The Basic Needs Approach

The basic needs approach is one of the major contributors towards development approaches, which came into play after it was discovered that economic growth did not necessarily eliminate poverty. It is used to measure absolute poverty in the developing countries. It tries to define the minimum resources required for physical well-being which include: food, health, education, water and sanitation and shelter and the poverty line was defined as the amount of income required to satisfy those needs (Brundenius 1982:4). The meeting of the basic human needs of people became an important element in alternative development strategies. Development programmes that follow the basic needs approach focus on the society consuming enough to rise above the poverty line in order to meet its basic needs as opposed to investing in economic productivity that will help society to sustain itself in future. The basic needs approach therefore became a tangible way of understanding absolute poverty, measuring it and a set of directives for what a state could do to alleviate its own poverty (Brundenius 1982:37). As part of their intervention programmes, African states adopted the basic needs approach as a way of measuring poverty in their countries and tried to provide the 'basic needs' to its people. However, this was a failure because the states were slowly turning to welfare states when they did not have the necessary resources to do so. Once again poverty and underdevelopment were on the rise and African countries had to once again turn to the West for assistance.

3.5 Integrated Rural Development Approaches (IRD)

The development efforts of the 1970s and 1980s were hampered by the prescription of reforms from a centralised perspective without regard for the differences in

communities hence the requirement of different specific needs of each community (Janvry 2000:11). Janvry (2000) further asserts that in the age of globalised trade and information, an integrated approach to development is the only possible solution. He states that any successful development must take into account the social, cultural, economic, environmental and geographical realities that shape the lives of the people all over the world.

The concept of an integrated approach refers to a broad range of actors not only the multi-sectoral nature ones. These include international NGOs, local NGOs, the UN and its agencies, multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, the private sector, local governments, communities, families and individuals. They all have a role to play in integrated development efforts (Janvry 2000:11). It is acknowledged that coordinating all these parties involved is a challenge but at least their efforts should complement each other and not contradict. The goal should be to let the local people who are affected by the development take the lead in directing, implementing and evaluating the projects. This integrated approach led to the new paradigm where development practitioners sort to involve the communities and encouraged their participation towards development. This marked the change in ideological thinking from the mainstream ideas to the alternative ideas of development which challenged the top-down approach and began to encourage the bottom-up approach. The alternative ideology emphasised the involvement of the communities concerned and encouraged them to participate in their own development.

3.6 From Neo-Liberalism to State Interventionism

With the desperate situations that the African countries were in, they needed desperate measures and so adopted the neoliberal approach prescribed to them by the developed countries. The 1980s were therefore marked by the neoliberal policies founded by Adam Smith and David Ricardo who advocated for minimal state intervention in the economic aspect of the country. Neo liberals actually criticised the state bureaucracies that government intervention in the economy actually prevented growth and development from taking place (Phuhlisani 2009:6). They believed that the market is the natural, most efficient mechanism through which humans could meet their needs. The neoliberal policies and strategies include trade liberalisation, privatisation, commoditisation, financialisation, management of crises and state redistribution (Harver 2005).

Neo liberalism was therefore about making trade between nations easier with freer movement of goods, resources and enterprises in a bid to always find cheaper resources to maximise profit and efficiency. In order to fulfil this, neo liberalism required the removal of certain controls that were seen as barriers to free trade such as: tariffs, regulations, laws, legislation, regulation measures and restriction on capital flows and investment which had all been imposed by the government. The goal was to allow the free market to naturally balance itself through the pressures of market demands (Phuhlisani 2009:6). The state had to be rolled back and the market forces would increasingly guide the resource allocation and decision making. The government was to take responsibility for constructing and regulating a macroeconomic framework that permits competitive markets, to set prices and

allocate markets. The private sector would play a dominant role in identifying and supplying public needs (Hulme and Turner 2010:100).

Despite being the dominating ideology, free market was not a success not only in the developing countries but globally as evidenced by the financial crises with the latest one in 2008 which required massive government interventions to bail out the so called efficient private financial institutions that were in danger of bankruptcy. This was evidence enough that free-trade was not the solution to development issues in the developing countries.

Poverty and lack of development persisted in the developing countries and there were political and structural changes that were undertaken by the African countries to improve the situation. At the forefront of bringing reform to Africa were the international development agencies and practitioners that were keen to reduce poverty in these countries. The World Bank and the IMF were concerned by the declining and continued regression in the African political and economical indicators. This called for fundamental changes in the political and economic organisation for African societies.

Private development agencies were in support of the call by the World Bank to give assistance to the developing countries and organisations like Ford Foundation were at the forefront and emphasised participation that empowered the disadvantaged groups. The international community therefore called for structures outside state bureaucracy to ensure people participated in development. With the state involvement limited in driving development, this gave rise to the world of NGOs as the international developments agencies preferred to fund NGOs as vehicles of development as opposed to the states. NGOs were given a higher priority than

before as well as many resources. They were mainly viewed as agents of service delivery. The Ford Foundation actually cut down on its contributions towards the state in favour of NGOs. In fact, NGOs were recognised to the extent that they influenced national policies to be more responsive to citizens in the developing countries. This was the rise of NGOs as they found themselves with a greater role to play in terms of development practises in Africa. Robbins (2002:129) further states that, there is a good deal of evidence which suggests NGOs were growing because of increased amounts of public funding.

3.7 State Interventionism

In most of the newly independent African states which were keen to prove that they could do it alone, state intervention was more appealing after witnessing the failure of free market. The markets had not been able to allocate the resources equally and efficiently and so needed some intervention from the government. This meant a lot to the African states because they would be able to bring about development to their people. State intervention therefore went beyond meeting the needs of the individuals to determining prices for goods and services, subsidising local industries, imposing trade barriers, controlling financial markets and ensuring that wages were low. These harsh measures were made so at to build the nation and develop the economy (Hermes and Weimer 1999:6). Because of the 1972 IDS/World Bank study of Redistribution with Growth, which concluded that rapid growth in the underdeveloped countries was of little to no benefit to its people, African leaders undertook ambitious transformational projects all trying to bring development to its people. Growth and development were the concepts that described their transformational projects which they embarked on. Some of the measures introduced towards this growth and development included: direct transfer of income

from richer to poorer groups, taxation resulting in income transfers to poor people, redistributing land or other assets in favour of poorer groups and emphasis on benefits such as free education, health services, clean water and sanitation (Jolly 2006).

Despite all these measures taken, evidence began to emerge showing that poverty was on the increase in developing countries (World Bank Report 1980). This meant that there was a need for the states to improve their strategies in helping the poorer people and so that marked a paradigm shift towards the 'basic needs approach'. The basic needs approach was popularised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which shifted state intervention to involve economic and social matters. This was seen as the new approach which represented a shift of emphasis towards social services designed to help the poor. It was involved in projects that catered for nutrition, health and education.

3.8 Participatory Approaches

The participatory approaches were the beginning of the alternative methods to development which challenged that the top-down approach to development was the answer to solving people's problems, instead using a bottom-up approach could be the answer they had had been looking for. This gave rise to new models of thinking in which it was crucial for local populations to be at the centre of their development agendas. Ellis and Biggs (2001) also include the participatory approach in their timeline as one of influential thrusts in rural development which became popular in the late 1980s to the 1990s. Thereafter, new research methods began to emerge based on participatory approach and these include: rapid rural appraisal (RRA), participatory rural appraisal (PRA), sustainable development and decentralisation.

These participatory approaches have become central to development as a means to seek sustainability and equity, particularly for the poor (Rifkin and Kangere 2003). They are especially valued for the reason that they put the concerned communities at the centre of the development processes. The Participation, Power and Social Change (PPSC) group further suggest that these methods emerged as an alternative to mainstream approaches to development which were top-down and linear, and in most cases it was the Northern 'experts' telling the Southern 'poor people' what to do in order to achieve development and eliminate poverty (PPSC 2010).

In participatory methods, local people play a greater and more active role in the information gathering process. These methods enable ordinary people to play an active and influential part in decisions which affect their lives. This therefore means that people are not just listened to but are heard and their voices shape the outcomes. Researchers and donors use participatory methods because respect for local knowledge (indigenous Knowledge Systems) and experience is paramount and yield positive results with interventions that reflect local realities leading to better supported and longer lasting social change. The first set of participatory methods to be popularly adopted was rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and later on reflections on RRA led to participatory rural appraisal (PRA).

3.8.1 Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)

Rapid rural appraisal focuses on how outsiders can learn quickly from local people about their realities and challenges. The basic idea of RRA is to quickly collect, analyse and evaluate information on rural conditions and local knowledge (Cavestro 2003:4). The technique essentially involves an informal, rapid, exploratory study of a specified geographical area designed to establish an 'understanding' of local

agricultural conditions, problems and characteristics. It provides basic information on the feasibility of beginning a survey project in an area, particularly when one is intending to survey an area about which little is known. The end product is a report that is used for a variety of purposes such as project design, improving on already existing projects and many other development related issues.

The process of RRA consists of a range of tools which include: key informant interviews, group interviews and direct observations. RRA therefore refers to a range of investigating procedures. Some of its main characteristics are that it only takes a short time to complete, it is cheap to carry out and uses less formal ways of collecting data. Data is mainly collected through expert observation together with semi-structured interviews of the community members involved, the local leaders and relevant officials. However, in RRA there is generally little expectation that the community is in charge of the process, but rather participation which will only yield to information gathering objectives (Freudenberger 2012:7). The research team works closely in collaboration with community members involving them in data collection. Data collection involves participation of the community members and that ensures that the information gathered is as accurate as possible. However, data collected is analysed and used by researchers who decide on how to utilise the information as opposed to being used by the community. This weakness of RRA caused some reflections on this method which then led to the evolution of participatory rural appraisal.

3.8.2 Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

PRA is considered as one of the popular and effective approaches to gather information in rural areas. This approach was developed in the 1990s with

considerable shift in paradigm from top-down to bottom-up approach (Cavestro 2003:3). It has a stronger focus on facilitation, empowerment, behaviour change, local knowledge and sustainable action (Chambers 1997). PRA therefore consists in a process whereby rural people create and manipulate their own information in a visualised format using familiar methods. Mascarenas (1994) further asserts that PRA is a growing family of approaches and methods that help enable local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions to plan and to act. Its aim is to help strengthen the capacity of villagers to plan, make decisions and to take action towards improving their own situation. (Cavestro 2003).

In as much as PRA shares some of its principles with RRA such as direct learning from local people, offsetting biases and triangulating, it further adds its own principles concerning the behaviour of outsiders, responsibility and sharing. Of significance with PRA is the fact that the collection of information right from the beginning of the project actively involves the community members all the way through to the end of the project. Not only does it end with the collection of data but also its eventual use by the community as it plan further activities. The emphasis in PRA is often not so much on the information as it is on the process and seeking ways to involve the community in planning and decision making (Freudenberger 2012:9). PRA is based on the principle that local people are creative and capable and can carry out their own investigations, analysis and planning therefore outsiders should learn from the local people rather than imposing their interventions on what the local people do not need.

A major contrast between RRA and PRA is that in RRA information is more elicited and sourced by outsiders while PRA heavily relies on participation by the

communities not only as sources of information but also as partners in the research process. Therefore in PRA information is more owned and shared by the local people. The methods used in PRA include direct observation, maps, transects, models, calendars, Venn diagrams, matrix scores, institutional diagramming, analytical diagramming and trend and change analysis, all done by the local people (Chambers 1997). Following these methods and working in close collaboration with the community led to some improvement in development hence PRA has been the most adopted developmental approach that is used by the government and the non-governmental sector across the globe.

It is clear that community participation was driven by the rather disappointing results of other approaches that were used to facilitate rural development. The United Nations Report (2009) highlights that community participation as a concept was formulated in response to the growing awareness that the various approaches then employed for rural development such as community development, integrated development or even the basic needs approach did not often lead to significant rural development and especially poverty reduction as was thought because there was little involvement in development projects of those undergoing development and particularly the poor.

Of importance to the thesis is the following approach, Sustainable Livelihoods (SL), which is one of the guiding theories of the study. Sustainable rural development is clearly explained by the SL approach hence its choice as the guiding line.

3.9 Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SL)

After tracing the history of poverty and development in the developing countries, one is left with the question that if all the approaches explained above were failing to solve the issue of poverty, due to the fact they all had their own limitations, then why not combine all of them? The answer lies in the sustainable livelihoods approach. Small (2007:28) suggests that the "SL approach combines participatory, bottom-up approaches with recognition of the impact of macro-level governance, policies and institutions... the approach draws together several major ideas in international development thought." The concept of sustainable livelihoods goes beyond the narrow conventional definitions and approaches to development which only focussed on certain aspects of development and did not consider other vital aspects of poverty which hindered development such as vulnerability and social exclusion (Scoones 1998, Krantz 2001 and Adato and Meinzen-Dick 2002).

3.10 Post-development

The 1990s welcomed a post-development perspective which suggested that development was not a solution to global problems of poverty and inequality, but rather a restrictive and controlling discourse that simply served to manipulate the power of rich countries over poorer ones. As explained in the Foucauldian concept of power, this approach showed how it was possible to understand ways in which empowerment coming from the outside world development professionals rather than being emancipatory could actually serve as a means to discipline poor, conceal local power structures and reduce essentially political problems to technical questions of management (Cooke and Kothari 2001). When analysing it in this manner, one may argue that development NGOs +are nothing but representatives of the past, with an

agenda of modernization which only serve the interests of the donors at the expense of the local people. Temple (1997:202) describes NGOs as 'trojan horse' which transports the values of the Western countries to communities that are still living their traditional lifestyles while pretending to be concerned with fighting for the indigenous cultures. The post-development ideas can provide potentially useful insights, especially Foucault's ideas about power to bring out how development operates globally as power-knowledge system through the ideas of and practices of its institutions (Lewis and Kanji 2009:55). However, this approach has been criticized for the way it tends to over-emphasise the local ways.

3.11 Conclusion

It is without doubt that the concepts of poverty and development have evolved over many decades. The approaches above have so far tried to show how poverty has been comprehended over the years and how these concepts have failed to alleviate it. Before 1970 poverty was largely defined in economic terms as a lack of income or gross national product (GNP) per capita. In the 1970s, the concept of basic needs was adopted. Basic needs meant having access to certain consumable goods as well as to collective goods such as education and health services and other general elements of a good well-being. However, in the 1980s the basic needs concept was partially abandoned and other approaches to well-being were adopted. It was at this moment that people's ability to fulfil various functions and to develop and deploy their capabilities were considered to be critical dimensions of poverty. The 1990s emerged with the concept that poverty and the processes that lead to poverty are conceived as multi-dimensional (economic, ecological, social, political and cultural). The poor were no longer viewed as a group of people with similar characteristics.

Poverty started being measured in various ways, it moved away from being characterised to analysing the processes that cause it at various levels. From the late 1990s to early 2000s, sustainable development became the catch phrase in development circles. Sustainable development moved away from being an environmental issue to a socio-economic concept (Kole 2005:18).

This chapter has focused on the theoretical paradigms that played significant roles in the field of development. Theories from the mainstream development approach (modernization, dependency, neo liberalism) to those that came with the alternative methods of development (participatory) have been discussed. Of interest are the people-centred or alternative development ideas which challenged the top-down approach which had been a failure in development. The participatory (bottom-up) approach was welcomed by the NGOs who were working at grassroots level and understood that development should involve the local people as opposed to having development ideas imposed on them from the top without a proper understanding of what was happening on the ground. The ideas should come from the people and the interventionists should develop their intervention basing it on what the people suggest.

Nevertheless, the alternative approach also failed to transform the social inequalities and poverty that existed but is acknowledged for changing the strategies of telling the poor people what to do but gave them opportunity to be actively involved in finding their own solutions. At the same time, one may argue that the participatory approach caused the state to take a step back and leave it all on the people instead of working with them all the way. This is exactly what neo liberalism advocated for but, has it really been of benefit to the developing countries? The state takes a back

seat and uses other institutions to do their work while observing from behind. Below

is Table 3.1 which summarises the main development ideas that have influenced the

paradigm shift in development over the years and how they link with NGOs.

Table 3.1 Changing development theories and their link with NGOs.

Development theory	Main development idea	Link with NGOs
Modernisation theory by W.W Rostow (1960)	Transition from traditional societies to modern capitalist growth societies.	No link with NGOs
Dependency theory by A.Gunder Frank (1969)	Underdevelopment as a result of subordination following the colonial period by the Western countries.	No link with NGOs but social movements begin to rise against colonialism.
Institutionalism by E.A Brett (1969)	Optimum conditions for development will only be achieved with the improvement of structural relationships.	NGOs recognized as one of the three main institutional sectors, and have comparative advantage over the other two sectors in service provision.
Neo-liberalism by J. Sachs (1982)	Using globalization to benefit the poor, the market is the key to development in the developing countries.	NGOs seen as agents of development.
Alternative development by J.Clark (1991)	Grassroots development, empowerment and bottom-up participation key to development.	NGOs influential because of their closeness to the people and their ability to challenge the top-bottom approach.
Post-development by A. Escobbar (1995)	Development is an undesirable Western imposition on the rest of the world and should be abandoned.	NGOs viewed as agents of modernization and promoting capitalism.
Sustainable livelihoods by DFID (1999)	Poor people are not passive recipients of interventions, they have assets they use to construct their livelihoods.	NGOs are institutions which work with the poor to use their assets.

(Adapted from: Lewis and Kanji 2009:61)

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

The main conceptual framework utilised in this thesis is the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach; it is however supported by the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. Although often misunderstood, the sustainable livelihoods approach is invaluable in informing development and monitoring development initiatives in poverty stricken communities. It is thus suitable for this study as it focusses on development projects in rural communities. The concept of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria on the other hand is also used because it focuses on the evaluation standards of intervention projects and programmes in development which is what this thesis seeks to do. It uses those evaluation standards to try to unearth what the Third Sector claims to be doing in the rural communities. Both the concept of sustainable livelihoods and the concept of evaluation fit into this study because they deal with the rural populations working with the Third Sector (NGOs) to sustain their livelihoods but the question being pursued is; are these NGOs making a difference in their lives? Sustainable livelihoods alone looks at the survival of the poor people and the concept of evaluation focuses on how much NGOs assist these people to survive, so they complement each other in this study which seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of NGOs in the rural communities. SLA will be discussed first showing its relevance to the study followed by the concept of evaluation

4.2 Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)

According to Krantz (2001:6) the concept of Sustainable Livelihood (SL) is an attempt to go beyond the conventional definitions and approaches to poverty eradication. These had been found to be too narrow because they focused only on certain aspects or manifestations of poverty, such as low income, or did not consider other vital aspects of poverty such as vulnerability and social exclusion. It is now recognized that more attention must be paid to the various factors and processes which either constrain or enhance poor people's ability to make a living in an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable manner. The SL concept offers the prospects of a more coherent and integrated approach to poverty.

Majale (2002:3) further notes that the Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) is a holistic approach that tries to capture and provide a means of understanding the fundamental causes and dimensions of poverty without collapsing the focus onto just a few factors such as economic issues and food security. The sustainable livelihoods approach aims to help poor people achieve lasting livelihood improvements (sustainable livelihoods) measured using poverty indicators that they themselves define. The SL approach nevertheless offers both a conceptual and programming framework for sustainable poverty reduction. Unlike traditional approaches that have tried to address poverty by identifying and addressing the needs of the poor, the SL approach seeks to improve their lives by building on what they already have – their assets.

Small (2007:28) also suggests that the "SL approach combines participatory, bottom-up approaches with recognition of the impact of macro-level governance,

policies and institutions... the approach draws together several major ideas in international development thought." The key factor lies in that it has been noted by various scholars (Scoones 1998, Krantz 2001, and Majale 2002) that the concept of sustainable livelihoods goes beyond the narrow definitions and approaches to development which only focussed on certain aspects of development and did not consider other vital aspects of poverty which hindered development such as vulnerability and social exclusion.

Sen (2001:444) further states that, sustainable livelihoods shifted the focus of rural away from being always associated with agriculture after realising that non-farming activities also played a crucial role in generating household income. It recognised that equal attention must be paid to the various factors and processes which enhance poor people's ability to make a living in an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable manner (Moyo 2009:56). Echoing the same sentiments was Kole (2005:18) who had noted Sustainable livelihoods as the 'promotion of the integration of the environmental and the agricultural activities, diversification of the economic activities as well as community development and inclusion'. It is also described as the integration of central government agendas as well as the local influences which constitute the core of this approach.

The important issue was the realisation that there was more to sustainable livelihoods than just agriculture as had been previously viewed. Since then various scholars and researchers have refined and redefined the sustainable livelihoods concept. The most widely used definition is that adapted from Conway's definition by the British Department for International Development (DFID);

> *A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (Including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (DFID 2000).*

Assets are also referred to as capitals. They may not necessarily be owned by an individual, household or community for them to be a contributor to livelihoods. As long as they have access to the assets they can use them. Accessibility and not ownership of assets is crucial when applying this concept in rural communities because the majority of rural people have access to resources that belong to the community but they do not necessarily own it. Natural capital such as land, water and forestry is accessible to anyone though may not belong to them but as the study will reveal in the later chapters, these resources are what have made a sustainable livelihood for some community members.

This adapted definition excludes the requirement in the original definition that for livelihoods to be considered sustainable they should also contribute net benefits to other livelihoods. This was after the realisation that not all households could contribute to other livelihoods. To understand the complex processes involved in the construction of the livelihoods, it is important to also analyse the institutional processes and organisational structures that link the various elements together.

Krantz (2001:2) states that the sustainable livelihood approach opens up some insights on poverty and development and the construction of the poor livelihoods. These insights are critical foundations to this study. First is the realisation that while many theories on poverty emphasise the economic aspect

as essential to poverty reduction and development, there is no automatic relationship between them. It all depends on the capabilities of the poor to make use of economic opportunities that open up to them. The second aspect is the realisation that poverty is not just a question of low income but includes other dimensions such as bad health, illiteracy lack of social services and a state of vulnerability and feelings of powerlessness. The third and important fact is that the poor people often know their situation and needs better than anyone else and as such, they must be involved in the design of policies, programmes and projects which are meant to help them. When they are given a say in the design, they are usually more committed to implementation. And so, participation by the poor improves project performance.

The SL approach applies to people living in poverty. If focuses on their actions and efforts, their possessions, their needs, their interests, their priorities their capabilities and the context in which they live. Emphasis on the types of capital available as resources and the capabilities of the people further indicates that there is more that poor people can do for themselves using those available resources. This emphasis on human agency and capability provides a comprehensive view of on what people can do and what they control as opposed to what they cannot do or lack (Schutte 2004). This approach presents a positive view of situations of people living in poverty. They are portrayed as actors who have the potential to survive in difficult situations such as social, economic and political marginalisation. Poor people are therefore presented as having the capabilities of improving their situations. This is in fact true of one community in the study who initiated a poultry project on their own using indigenous knowledge of poultry farming. They did not wait for government or

other organisations to help them but used the available assets and their capabilities and on their own they managed to improve their situations.

According to Krantz (2001:2) there is therefore no one way of applying the SL approach, but there are three basic features common to most approaches. Firstly is that, SL mainly focusses on the livelihoods of the poor, but does not aim at addressing the all aspects of the livelihoods of the poor. Secondly, is that the approach does not approve the standard procedure of conventional approaches of taking as an entry point a specific sector like agriculture, water or health. The intention is rather to employ a holistic perspective in the analysis of the livelihoods to identify those issues of subject areas where intervention could be important. Finally, SL approach places a lot of emphasis on involving people in both identifying and implementing necessary intervention.

Guided by the SL approach, a number of sustainable analytical frameworks have been created which share basic common elements. As already pointed out, this study uses the DFID approach, because many NGOs and bilateral agencies in Africa prefer to use this approach and since the study concerns interventions by NGOs, it was seen as best fit to use it. DFID's SL approach aims to increase the agency's effectiveness in poverty reduction in two main ways: the first is by mainstreaming a set of core principles which determine that poverty-focused development activity should be people-centred, responsive and participatory, multi-level, conducted in partnership, sustainable, and dynamic. The second is by applying a holistic perspective in the programming of support activities, to ensure that these correspond to issues or areas of direct relevance for improving poor people's livelihoods. Also influential is that this approach does not view poor people as passive but

acknowledges their agency and the assets they have and how they use them to construct their livelihoods in an environment constrained by external institutions. A central element of DFID's approach is the SL Framework, an analytical structure to facilitate a broad and systematic understanding of the various factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities, and to show how they relate to each other.

4.3 The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF)

The sustainable livelihoods framework was developed as a tool for analysing rural livelihoods. It provides an analytical framework that promotes systematic analysis of the underlying processes and causes of poverty. The framework suggests that when situated in a vulnerability context, certain livelihood assets or capitals can be accessed by different households and used to change their situations. What they decide to do is dependent on structures and processes in the form of institutions and organisations that they face in their environments (DFID 2000). Figure 4.1 below is a diagrammatical presentation of the DFID sustainable livelihoods framework.

Figure 4.1 The DFID sustainable livelihoods framework

Figure 1. Sustainable livelihoods framework
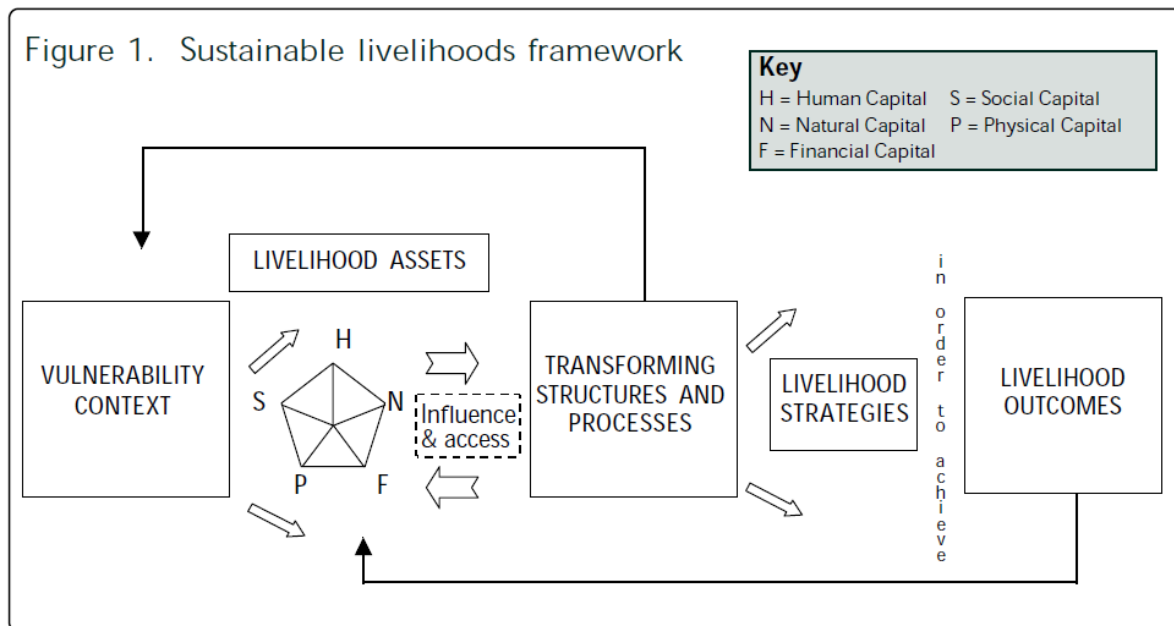
Source: DFID 2000 key sheets for sustainable livelihoods.

Kollmair and Gamper (2002:34) summarise the SLF as depicting stakeholders as operating in a context of vulnerability within which they have access to certain assets. Assets gain weight and value through the prevailing social, institutional and organisational environment (policies, institutions and processes). This context decisively shapes the livelihood strategies that are open to people in pursuit of their self-defined beneficial livelihood outcomes.

4.3.1 Elements of the SL framework

GLOPP (2008) explains Fig 1 above, as follows; the vulnerability context is the external environment in which people exist. Critical trends as well as shocks and seasonality over which people have limited or no control, have great influence on people's livelihoods and on the wider availability of assets. Vulnerability emerges when people have to harmful threat or shock with inadequate capacity to respond

effectively. Secondly are the livelihoods assets. Since the SL approach is concerned with putting people first, it tries to gain an accurate understanding of their strengths which are referred to as the assets or capitals. It is important to analyse how people try to convert those assets into positive livelihood outcomes. The SLF therefore identifies five types of assets (capitals) upon which livelihoods are built; human capital, natural capital, social capital, physical capital and financial capital. These are explained in detail in the following section in this chapter. Thirdly are the transforming structures and processes. These include policies and institutions which effectively determine access to various types of capital to livelihood strategies and decision-making bodies and source of influence. These policies, institutions and processes have a direct impact on weather people are able to achieve a feeling of inclusion and wellbeing. Fourthly are the livelihood strategies. Livelihood strategies comprise a range and combination of activities and choices that people make in order to achieve their livelihood goals. Is should be understood that people combine various activities to meet their needs at different times. Livelihood strategies are dependent directly on asset status and policies, institutions and processes. Lastly are the livelihood outcomes. These are the achievements or outputs of livelihood strategies, such as more income, increased well-being, improved food security and a more sustainable use of natural resources (GLOPP 2008:4).

The sustainable livelihoods framework is thus a tool for understanding how households draw on capabilities and assets to develop livelihood strategies made up of a range of activities. It defines and categorises the different types of assets and entitlements which households have access to, examines the different factors in the local and wider environment that influence household livelihood security and studies the connections between the local or micro situation and actors, institutions and

processes active in the wider world. At its core are therefore the assets or capitals on which individuals, households, or villages draw to build their livelihoods (DFID 2000).

DFID (2000) further states that these assets are the tangible and intangible resources over which people are able to exercise command. McLeod (2001) summarises the assets that are generally recognised within sustainable livelihoods framework as:

- Natural (environmental) capital – these are natural resources that benefit the community which include land, water, wildlife, biodiversity resources.
- Physical capital – this includes basic infrastructure such as water, sanitation, energy, transport, communications, housing and the means and equipment for production used to support livelihoods.
- Human capital - these include health, knowledge, skills, information, ability to labour, produce and reproduce.
- Social capital – these are social resources such as relationships of trust, memberships of groups, networks and access to wider institutions which exist in society and are made use of by the people in pursuit of their livelihoods.
- Financial capital – these are financial resources available which may include regular remittances, pensions, savings and supplies of credit as well as the ability to easily convert other assets into cash.

  (McLeod 2001:24).

It has been observed that people need a range of assets in order to reach positive livelihood outcomes; one range category of assets is not enough to produce a desirable livelihood. More so with reference to the poor people in the rural communities who have limited access to most of the above mentioned assets. This

was the case in all study areas of this research where rural people used more than one type of asset to improve their livelihoods, for example, the horticulture and household food plots projects used the natural capital in the form of land and water with financial capital from the sponsors of the project, social capital in the form of institutions which trained them and imparted the skills of their project and equally important the human capital in the form of their labour and the taught skills to do the work. The poultry project also combined the natural, financial and human capital to keep their project viable.

In any society, different categories of people have access to different assets hence the emphasis of working together. Small (2007:2) emphasises that the SL framework combines participatory, bottom-up approaches with recognition of the impact of macro-level governance, policies and institutions. It draws together several major ideas of international thought. As a part major international developmental approach, SL has been used in international development projects in countries throughout South America, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and in Asia (Helmore and Singh 2001). Many NGOs and bilateral agencies use this framework. The objectives that the framework hopes to achieve, the fact that it is people centred, does not work in a linear manner and does not try to present a model of reality but aims to assist stakeholders with different ideologies to engage in productive debates about factors affecting livelihoods (DFID 1999:1) fits perfectly in this thesis which seeks to evaluate how the poor in the rural communities respond to interventions from third sector organisations.

The SL capitals are assessed in terms of their vulnerability to shocks and institutional context in which they exist. Once these are understood, interventions are put in

place to enhance livelihoods and their sustainability either by increasing capital available or by reducing vulnerability. Thus the framework is about developing an understanding of a situation and developing suggestions for improvement based upon that understanding. The framework does not specify particular methods and techniques that have to be applied to explore the capitals and institutions rather a wide range of methods could be used such as techniques based on observations, focus groups and interviewing those involved. It is all about what should be looked for and not how to do the looking.

As much as people participation and their capabilities are emphasised in SL, it ought to be noted that the success or failure of this agency in achieving positive livelihood outcomes partly depends on the vulnerability context. As already mentioned, the vulnerability context frames the external environment in which people exist. People's livelihoods and the wider availability of assets are fundamentally affected by critical trends such as resources, population, economic, political and technological trends as well as by shocks such as health, natural, economic and crop/livestock health shocks over which they have limited or no control (DFID 1999). In addition, historical factors and existing patterns of social differentiation also contribute towards the vulnerability context. These factors that make up the vulnerability context are important because they have a direct bearing on people's asset status and the options open to them in pursuit of positive livelihood outcomes (Hamilton 2001). Historical factors in South Africa contributed a great deal towards the vulnerability context. During the apartheid era, black people were displaced from fertile farming lands and settled in dry areas which were not suitable for agricultural purposes. Ndlambe village is a good example of infertile land characterised by low rainfall patterns and high temperatures. This has had an effect on the people of Ndlambe

whose land has directly impacted on their strategies to improve their livelihoods. The outcomes only improved after the involvement of Ruliv yet they argue that they had been trying to make a living out of their land and never succeeded.

The Sustainable livelihoods framework helped to establish the principle that successful development intervention must begin with a reflective process of deriving evidence which is broad in vision and not limited to what may seem like a good 'technical' fix. The case of the pomegranate project is an example of an indication of what happens when a 'technical' fix to poverty happens. In other words, before development can take place there must be some idea of what needs to be done and how it will be done as well as why it must be done. A necessary degree of humility is required in the sense that there is a lot that needs to be learnt and understood from the communities before offering them some help. There has to be a baseline assessment built through partnering with those who are meant to benefit rather than seeing them just as passive recipients.

Furthermore, the sustainable livelihoods framework focuses on the development needs of communities at local level. It was argued that in order for development to take place, government and the private sector should interact and allow development to be market driven, NGO capacity had to be increased and strengthen decentralised government institutions as a way of enhancing development (Kole 2005:19). However, despite the intentions of SL being a commendable approach with its attempt to be comprehensible and integrating it has proven to be of less success in its donor-driven initiatives which have proved to be isolated and fragmented. Mahlati (2011:81) argues that they are ineffective and have failed to link with government macro-frameworks and programmes.

The sustainable livelihoods concept also examines how institutions influence and shape the livelihood resources and livelihood strategies. Institutions according to Scoones (1998) refer to regularised practices structured by rules and norms of society which have persistent and widespread use. These institutions can either be formal or informal and are fluid and ambiguous and associated with power. Individuals and groups manipulate various types of institutions and organisations to access assets and construct their strategies and different institutional arrangements frame access to and use of resources differently for different categories of the poor (Swift and Hamilton 2001:85). The analysis of the institutions of politics and power reflect that there are some power struggles in institutions thought to be operating smoothly in assisting the poor people. This politics and power struggle will be discussed and forms part of the basis of the theoretical frameworks of the thesis.

4.4 The evaluation criteria of rural development projects

This section sets out principles governing the evaluation of NGO supported projects. It describes the importance of evaluating projects and how the evaluation of project achievements improves decision-making, organisational learning, accountability and impact. The section looks into the procedures for managing project evaluations.

4.4.1 Concept of Evaluation.

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy; its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the success or failure of an intervention. Since development means progressing from an existing level to an advanced level, evaluation of projects is an important aspect of development as it helps to determine if a project has improved the lives of rural people or not. In order to evaluate that a situation has improved,

there has to be a criteria that measures the effectiveness of the intervention that was introduced to remedy the current situation. Evaluations contribute to secure the optimal quality and impact of development interventions. Some purposes of evaluation include the following:

- Learning from experience: With the assistance of evaluations, successes and failures can be interpreted. Based on those experiences, both current and future projects and programmes can be improved.

- Transparency: Evaluations illustrate the responsible utilization of the resources and justify the results and their effects vis-à-vis the contractor, the partners, and the target groups (recipients).

- Deepening understanding: Evaluation is a tool for deepening knowledge and understanding of the assumptions, options and limits of development cooperation (DC). Evaluations are intended to contribute to a comprehensive discussion and reflexion about development cooperation.

- Improved communication: An evaluation is intended to foster communication and understanding within and between the groups mentioned above, even if this can only be managed in different ways and with different participations in each case (ADC 2009:3).

4.4.2 The OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria

There are various ways of evaluating projects and programs in the field of development. One commonly used method is the OECD/DAC (2002) evaluation criteria which has five characteristics and they are; Relevance, Effectiveness, efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Depending on the type of evaluation,

Participation and Responsibility may also be added. The OECD/DAC criteria are defined in table 4.1 as follows;

Table 4.1 The OECD/DAC evaluation criteria

Relevance	Are we doing the right thing? How important is the **relevance or significance** of the intervention regarding local and national requirements and priorities?
Effectiveness	Are the objectives of the development interventions being achieved? How big is the **effectiveness or impact** of the project compared to the objectives planned (Comparison: result – planning)?
Efficiency	Are the objectives being achieved economically by the development intervention? How big is the **efficiency or utilisation ratio** of the resources used (Comparison: resources applied – results)?
Impact	Does the development intervention contribute to reaching higher level development objectives (preferably, overall objective)? What is the **impact or effect** of the intervention in proportion to the overall situation of the target group or those effected?
Sustainability	Are the positive effects or impacts sustainable? How is the **sustainability or permanence** of the intervention and its effects to be assessed?

Source: ADC 2009:2

According to OECD/DAC (2002) an evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision making process of both the donors and beneficiaries as explained below:

Relevance – the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partner and donor policies. Before initiating any intervention in communities, it first has to be in line with the global priorities such as the 'The Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs) which include eradicating hunger and poverty, education and health issues. The intervention also has to comply with the country needs for example

development interventions in the developing countries will not be the same as that of the developed countries. Most importantly, the intervention should be relevant to the requirements of the recipients. It is thus a necessity to do a baseline analysis of the communities that would be supported in order to understand what exactly they need to improve their conditions. This forms part of the people centred approaches where beneficiaries are at the centre of the intervention. Without the baseline analysis the danger is that intervention will be initiated but the wrong type of intervention which does not benefit or improve the livelihoods of the intended people. Often, the outcome is that local people do not participate in such interventions as they do not see any gains out of it. A good example of an irrelevant intervention in this study is the pomegranate project in Ndlambe village. The Department of Social Development (DSD) initiated this cash crop project without proper consultation of the community which although was a good income generating project was irrelevant to the people of Ndlambe who had other pressing issues to deal with. The result was the failure of the project due to its irrelevance to the local people. On the other hand, the horticulture, poultry and food plots projects all had positive responses due to their relevance to the beneficiaries. They all addressed the needs and interests of the target groups and the outcome was a success of the three projects.

Effectiveness measures the extent to which development intervention's objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Effectiveness is also used as an aggregate measure of the merit or worth of an activity that is the extent to which an intervention has attained or is expected to attain its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional developmental impact (ADC 2009:14). Effectiveness simply means the degree to which something is successful in producing a desired

result; success. In the field of development, the concept of measuring the effectiveness of projects is as broad as the types of intervention projects themselves. However, in sustainable rural development focus is on the extent of the impact on the target population. If the intervention is bringing positive changes to the beneficiaries and improving their lives then it is meeting the objectives thus it is effective and vice-versa. In this study, the effectiveness of intervention projects is clearly observed in the household food plots project. The people of Ndlambe community acknowledged how their lives had improved since the introduction of that project. They are able to meet their basic food needs through growing a variety of crops throughout the year. It is without a doubt that the household food plots are an example of an effective and successful project.

Impact means the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended (ADC 2009:16). Here focus is on changes that have occurred as a result of the project. It looks at the things that only started happening after the introduction of the project, which means that they are a result of it. The real differences that the project has made to the beneficiaries are considered and they include changes in income, ability to meet food needs for example increasing the number of meals per day, a general improvement in lifestyle. In this study, the projects made a significant impact to a number of people though not necessarily the whole community. Those members of the community who were closely involved in the projects reported some positive changes in their lifestyles.

Sustainability measures the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. It looks at the probability of

continued long-term benefits (ADC 2009:17). Sustainability looks at whether it will be possible to sustain the positive changes that occurred as a result of the project. A project that is successful is one that is able to continue after formal funding has stopped which is an indication that the beneficiaries are able to carry on without external support. This yardstick is very important when evaluating projects because it shows what the beneficiaries are able to do on their own. In South Africa and many other African countries this is the stage where most projects fail. Large sums of money would have been spent in setting up the projects but immediately after external funding stops everything collapses. There will be no benefits and people are back to where they started, with nothing. This is caused by various reasons which are discussed in the latter chapters of this thesis. It was found out in this study that some of the projects also went through this challenge at some point although they were fortunate enough to recover from it. Sustainability of projects is thus an important yardstick for evaluating the success of a project because it determines whether the project will continue benefitting people or if it was a short-lived benefit.

Participation and responsibility are also some of the yardsticks used for evaluating projects. Participation is involving the local people and making sure that they partake in development efforts in their communities. It is using the participatory approach which puts the local people at the centre of their development and listens to their voices about what they want for their communities as opposed to telling them what will be done in their communities. It has been observed in other studies that communities which are involved in their own development tend to be responsible for it too. Once they know that the development initiatives are theirs and that they will benefit from them in the long run they become committed and take responsibility. Although participation and responsibility do not appear in the OECD/DAC criteria of

evaluation, they are important aspects of this study hence have been used as part of the evaluation criteria in this thesis.

Furthermore, it is noted that a project can only achieve sustainability if the local partners take ownership for the project during the design and implementation processes and after completion of the project. They should also take an active part in the accompanying learning process, including evaluation. A participatory evaluation involving the local partners and the beneficiaries strengthens their capacities and ownership of the project and thereby increases a project's sustainability. It also assesses how a project is motivating and supporting national constituents and other partners to meet the decent work-related needs of the intended beneficiaries.

Participatory learning is central to good project management (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). Information on project activities, including personal accounts of people's experiences, should be collected to facilitate focused management. The project management team and the evaluation manager should ask:

Who has a relevant view on what has happened during the course of the project?

How can these people be involved in the evaluation?

At what level will their contribution be most valuable?

Who can benefit from learning from the project?

What are the concerns and questions they would like to have addressed?

Project team members, national constituents and other partners should periodically meet and analyse their experiences in order to enhance ownership and make sure the evaluation findings are used to increase the impact and sustainability of the project.

A similar evaluation criterion is also used by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to evaluate their intervention projects. It exhibits more or less similar characteristics with that of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria but also has extra features that are not used by the OECD/DAC criteria as shown in table 2.2 below.

The evaluation framework includes; the relevance and strategic fit of the project, the validity of design, project progress and effectiveness, the efficiency of resource use, effectiveness of management arrangements and the impact orientation and sustainability of the projects. As much as the evaluation criterions maybe closely related, it ought be emphasised that this study used the OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating its projects.

Table 4.2 below is an analytical framework with typical evaluation questions which are used in ILO evaluations:

Table 4.2: An analytical framework of evaluation questions

Parameter	Relevant evaluation questions
Relevance and strategic fit	- Does the project address a relevant need and decent work deficit? Was a needs analysis carried out at the beginning of the project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders? Are these needs still relevant? Have new, more relevant needs emerged that the project should address? -Have the stakeholders taken ownership of the project concept and approach since the design phase? -How does the project align with and support national development plans, the national poverty reduction strategy (PRS), national decent work plans, national plans of action on relevant issues (e.g., on employment creation, child labour, anti-trafficking, etc.), as well as programmes and priorities of the national social partners? -How does the project align with and support ILO strategies, i.e., the operational objectives of the thematic programming, decent work country programmes, mainstreamed strategies and other relevant strategies and policies of the ILO? -How well does the project complement and fit with other ILO projects/programmes in the country or countries of intervention and in the region? -How well does the project complement and link to activities of other donors at local level? How well does the project fit within the broader local donor context (United Nations and non-United Nations, making reference to UNDAF and donor consultative groups, where applicable)?
Validity of design	-What was the baseline condition at the beginning of project? How was it established? Was a gender analysis carried out? -Are the planned project objectives and outcomes relevant and realistic to the situation on the ground? Do they need to be adapted to specific (local, sectoral, etc.) needs or conditions? -Is the intervention logic coherent and realistic? What needs to be adjusted? -Do outputs causally link to the intended outcomes (immediate objectives) that link to broader impact (development objective)? How plausible are the underlying causal hypotheses? -What are the main strategic components of the project? How do they contribute and logically link to the planned objectives? How well do they link to each other?

	-Who are the partners of the project? How strategic are partners in terms of mandate, influence, capacities and commitment? -What are the main means of action? Are they appropriate and effective in achieving the planned objectives? -On which risks and assumptions does the project logic build? How crucial are they for the success of the project? How realistic are they? How far can the project control them? -How appropriate and useful are the indicators described in the project document in assessing the project's progress? Are the targeted indicator values realistic and can they be tracked? If necessary, how should they be modified to be more useful? Are indicators gender-sensitive? Are the means of verification for the indicators appropriate?
Project progress and effectiveness	-Is the project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives? Will the project be likely to achieve its planned objectives upon completion? -Have the quantity and quality of the outputs produced so far been satisfactory? Do the benefits accrue equally to men and women? -Are the project partners using the outputs? Have the outputs been transformed by project partners into outcomes? - How have stakeholders been involved in project implementation? How effective has the project been in establishing national ownership? Is project management and implementation participatory and is this participation contributing towards achievement of project objectives? Has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituencies and changing partner priorities? -has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic institutional etc changes in the environment? -Has the project approach demonstrated successes?
Efficiency of resource use	-Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? Have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost- effective? In general, do the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources? Have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
Effectiveness of management arrangements	-Are management capacities adequate? Does project governance facilitate good results and efficient delivery? Is there a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities by all parties involved? If the project has a national project steering or advisory committee, do the members have a good grasp of the project strategy? How do they contribute to the success of the project? How effective is communication between the project team, the field office, the regional office, the responsible technical department at headquarters and the donor? How effective is communication between the project team and the national implementing partners? Has co-operation with project partners been efficient? Has relevant gender expertise been sought? have available gender mainstreaming tools been adapted and utilised?
Impact orientation and sustainability	Can observed changes (in attitudes, capacities, institutions, etc) be casually linked to the project's interventions? In how far is the project making a significant to broader and longer-term development impact? Or how likely is it that it will eventually make one? Is the project strategy and project management steering towards impact? What are the realistic long-term effects of the project on the poverty level and the decent work condition of the people? Is there a need to scale down the project (ie if the project duration is shorter than planned) can the project be scaled up during its duration? If so, how do project

| | objectives and strategies have to be adjusted.

How effective and realistic is the exit strategy of the project? Is the project gradually being handed over to the national partners? Once external funding ends will national institutions and implementing partners be likely to continue the project or carry forward its results?

Are national partners willing and committed to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built national ownership?

Cam any unintended or unexpected positive or negative effects be observed as a consequence of the project's interventions? If so, how has the project strategy been adjusted? Have positive effects been integrated into the project strategy? has the strategy been adjusted to minimize negative effects?

Should there be a second phase of the project to consolidate achievements? |
|---|---|

Source: ILO evaluation guidance 2006:20

4.5 Conclusion

Although the Sustainable livelihoods approach has its own criticisms in terms of its usefulness in alleviating poverty, it is also a powerful tool in understanding how the poor people deal with their challenges. It is in fact a starting point in livelihoods analysis as it focuses on what the poor people have access to (resources) to construct sustainable livelihoods as opposed to what they need in order to survive. Furthermore, the approach has been valuable in this study due to the fact that it does not view poor people as a passive group who are at the mercy of social processes but as active agents responding to social and economic challenges as best as they possibly can. This view is in line with the belief held by the NGOs that in order to maintain sustainable development poverty should be looked at from a positive perspective, focussing on what poor people have rather than what they do not have. They may not have financial capital but they have natural resources around them, their local and traditional knowledge system of doing things as well as their skills which they can rely on for their livelihood.

In order to understand how NGOs apply this theory on the ground, the study has used an evaluation criterion which measures the impact of their interventions on the

rural communities. The criterion focuses on, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the intervention projects on the lives of the rural communities.

CHAPTER FIVE

A SOCIOLOGICAL PORTRAIT OF THE STUDY COMMUNITIES

5.1 Introduction

In order to fully answer the research questions in context, it is important to have an informed understanding of the communities and NGOs under investigation. It will be recalled that the study was conducted in two local municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province. These two local municipalities in the Amathole District Municipality were identified as: Raymond Mhlaba and Ngqushwa Local Municipalities. Under the Raymond Mhlaba local municipality, two communities were identified namely Dikidikane and Nxumbu Villages. In Nqgushwa municipality, the community involved was Ndlambe.

This chapter gives an overview of the characteristics of these municipalities as well as a detailed sociological portrayed of the selected communities. Furthermore, it outlines the profiles of the two NGOs (World Vision and Ruliv) which are the focus of our study.

5.2 Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality

Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality (formerly known as Nkonkobe) was established in 2000 and is made up of Alice, Middledrift, Fort Beaufort, Hogsback and Seymour/Balfour. It is the second largest local municipality covering 3 725km and constituting 16% of the surface area of the Amathole District municipality. Raymond Mhlaba local municipality is a countryside municipality that sits on the majestic mountain range of the Winterberg (Intaba zeNkonkobe). According to the 2011 census, the total population in this municipality is 127 115. It has 21 wards and is

dominated by large populace which is indigent. The majority of the population (72%) lives in the villages and farms while a minority (28%) lives in the urban areas (Nkonkobe IDP 2013/14).

In terms of its racial distribution, the majority are the Black Africans (95%) with very few coloured population (4%) and an insignificant population is the white population (1%). It is also noted that the population of Raymond Mhlaba local municipality is dominated by children, women and the elderly suggesting that the male population has migrated for employment opportunities in towns and cities. This migration of the male population has led to stagnant population growth which has a negative impact on economic activity (Census Data 2011). With such a situation, the implication is that women and the youth are the ones working on the land. With agriculture (crop production) as the main source of generating income, it raises questions as to how women and the young people are expected to produce much from the land which requires intensive labour to have a good harvest. However, the rate of poverty in this area is less than 40% which could be attributed to social grants, seasonal employment in the agriculture industry, as well as contributions by local government. The rate of unemployment is 68% which is the same as the average unemployment rate for the Amathole District. Agriculture is the main source of employment and is the economic potential in this area (Nkonkobe Municipality IDP 2014/15).

Dikidikane and Mxumbu are two of the many villages under the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality. Dikidikane village is located 32.9277 South and 26.9604 East, Ward 14 North East of Middledrift and runs a poultry project and Mxumbu village is located at approximately 32.9012 South and 26.7877 North in Ward 18 and is South East of Middledrift running a horticulture production project. These villages were

selected because they both have food security projects run by World Vision one of the NGOs under study.

Map 5.1 The map of Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality
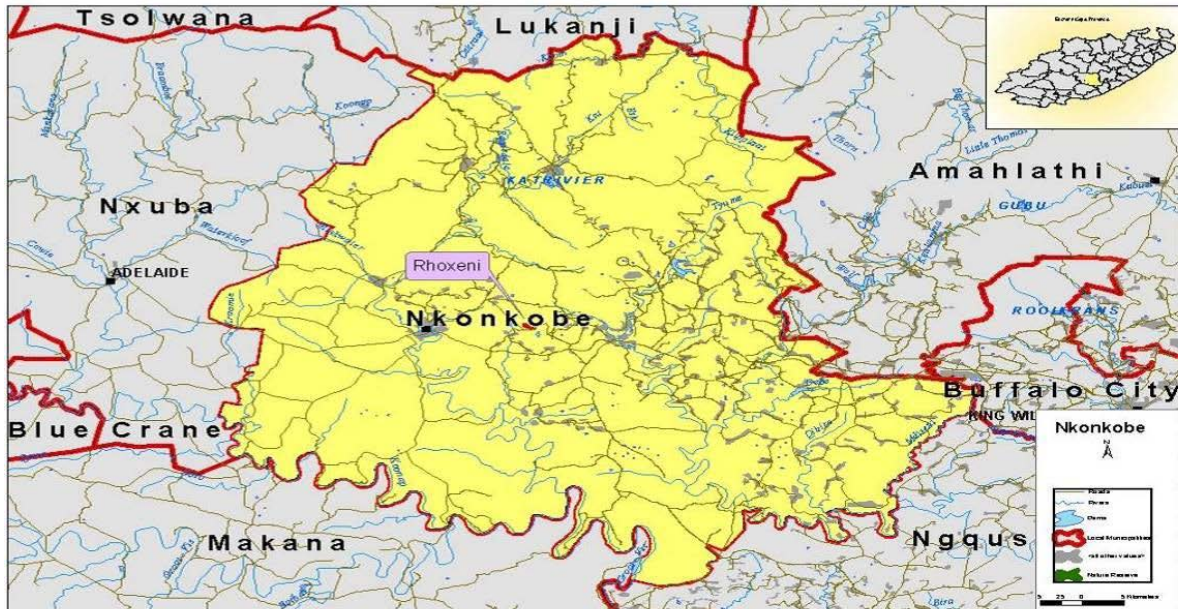
Source: www.places.co.za

5.3 Ngqushwa Local Municipality

Ngqushwa local Municipality falls within the jurisdiction of the Amathole District Municipality. It covers 2 245 square kilometres of land accounting for 10% of the district. Ngqushwa is located in the west of Amathole District and consists of two towns of Peddie and Hamburg a portion of King William's Town. This municipality consists of 118 villages bordered by the Great Fish River to the west and Keiskama river to the East. The southern boundary comprises a part of the coastline of the Indian ocean.

According to the 2011 census, Ngqushwa has a population of 84 233 people. The municipal area is predominantly rural in nature with 95% of the population residing in the rural areas and only 5% residing in the urban areas. It is further estimated that

38% of the population is 19 years and younger and about 10% of the population is 65 years and older meaning that about 52% of the population are between the ages of 20 and 64 which is the economically active group (Ngqushwa IDP 2012/17). In terms of racial composition, Ngqushwa has a predominantly black African population of 99% and the remaining 1% being coloured, white and Asian racial groups.

The rate of unemployment is very high in Ngqushwa municipality which according to Global Insights (2006) were calculated at 78%. This is the highest unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape which has an average unemployment rate of 58%. Most households earn less than R1500. Household income levels in this area are generally low. In fact, according to the 2011 census statistics 71% of the population earns below R800 per month. Agriculture was identified as being the main source of generating income and the municipality has put in place some agricultural enterprises to be promoted under local economic development (Ngqushwa IDP 2012/17).

Map 5.2 The map of Ngqushwa Local Municipality
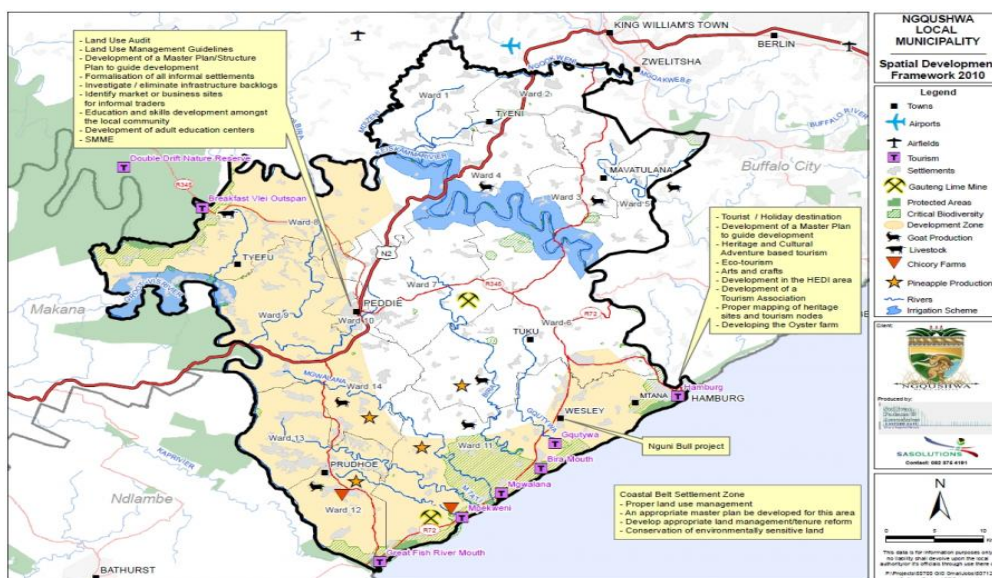
Source: www.sa-solutions.co.za

In Ngqushwa Local Municipality the village selected was Ndlambe village with GPS coordinates of 33.3253 South and 26.4312 East in Ward 16. The village runs projects supported by Ruliv NGO hence being chosen as research site. In Ndlambe village there are household food plots and a pomegranate fruit project also run by the community under the guidance of Ruliv.

The coordinates of the three sites indicate that they are located far from towns in the rural areas, which is where their problems are rooted from. Furthermore, the researcher noted high poverty depicted by sub-standard homesteads, poor road networks, poor health conditions such as lack of flushing toilets and lack of taped water and some households also lacked adequate food (see subsection 4.4) . These poverty indicators as explained in the section below, reinforced the suitability of these communities as selected study sites as NGOs target to bring interventions to such communities therefore worth evaluating if their interventions are making any impacts in these communities.

5.4 Study Communities: Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe

A variety of intersecting variables such as poverty levels, unemployment rate, gender dynamics, population size and composition, public infrastructure and local migration patterns in the study communities assist in contextually understanding local livelihood choices, actions and tribulations.

Unemployment is pervasive in all three study communities (Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe). The majority of local residents (who were present during data collection) and respondents were unemployed. For example, Mxumbu had the highest number of unemployed persons. Out of 50 respondents in the survey, 34 (68 percent) were unemployed. The remaining 16 (32 percent) were employed in different sectors in

King Williams Town or self-employed. Due to the high unemployment rate in the communities, the majority of people rely on public safety nets. These include social security grants such as older person's grant, child support, care-in-dependency and the disability grant. Out of the 150 households randomly sampled in the three communities, 95 (63%) relied on social grants as their main source of income with the old age and child support grant being the most popular (see Table 5.1 below):

Table 5.1 Social security grant recipients in study communities
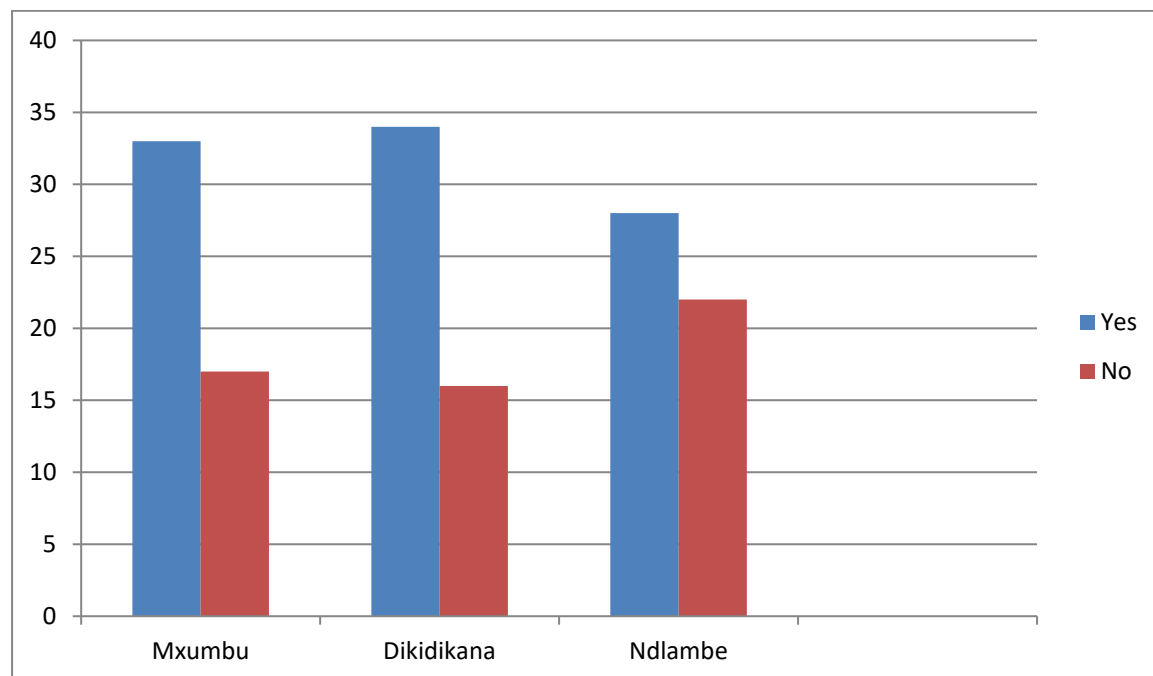
Source: Field data (2016)

In Dikidikana village, 68% of the respondents had no other source of income except social security grants. Similar high dependence on grants was observed in Mxumbu (66%) and in Ndlambe (56%). While these grants do enable recipient households to purchase some necessities, they are not enough to cover all their basic needs. Furthermore, the high dependency on these social security grants which pay out meagre amounts per month (R1 500 for old age and R350 for child support) is symptomatic of the chronic poverty levels in the study communities.

This chronic rural poverty is not unique to the study communities; it is prevalent throughout rural Eastern Cape. In addition to its negative effects on human development in the study communities, it has also had the unintended consequence of being a rural-urban migration push factor for many able bodied middle aged young men and women who are migrating to cities and towns in search of employment and other economic opportunities. As a result, the study found that the majority of those remaining in the villages were aged between 1-20 years and 51 years and above as shown in Figure 5.1 below:

Figure 5.1: Age distribution in study households
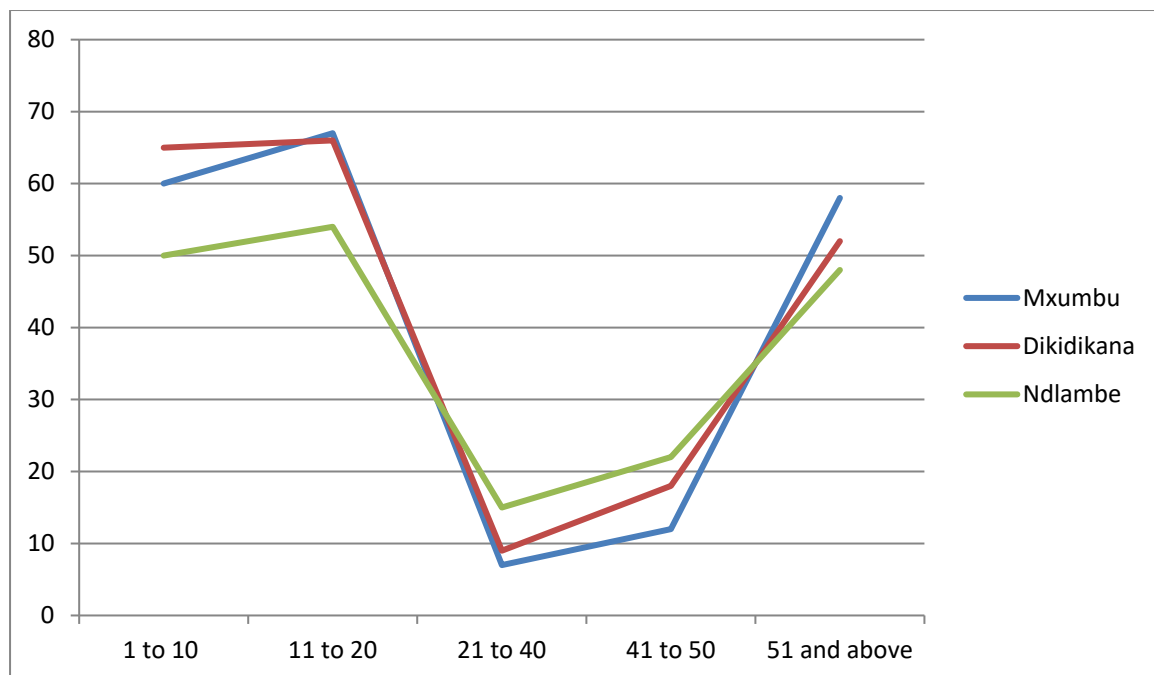
Source: Field data (2016)

From the above Figure 5.1, it is clear that the majority remaining in the villages are those aged below 20 who are of school going age. The next biggest cohort is in the 50+ age range while the fewest were the middle aged between 21 and 40 years. The low numbers of middle aged people (especially men) was a result of the high numbers of rural-urban migration as explained by one of the key informants who

noted that the lack of jobs in their communities is pushing many young people, especially young men to migrate. He further pointed out that after completing matric, those who have passed well go away to further their education in different cities and towns while those who fail also "*leave the village in search of any opportunities to brighten their future*" (Key informant 1, Ndlambe, 03/11/2015)

Big cities such as East London, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg, Cape Town and mining towns such as Rustenburg are the preferred destinations for these middle aged people searching for employment and economic opportunities. The net effect of this rural-urban migration is fourfold: Firstly, it means the study rural communities are mostly inhabited by people (elderly and young) who cannot engage in full-time labour intensive formal work. Secondly, the high concentration of these two age groups (old and young) partly explains the high unemployment rate in the study communities since the remaining locals are either too young or too old to work. Thirdly, the high dependence on social security grants (old age and child grants) in the communities might also be because of the predominance of these two age groups. Fourthly, rural-urban migration is also the main reason why there are very few young able bodied young men in the villages. All these rural-urban migration effects are crucial in understanding the nature, organisation and structure of the local community development projects in the study villages. For example, as will be demonstrated later on in this chapter as well as in chapters six and seven, the predominance of the elderly in the communities partly explains why the majority project members were mainly the elderly and a handful of middle aged persons. Age is thus one of the analytical variables that not only influenced who participates in the community development projects but also partly determined the nature of projects imitated in the study communities.

The high numbers of men migrating to cities and mining towns has also altered the local population gender composition and dynamics in the study villages. This was confirmed through the survey questionnaire wherein women constituted the majority (70%) of respondents.

Table 5.2 Gender Composition of participants

Gender	Mxumbu	Dikidikana	Ndlambe
Male	14	22	23
Female	36	28	27
Total	50	50	50

Source: Field data 2016

As will be shown later on in this chapter, this gender composition of the local population has to a certain extent influenced the type of development projects being implemented in the villages. These projects are what can be colloquially called 'women's projects' simply because they are generally favoured or preferred by women for a variety of reasons. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated how the remaining female majority are showing agency thus driving local community development. This agency by rural Eastern Cape women – which has thus far not

been fully acknowledged – is one of the new contributions made by this study as it challenges the erroneous generalisation that these rural women are passive poor residents solely dependent on social security safety nets and remittances from their migrant husbands, partners, children and other relatives.

5.4.1 Level of education

The level of education among survey respondents was very low. The majority (53%) were only educated up to primary school level (see Table 5.3 below); 27% had gone up to secondary school while 15% had never attended school:

Table 5.3: Levels of education of participants in study communities

Education level	Mxumbu	Dikidikana	Ndlambe	Total (%)
Diploma	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)
College certificate	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	5 (10%)	7 (5%)
High School	11 (22%)	14 (28%)	15 (30%)	40 (27%)
Primary School	28 (56%)	29 (58%)	23 (46%)	80 (53%)
Never went to school	8 (16%)	7 (14%)	7 (14%)	22 (15%)
Total	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	50 (100%)	150 (100%)

Source: Field data (2016)

This low level of education is not surprising given that the majority of respondents were the elderly (as mentioned above) who grew up during the colonial and apartheid era which did not prioritise proper education of black people. The uneducated elderly in the villages are thus a reminder of the segregate effects and 'ghettoization' of black people by the rogue apartheid regime. They are also a cue of how the underdevelopment of villages and black people in South Africa should always be understood within a historiography context of the negative effects of the apartheid system.

However, for the few middle aged people who were survey respondents, their low level of education should be understood through a prism that recognises some of the failures of the post-apartheid state in delivering education for all. While it has to be acknowledged that the ANC government has done a lot in improving access to quality basic education for millions of black South Africans, it has to be said that it has not done enough especially in Eastern Cape rural areas. Many rural areas in the Eastern Cape do not have proper school infrastructure while some have none at all. For example, in Mxumbu, the nearest secondary school is located about 18kms from the village. This long distance is a hindrance to schooling as many young people from the village drop out before finishing high school every year.

5.4.2 Public infrastructure

In common with so many other rural areas in the Eastern Cape Province, Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe villages are located in far-flung 'deep' rural areas which lack a lot of basic infrastructure. For example, their gravel road network is poor and inaccessible.

This poor road network (coupled with the long distance to the nearest town or city) has obvious implications on their accessibility for developmental purposes. Due to their inaccessibility, they are largely isolated and 'out of sight' from government officials mandated with spearheading rural development. Local citizens' existential problems are thus not immediately addressed due to their isolation as government officials rarely visit these villages on local development missions. Furthermore, the distance from towns and cities as well as the poor road network negatively affects the way locals lead their social lives and limits their access to economic opportunities external to their communities. This is because very few cars ever drive through these villages; hence locals rarely travel to the nearest towns and cities to explore social and economic opportunities which might advance their livelihood strategies.

5.5 Profile of NGOs under study

Two NGOs have been used as the case studies: World Vision and Ruliv. World Vision is an internationally reputable NGO and Ruliv on the other hand is a local NGO but they both offer more or less the same interventions to the rural communities, however, due to the nature of the study this thesis only focussed on food security programmes.

5.5.1 World Vision International

World Vision International is a development, relief and advocacy NGO that has been in existence since 1950. When it was initiated, its focus was on providing for orphaned children but upon realising that they was more than just orphans who were needy they expanded their focus to cater for children, families and communities. Today World Vision is one of the popular NGOs with more than 100 offices worldwide. As a non-governmental organisation, World Vision works closely with

communities to bring out a better understanding of the root causes of poverty. Their aim is to mobilise communities to work together and overcome poverty through utilising their skills and the available resources, to become self-reliant and be able to sustain their families and communities. This is shown through their mission statement; Transformational development, relief and advocacy.

One way of attaining this is through the use of participatory methods (as described in chapter 3 of this thesis). The communities are actively engaged in finding solutions to the challenges which cause poverty and hinder progress. In addition to finding their own solutions is also the fact that most of the World Vision employees in their programmes (facilitators and fieldworkers) are from the communities where the projects take place. This not only provides employment for these people but there is also trust when community members are working with people of their own. That way there is openness and trust among each other and the participation is usually much better than when complete strangers approach them with help.

In Africa, World Vision South Africa (WVSA) is also a member of World Vision International (WVI) and was established in 1967. It implements integrated development interventions in the nine provinces of the country with its own national board. Like World Vision International, WVSA seeks to bring out holistic sustainable transformation development in the lives of the poor and marginalised communities. It is hoped that by addressing the root causes of poverty the organisation helps the poor to also achieve life in all its fullness (World Vision Report 2004). At the time of its commencement WVSA was working in partnership with some churches to assist mainly with child related problems. Today however, it boosts of helping more than a million people in its wide range projects.

WVSA supports long term development interventions through area development programmes (ADPs). The ADPs are used to identify the type of intervention suitable for each community. It is through the ADPs that World Vision is able to facilitate community development. The aim of the ADP is to empower local communities so that they can be able to own their own development process in the long run. Once an area is identified as seeking intervention, a committee from that area is formed which will be working closely with World Vision staff to identify the exact needs that can help develop the area. Below is a figure which summarises a generalized operation of how World Vision operates:

Figure 5.3: A generalised account of World Vision's Development Approach.

World Vision is approached by the community
An individual in the community, a group, or local government authority may request World Vision for help. This signals that the community has a need and they have heard of World Vision's work.

World Vision approaches the community

- As part of their work in a cluster of villages or
- To start a new project as part of the World Vision's country

Relationship building

After the initial contact World Vision staff visit the community to build relationships,

Information gathering

World Vision staff work with the community to:

- Determine what they consider their strengths.
- Dream about what and how they might progress.
- Examine things that are preventing development and how these might be overcome.
- Determine how they could work together and what resources they can contribute e.g. labour, materials, money.
- Gather information on local issues such as birth rates, agricultural production levels, yearly weather patterns, distribution of work, roles of men and women, incidence of diseases etc.

Community committee

A community committee is established to work with World Vision project staff to set goals, make plans for implementation, identify ways progress will be measured and track improvement. Ideally both men and women are involved in the committee.

Project implementation
World Vision staff work with the community providing advice and arranging training for community committees and local leaders on project management and leadership skills.
Expansion of project
After having established a working relationship (one to two years) and developed capabilities a broader program is undertaken. Child Sponsorship as a long-term funding source is introduced. The community has the responsibility to select the children most in need to avoid jealousies and division within the community.

Source: Adapted from World Vision Report (2003;3)

In the Eastern Cape Province, World Vision has been involved in a variety of programmes ranging from health, education and social welfare. Of particular interest for this thesis are the food security programmes that have been initiated in that province. A number of communities identified vegetable gardening and poultry as some of the projects in their area development plans (ADPs) which they could run in order to sustain their livelihoods. World Vision worked with these communities to set up the projects and begin their journey to self-reliance. One good example of such a project is that of Daba and Sons in the Balfour community. They identified vegetable gardening for their area and were assisted with seedlings of onions, cabbage and beetroot. The produce from these vegetables helped the project to buy some seeds for other vegetables like butternut and carrots as well as agricultural implements which they needed. In addition to these they were also able to expand their project to include poultry and they bought a batch of broilers which would start them off. To show the success of their project, they harvested 600 bags of butternut which they sold to the local and surrounding shops as well as to the community. As a way of helping their community they in turn also donated some of their vegetables to some local schools to help with the feeding schemes. In addition to this, they employed the young people within their community to help with harvesting and although they were not paid in cash, they were paid by receiving those vegetables which they could either sell or take to their homes for consumption. By merely contributing those seedlings at the beginning, World Vision has been able to make a difference to the lives of many people in Balfour and their surrounding communities.

Furthermore, another project was established which was a Farmers' Co-operative. A group of interested individuals set this up and asked for assistance from World Vision to train them on how to use farming as a source of living. They were

capacitated with vast knowledge on how their own land could be their source of income. They were taught about how to grow different types of vegetables, poultry and how to raise different types of animals. It was an eye opener for most of these individuals who were unemployed and were struggling to make ends meet. They were also assisted with seeds to start up home gardens but were encouraged to work together and help each other.

Another successfully implemented project in the Eastern Cape is a poultry project that was specifically started for the youth. The children involved are aged between 12 and 15 years and they still go to school. World Vision works closely with these children by empowering them with business and project management skills. The children came up with the project themselves and were encouraged to write a proposal asking for funds from World Vision which they did and were granted the help they needed. They were provided with 100 egg-laying chickens and other equipment needed to start a poultry project. Once everything was established the project was up and running. The children take full responsibility of the chickens, they make sure that they are well fed to the extent of checking on them during their school breaks and spend a lot of time there after school.

The project is doing very well such that they have managed to open a bank account for it. With the layers producing over 100 eggs per day, the project has become self-sustaining. Although they manage to make some profit, most of it is used for buying chicken feed and medication for the chickens. Their market is the local supermarkets and members of their community. This project is doing very well and World Vision still continues to support them through further training them on other relevant skills such as record keeping and accounting. They continue to receive coaching and mentoring form the World Vision staff. This project has been a huge success

considering that it is run by young people. They hope that in future their project will expand into a huge business that would help combat poverty in their community. They wish to be able to create employment for the many unemployed people and address the challenge of poverty in their community which seems to be affecting a lot of people.

The children feel that they have a social responsibility for their community and have decided that once they have enough funds they would like to buy some school uniforms and other basic items for their peers and their families who cannot afford such items. Their project is well managed that they even have a market for their off-layers when they sell the chickens that are too old to lay eggs. Because of their determination and hard work, World Vision is in the process of helping the children register their project with the local authorities to link it with the local markets. The future looks bright for these youth as some markets are showing interest in working with them.

The above are some of the examples of case studies of projects run by World Vision in the Eastern Cape outside of the projects selected for the study. World Vision is doing a lot in helping communities in need. It is able to reach out to those at grassroots level who tend to be forgotten or left to fend for themselves in the middle of nowhere. World Vision is a typical example of what NGOs are all about when it comes to helping the poor.

5.5.2 Ruliv

Ruliv is a local NGO based in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa which provides support services around all aspects of rural and urban development. Although working primarily in the Eastern Cape, it has occasionally ventured further

afield to other provinces such as Kwa-Zulu Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the North West. Ruliv offers services to a diverse range of clients ranging from village-based community development organisations, business groups as well as local, provincial and national government and state agencies. The core business of Ruliv covers an entire spectrum of socio-economic development from planning facilitation to the implementation management of development interventions and continuous mentoring support towards sustainability and independence (Ruliv, 2013).

In order to see the success of their work, Ruliv applies and promotes participatory approaches to its development praxis focusing on building social capital resulting in empowered communities. Focus is based on the asset-based development approach by building on and enhancing the communities' inherent strengths through application based training and capacity development. One of the key outcomes for Ruliv is to build capable and informed communities who are able to take charge of their future development on their own. Household food and nutrition security is regarded as key to the well-being of the impoverished communities. To date, Ruliv has provided support to 18 projects across the Eastern Cape in facilitating clear, long term development plans aimed at enhancing the communities' asset bases towards sustainable socio-economic development and growth (Ruliv, 2013).

Since February 2008, Ruliv has been running a Sustainable Rural Development in the Eastern Cape (SURUDEC) programme in partnership with the European Union (EU). The main aim is to reduce poverty in the province by providing grant funding to support the design and implementation of integrated community driven development plans. SURUDEC supports activities which mobilise and sustainably grow the asset base of the communities whether social, economic and environmental. On realising that in development sometimes communities are encouraged to focus on their needs

and problems and tends to ignore the assets and resources that they already have, SURUDEC encourages communities to design and implement their own integrated community development plans (ICDPs) which build on existing assets and resources.

ICDPs are plans of action that indicate ways in which the economic situation of a community will be improved and how its asset base will grow over time. These plans will in turn inform district and local government IDPs which benefits the community in the long run.

SURUDEC funds activities which build social capital and livelihood assets in communities. The funding was divided into two categories (Call 1 and Call 2). Call 1 known as the Building Communities Fund applied to communities that had initiative and vision but did not yet have a plan in place and were not formally organised. The aim of this fund was to help communities in planning an intervention which could build social networks and strengthen social capital. Call 2 the Fast Track Delivery Fund applied to communities that already had plans, projects and some partnership in place and are ready to implement their development plans. The main intention of the Call 2 programme was to facilitate the transformation of the already existing community plans into more integrated development plans and implement aspects of these plans so as to bring community assets into active use.

According to SURUDEC reports, the programme has sponsored 19 projects with grants. Out of these, 9 were from Call 1 on Building Communities Fund and the other 10 were from Call 2 the Fast Track Delivery Fund. An example of the Call 1 projects is the Ndlambe household and food plots where 0.25 hectares of land were allocated to each household in the Ndlambe village. They were supplied with seeds and an

irrigation system as well as training on how to use their plots effectively in order to be self-reliant. Up to 180 households had been allocated with these food plots and making use of them and others were yet to be allocated to any interested person in that village.

The pomegranate project was from the Call 2 programme where Ruliv worked with this community on an already existing but failing project. This project is of pomegranate fruit which was started in 2007 but has been neglected and failing so Ruliv came in trying to revive the project and make it viable and bring the community assets into use. In this project 115 hectares of land are planted with pomegranate fruit but because there was no proper ICDP the fruits were not harvested for profit yet could be a huge source of income for the community.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has given a sociological portrait of the local municipalities, the study communities and the profiles of NGOs under study. The two local municipalities are rural and isolated which has been identified as one of the main causes for lack of development. Although all three communities are different in nature, they have been described as exhibiting more or less similar characteristics which portray the characteristics of most rural communities in South Africa. All three communities are characterised by variables such as high poverty levels, high unemployment rates, gender dynamics, irregular population sizes and compositions, poor public infrastructure and high levels of local migration patterns. These variables have huge implications on the livelihoods of the rural communities hence the need for interventions from third sector organisations. The profiles of the two NGOs have also

shown how they operate in the rural communities in trying to make a difference in the lives of the poor people which are explained in detail in chapter 6 and 7 of this thesis.

The following chapter focuses on the methodology and methods that were used to gather data in the study communities.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological framework that guided data collection, synthesis and analysis. It describes the methodology, methods and techniques that were used in the collection of empirical data to address the questions of this thesis. Methodology considers and explains the logic behind the chosen research methods and techniques while methods deal with forms of data collection, interpretation and analysis. Lastly, techniques are the tools or instruments used to collect data (Welman, Kuger and Mitchell 2009).

As pointed out in chapter one of this thesis, the focus of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of some selected NGO supported projects in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape in South Africa. This was to be achieved through answering three guiding questions:

   i.   What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development and how do the modes of project implementation impact on project viability?

   ii.   How effective are the non-governmental organisation sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods?

   iii. What factors affect the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects?

To answer these three questions effectively, triangulation research was used, which according to Barbie and Motton (2003:275) is a plan of action that combines

methods from different paradigms and methodologies. They further explain that it is the best ways of enhancing a study's validity and reliability. The study used a mixed method approach, with the aid of a mini survey, FGDs, in-depth and key-informant interviews, as well as non-participant observation. The qualitative component enabled the researcher to gain the necessary depth with regard to, especially the 'beneficiary perspective', which answered the second and third research questions. Besides, even research question 1 did make a demand on, among other things, non-participant observation (a qualitative method). Creswell (2009) also states that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals and groups ascribe to a social or human problem (see Nachmias 2000:256).

Quantitative research on the other hand is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. Quantitative methods emphasise the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables not processes. As such the conclusions of quantitative methods fail to explain socio-political reality which is effectively done by the qualitative methods hence its choice as the main method in this study. Qualitative research allows the use of a wide range of interconnected techniques in order to get as close to the truth as possible. The techniques that were used include structured and semi structured interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, observation and analysis of secondary data. The quantitative technique that was used is a mini survey which utilised a structured questionnaire. The use of both methods addresses validity and reliability because the bias in one method is offset by the use of another method. The two methods are used to complement each other in order to achieve broader and often

better results. The table below shows a detailed description of the methods and techniques used in addressing each of the research questions:

Table 6.1: Research Methods linked to research questions

RESEARCH QUESTION	RESEARCH METHOD AND SOURCES OF EMPIRICAL DATA	JUSTIFICATION
What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development and how do the modes of project implementation impact on project viability?	**Key Informant interviews** with relevant officials of the two NGOs. **In-depth semi-structured interviews** with relevant stakeholders: project members, selected members of the community, NGO officials and authority figures of the community.	Key informants are by virtue of their positions in specific organisations, expected to be knowledgeable about the programmes and projects they run. This method allows the researcher to yield data on the types of projects that are supported by the NGOs in the selected communities, from the community members and other relevant authorities.
How effective are the NGO sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods?	**Mini survey** of a random sample of community members. n = 200 (conf. level: 95%; conf. interval: +/- 6.9%) **In-depth semi-structured interviews** with local authorities, members of the community, NGO officials and authority figures of the study communities. **FGD**: FGDs with less than 10 participants each. One FGD in each of the villages.	The views and opinions of the beneficiaries and authority figures will reflect if the projects are effective in their lives or otherwise. This method will enable the researcher to find out the opinions from the people involved about the effectiveness of the projects. FGDs bring out the more dynamic views about what is happening more vividly hence information on effectiveness should emerge.
What factors impinge on the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects?	**In-depth semi-structured interviews** with NGO officials and members of the study communities. **FGD**: FGDs with at most 10 participants each. One FGD in each of the villages. **Mini survey** of a random sample of community members. n = 200 (conf. level: 95%; conf. interval: +/- 6.9%) **Review** of organisation documents and reports.	This method enables the researcher to elicit data on the issues affecting effectiveness of the NGOs on the benefiting communities. Focus groups will be able to tell the challenges encountered in the projects to render them effective or otherwise. A survey will bring out different opinions from the community members about the effectiveness of the projects. Reviewing organisational documents and reports could yield to useful insight on the success or failure of the programmes.

Source: Moyo (2014)

Details of the research design and the explanations of the various research techniques are presented in the following sections:

6.2 Research approaches

The methodology used in a given study is hugely influenced by the nature of the study. This study sought to do an evaluation on the effectiveness of intervention projects supported by non-governmental organisations in the rural communities of the Eastern Cape, and to find out what impinges on the success of the projects in some communities. As already stated in this chapter, a qualitative study was triangulated with a quantitative approach to strengthen the findings of the research. An evaluative study requires insights from the community itself on what has been happening in their livelihoods since the involvement of the NGOs. They need to narrate and describe the impact of the projects and hence the reason for choosing a qualitative study. Qualitative studies are known for describing and understanding a phenomenon rather than just explaining human behaviour. The quantitative method adopted (i.e. a mini survey) allowed the generation of standardised data across the sample. The study used the following data collection techniques to gather empirical data from the study areas identified above: key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observation, analysis of secondary data and a mini survey. Below are the factors that explain the choice, the application as well as the limitations of these instruments. (See also Table 6.1)

6.2.1 Key informant interviews

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects, it was imperative for the researcher to engage relevant officials who have knowledge and experience on intervention projects and their effects on the lives of the rural communities. These key informant interviews enabled the researcher to compare the responses from the point of view of officials and those of the community members and do a proper

evaluation. Two groups of key informants were identified; the staff members of the NGOs under study as well as the leaders of the projects in the communities.

NGO staff members were selected because they work with the rural communities under study; they are the driving forces of these projects and would therefore have the knowledge about the effectiveness of their work on the rural communities. The researcher visited the World Vision and Ruliv offices and explained the purpose of the research and the project leaders and fieldworkers of the relevant projects were identified and recommended for further interviews. The respondents interviewed were therefore the NGO staff from the two NGOs concerned, the traditional community leaders and project leaders in the three communities. The key informants were, by virtue of their positions in organisations, expected to be knowledgeable about projects run by their organisations and the traditional leaders were helpful in explaining the socio-economic conditions of their communities prior to and after NGO intervention projects. They were able to enlighten the researcher on the relevant questions they were asked. The project committee leaders shared information pertaining to the socio-economic development programmes that have been introduced in their communities. These interviews used a semi-structured format which has an advantage of being flexible allowing the researcher to probe deeper into what the respondents maybe leaving out. The open ended questions allowed the interviewees to answer question in detail elaborating some points of interest and leaving no room for doubt. These techniques yielded data that was rich in detail and answered all the research questions in pursuit.

Table 6.2 Key Informant Interviews conducted

Community/ Organisation	Sample Size	Gender	
		M	F
Dikidikane	4	1	3
Mxumbu	4	2	2
Ndlambe	4	2	2
World Vision	2	1	1
Ruliv	2	2	0
Total	16	8	8

Source (Moyo: 2015)

A total of 16 key informant interviews were conducted from all the relevant sources. Four were from each community who included the traditional leaders and the project leaders. The remaining 4 were from the two organisations (World Vision and Ruliv). Both groups were welcoming and gave a lot of relevant information about the projects. Picture 6.1 below shows an interaction between the chief of one of the villages and the research team.

Picture 6.1 Interaction between the Chief of Ndlambe village and the research team.

Source: Field Data (2015)

6.2.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussion was another technique used for collecting data in this study. FGDs draw their principles from participatory rural appraisal which is a methodology which helps in interacting with local communities, understanding them and learning from them. It encourages the involvement of locals for indigenous knowledge building exercises. It is a way of learning from and with community members to investigate, analyse and evaluate constraints and opportunities regarding development projects (Participatory Community Development Training Manual PCD 2007). Focus groups are also used for exploring different opinions and attitudes towards a project. They usually draw out some rather interesting contributions from

interviewees who may at first be reluctant to participate but the contributions of others end up engaging them to also contribute their opinions. Because of their less formal nature, focus groups can lead to some insights that otherwise may not have been raised at all in formal one to one interviews.

It should be noted that one characteristic of FGDs is that the respondents must have similar backgrounds and experiences so that they are at the same level on the topic under discussion. The whole idea behind FGDs is to understand some group ideas on a certain issue; therefore the participants ought to have knowledge on the issue being discussed. The groups are not supposed to be too large otherwise they tend to be difficult to control with some speakers interrupting each other as they speak. At the same time they are not supposed to be too small because they end up becoming more like interviews. In this study, the focus group consisted of members of the community who were involved in the food projects run by both NGOs World Vision and RuLiv. They were all closely involved with the running of the projects and were able to talk about their experiences as project members as were required by the researcher. These focus groups were used to understand how the projects were run, their success as well as their areas of weakness and how the local communities viewed them in general. They were able to provide some local perspectives on the NGO interventions based on their own experiences.

One FGD was held in each of the study communities. The groups consisted of between eight to ten participants per community in order to control the discussion properly. The researcher facilitated the discussion by introducing herself first as well as the research assistants and reminded the participants that the discussion was for academic purposes only and asked them to speak freely, openly and truthfully as possible. The participants were also informed that the discussion would be recorded

but assured them that the information said would be safe with her and used for research only and nothing would be used for political or any other reasons they feared. In addition to tape recording the researcher was also taking notes which would be used for comparison purposes during transcription. The participants present in all the FGDs were the chairperson of each project, the deputy chairperson, the secretary and the rest were the members of the projects. Although it was requested by the researcher to have an even number of males and females, it was not possible because the Dikidikane and Mxumbu co-operatives have far more women than males and even when they attended the FGDs the numbers were uneven. In Dikidikane there were 8 members present, out of those 6 were females and 2 were males and in Mxumbu there were 9 and out of these only 3 were males. The Ndlambe group had a fair representation of both males and females in their FGD.

The researcher had arranged with the chairperson of each co-operative in all the communities during an earlier visit for a day to have the FGD with the co-operative members. It was left upon the chairperson to communicate with the rest of the members to agree on a suitable date when the FGD would be facilitated, also requested was the even distribution of members who would be attending the discussion. This was done so as to balance the discussion and hear opinions from both males and females. There is a tendency to look down on women in the rural areas yet their contribution to rural development has proven to be very significant. Once the convenient dates were agreed with the researcher the discussions were carried out with the help of research assistants in translating some terms which the researcher could not quite understand. The discussions went well with full participation from all the members who were present although women were a bit

reluctant to talk at first they eventually participated in giving their thoughts and opinions on what was happening in their projects. The pictures below show the interactions during the FGDs in Mxumbu and Dikidikana villages.

Picture 6.2 FGD with the horticulture project members.

Source: Field data (2015)

Picture 6.3 FGD with poultry project members

Source: Field data (2015)

Picture 6.4 FGD with Ndlambe household food plots members

Source: Field data (2015)

6.2.3 Non-participant Observation

Non-participant observation was also utilised as a data collection method. Its utilisation was in line with the best traditions of qualitative sociological inquiry. Following this tradition, the researcher observed daily activities and took note of everything without making herself a part of the activities, besides having informative conversations with those engaged in the activities. It is believed that during fieldwork vital information can be gathered through the use of a good and normal conversation. This may help complement what the interviewee may say or at times contradict what is being said. In the case of this research it was beneficial to photograph the areas visited especially the sites where the projects took place.

The researcher began her work through pilot visits to Mxumbu, Dikidikane and Ndlambe communities in June 2015. The researcher first visited the NGO offices in East London (RuLiv) and Middledrift (World Vision) introducing herself and explaining the study that she was pursuing. The managers of the NGOs approved of the research and were able to provide with relevant information of the people who

had to be contacted and arrange to meet them. When permission had been granted to visit the sites the researcher hired a bakkie (van) to travel to these communities because the NGO staff had warned that the roads to these communities were rough and so needed a strong vehicle to get there. The manager at World Vision was kind enough to give 2 fieldworkers who had been working with these specific communities to accompany us to their projects and introduce us to the chairperson of the projects. The first place visited was Mxumbu Village which had a tomato project. It took nearly 3 hours to get there not because the place was very far but because the roads were very rough dust roads so the driver had to be slow and careful. The chairperson and three other project members were waiting on the site. After explaining what the whole visit was about they welcomed the idea of becoming a study site and took us on a tour of the whole site. The researcher observed that the site was situated close to a dam, the soil was very fertile and the whole garden was fenced. They were also a few other women working on the tomatoes although they did not become part of this first meeting. Immediately noted was the fact that the chairperson was an elderly person and the two other members present were also old.

On the second day the pilot visit was still with World Vision so the fieldworkers accompanied us to the next place, a village called Dikidikane where they were running a poultry project. It took even longer to get there because this community was further up and the roads were equally bad. Upon arrival we found the chairperson and some project members also waiting for us. The same procedure was followed and we were shown around the site. The researcher was quick to observe that there was one fowl run which was divided into three sections, there was no electricity and there were only women present at this meeting. Also observed during these visits was that the community seems to rely on subsistence farming,

they were small vegetable plots which however had no vegetables planted, they were animals such as sheep, goats and a few cows loitering around the area. Groups of young men were observed to be sitting under the shades in the nearby shops and considering the time of day it was clear that these young men were sitting there because they had nothing to do. This became a first indication of a problem of youth unemployment in the area, and it created the impression that the youth who were unemployed would be the main participants in the project yet what the researcher later found was the opposite. The youth was not involved in the projects even though they were unemployed.

The third day was a visit to a different place, in Ngqushwa Municipality which was further away so the researcher had to wake up very early in order to arrive in time for the set appointment. This time there was no fieldworker to accompany the research team as we were visiting a different NGO (Ruliv). We were relying on the directions given by the contact person from Ndlambe community which we got from the Ruliv offices. After driving for a very long time we were not sure whether we were still heading the right direction and stopped to ask people who were walking nearby. After asking several other people we finally arrived and we were late by 30 mins but our hosts understood that it was a new place for us and it was difficult to drive fast because it had been raining so the roads were wet and slippery so we had to be extremely careful. After the formal introductions and all the formalities done we were also taken to see the sites of these projects. First we went to the pomegranate fruit project, it was a large piece of land covered with dry plants. The chairperson explained that they were dry because it was the winter season and they would start sprouting towards the end of the year and are harvested at the beginning of the year.

The researcher observed that they were irrigation pipes lying around and connected to the irrigation system and one could see that they had never been used before.

The chairperson of Ndlambe and her team then took us to the other section of their project, the food plots. The drive to the food plots was difficult because the road was very narrow, had deep potholes and not suitable for a car. They said they always walk to the plots but on that day they suggested we drive because it was raining and we would get wet. After carefully negotiating the narrow road we arrived at a very big portion of land which stretched to the other side of the village. It was well fenced and had a gate which was closed at all times to keep animals away. The researcher noted how big the fenced area was, there were also irrigation pipes which were connected and the sprinklers could also be seen in the plots.

The chairperson explained how the land had been divided and showed us some plots that were divided for different households. Also noted was that there were some plots which had green vegetables showing that there were being cultivated at that time. Others on the other hand still had some dried maize stalks showing that they had not been cultivated since harvesting their maize crops. Despite the rains on that day, some members of the community were actually working on their plots at the time of the visit. The chairperson further explained that it was up to the different households how and when they worked on their plots they were not followed up every time.

It was at these pilot visits that the researcher asked for appointments to be made for later visits to begin collecting data when permission had been granted from the local authorities. To save time and costs of travelling to and from, the chair persons suggested they would approach the local authority known as 'Inkosana' (the chief)

and let them know about the intended studies in their communities. They did not envisage any problems because they have good working relations with the chiefs and some are even part of the projects. Also requested were research assistants from each community who would assist the researcher once data collection began. The research assistants had to be young people who were able to read, write and speak English. This request was made because the researcher is not a native speaker of Xhosa (the local language) although she can understand and speak it since she is also from a Nguni speaking tribe which is closely related to Xhosa. However for purposes of communicating with the elderly a native speaker of Xhosa was ideal who was able to clearly explain the questions. The assistants had to be English proficient so as to be able to translate the questions from English to Xhosa. It was agreed that once permission had been granted by the local authority figures the chairpersons would communicate with the researcher and data collection would begin. During that period the researcher was also applying for ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee which was granted within a few weeks.

6.2.4 Secondary Data

All organisations always keep records of their work in the form of project reports. This is where all information about a project is recorded. When all the work is completed a full, detailed report is produced which describes the whole intervention and whether it was a success or a failure. Both NGOs were willing to show their reports to the researcher on the projects concerned. Their reports provided rich data that helped in understanding how these NGOs function. The use of secondary data was useful in research in this case it was a way of cross-checking whether what the

NGO staff said during interviews tallies with what they have on their reports as well as what was said by the project members in the focus group discussions.

6.2.5 Mini Survey

As already stated, this research also used a mini-survey for data collection. The reason behind the use of a mini survey was to be able to hear the opinions of other members of the communities about the projects running in their communities. It should be remembered that these projects are run by a small percentage of the population in these communities, yet they are meant to benefit the whole community; so what do others say about them? Are they seen as helpful as the members of the projects say or are they just another project which do not affect their lives in any way? According to Creswell (2003:154), a survey provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. Rather than interviewing everyone in the whole population of the study, which is impossible due to a lot of factors, the survey covers for everyone through inferencing from the sample. The whole point of doing a survey is to reach a conclusion based on a sample of the population for generalisation in the whole population. Inferences can be made based on the sample but applied to the whole community (Barbie and Mouton 2001:164).

The researcher was trying to gauge the opinions of other community members pertaining to the impact of these NGO projects on their lives. The questions addressed in the survey asked for their thoughts based on their experiences, observations and the impact that these projects have on their communities.

Table 6.3   Sample characteristics

Communities	Sample size	Gender	
		Male	Female
Mxumbu	50	14	36
Dikidikane	50	22	28
Ndlambe	50	23	27
Total	150	59	91
Confidence level 95%		Confidence interval	+/-6.9%

Source: researcher's field notes (2015)

A sample size of 150 was estimated from the populations of the three communities using a Macorr Sample Size calculator. This sample size meant 50 respondents from each community. It has to be pointed out that the total population estimates for all the communities were not known but the calculations were done using a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of +/-6.9%.

From the researcher's previous experiences in survey research, the researcher had problems with the return rate of questionnaires. It was very difficult to get the completed questionnaires in time and some were never returned. This experience taught the researcher to device other means of distributing the questionnaires in order to improve the return rate. The questionnaires were designed in such a way that they were short, simple and straight forward to complete. The researcher administered each questionnaire and waited for it to be completed so as to avoid a

low return rate. So, for all the questionnaires the researcher and the assistants were present when the respondents were completing the questionnaire. This was also an advantage because the respondents would ask when they were not sure of the question and the researcher or the assistant clarified it. While this was time consuming it was worth it in the end because all the questionnaires were returned. The return rate of the questionnaires was not a challenge at all as they were collected immediately after completion. Furthermore, the presence of the researcher and assistants enabled even those with no education to participate in the survey as the questions were read out to them by the research assistant and their responses were also written down for them. In this way, all the sampled community members had a fair chance of participation regardless of their level of education. The participants of the survey were randomly picked from the households in each community.

6.3 Ensuring data trustworthiness

It is crucial for any researcher to ensure that the data collected is trustworthy otherwise it yields to false results. As a way of ensuring data trustworthiness this study used triangulation of qualitative and quantitative instruments. This section explains how the issues of validity and reliability were addressed in order to end up with information that can be trusted.

While the debate between positivists and interpretivists will always linger on, with positivists believing in their quantitative methodologies and the interpretivists advocating for the qualitative methods, the use of both methods finishes the debate. Positivists emphasise the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. To them social facts can be observed and

calculated to the exact point when using the right measuring tools such as surveys. They equate the study of societies to studying natural sciences where exact answers can be found when calculated using the correct formulas without adding the interpretation of the researcher. They strongly believe that this is the way to getting the accurate truth in research. Although quantitative methods can measure relationships between variables in a study population with a degree of certainty it treats observable fact as though it exists out there. Quantitative methods do not accommodate social contacts between the researcher and the study population hence ignores the fact that in some situations rich data can only be acquired through direct contact with the study population. Denzin and Lincoln (1998:3) also argue that however arithmetically precise the conclusions of quantitative methods might be, they fail to explain socio-political reality.

Interpretivists on the other hand argue for the use of qualitative instruments such as interviews, focus group discussion, and observation as well as using other secondary sources of data. Through these methods the researcher can give meaning to the daily experiences of the study communities (Tedlock 1991:71). Data is collected through the interaction between the researcher and the communities under study and validity is socially constructed through this interaction. Human behaviour is better understood through mixing with the community, observing and asking questions in order to be able to describe rather than explain the societies being researched. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2000:256) further emphasise that qualitative methods attempt to understand human behaviour and institutions by getting to know the persons involved and their values, rituals, symbols, beliefs and emotions. It involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Qualitative researchers therefore study things in their natural settings, attempting to

make sense of, interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them (Denzel and Lincoln 1998:3). Consequently, the use of such techniques allows researchers to share in the understandings and perceptions of others and to explore how people structure and give meaning to life.

To further differentiate between quantitative and qualitative methods is that in analysis qualitative analysis uses thick, rich and detailed descriptions of specifics as opposed to summary, standardized explanations of quantitative analysis. Qualitative analysis allows the researcher to discuss in detail the various social contours and processes humans use to create and maintain their social realities and existence. Quantitative analysis emphasises on being scientific thus measuring and explaining human processes.

In order to ensure validity and trustworthiness of data, the researcher used a variety of ways. Firstly is triangulation. This is the use of two or more methods of data collection that are employed independently of one another but are focussed as closely as possible to the research questions being pursued to achieve broader and often better results. As already discussed in this chapter both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed so that one method can offset the limitations of the other. The study could have been enough with only the qualitative methodology but the researcher decided to also make use of the mini survey whose purpose was to cross-validate some of the data obtained through interviews and FGDs. To further cross-check this information, some of the questions asked during interviews purposely repeated in the FGDs in order to get different perspectives on the same issues.

Apart from triangulation the researcher also ensured that during interviews and FGDs notes were taken down by the researcher, the assistants as well as recording which were later compared to ensure that what the researcher understood is exactly what was said and meant by the respondents. These were further backed up by later visits to the research sites to check on any new developments and to follow up of some of the issued they had raised and for clarification on certain issues. The researcher also maintained communication with the communities especially the research assistants and the chairpersons of the projects through phone calls to be kept updated about any new developments pertaining to the projects.

The use of research assistants from the communities also helped the researcher a lot. Because the assistants were known by the community it made the people feel free when responding to questions in the questionnaire, they were free to ask for clarifications where they were not sure. The issue of language was also solved because the researcher although not a native speaker of Xhosa communicated in Xhosa all the time with the help of the assistant here and there which made her welcome by the communities and they opened up and participated well. There was some trust between the community and the research team which allowed for participants to be honest and speak freely in their own language. Even the illiterate were able to participate in the study because there was no language barrier, all that was required were their opinions and their time.

As much as the researcher tried to make the research as valid and reliable as possible, it is known that there is no 100 percent validity but the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods was the best to get as close to the truth as possible. The weakness of one method is strengthened by the other. While FGDs

and interviews might have catered for a small percentage of the population, the survey covered a larger segment of the population.

6.4 Delimitations and Limitations of the study

South Africa has many NGOs operating and offering support to different communities, the study only chose to focus on two NGOs in the Eastern Cape. This is not to say these were the only two but the research focused on these. World Vision and Ruliv are involved in many programmes and work with a lot of communities but again the study only focussed on food security programmes in three communities. This then implies that knowledge gained from this study may not necessarily apply to other NGOs operating in South Africa or other regions for that matter.

Furthermore, the communities chosen were both in the Eastern Cape Province occupied by the Xhosa speakers. Cultural practises and other geographical aspects such as the arability of the land, the amount of rainfall as well as other sociological issues differ from one province to the other therefore what applies in this study may not be applicable to the whole of South Africa.

6.5 Ethical considerations

The researcher followed all ethical guidelines of research in social sciences as well as those of the University. Some of these ethical rules include ensuring that participants are aware of what they are doing and why, that they are participating voluntarily and are allowed to withdraw from the study anytime should they decide otherwise, confidentiality and anonymity was also ensured.

Before commencing data collecting the researcher ensured that she got ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee and a permission and introductory letter from the department. These were used when seeking permission from the relevant authorities to introduce ourselves and prove that we were genuine students from the University of Fort Hare. The researcher sought and obtained permission from the study communities, the NGOs under study, the individuals and the relevant authority figures. Permission was granted and the research only began after all formalities had been done.

6.6 Conclusion

This study adopted a qualitative research approach in conjunction with a mini survey. The data collection techniques used were: key informant interviews, FGDs and a questionnaire survey. The use of these methods enabled the researcher to elicit relevant data on the effectiveness of projects supported by NGOs. The combination of methods helped to validate the trustworthiness of the data which was further strengthened by use of other strategies such as electronic recording of respondents, use of detailed fieldwork notes and working with trained and experienced fieldworkers.

The data collected was analysed and presented mainly in a qualitative and descriptive manner although there was use of basic statistical diagrams such as bar graphs and pie charts. Use of photographs was also applied to reinforce what is described in the study. The study also adhered to all ethical considerations guiding social science research as expected by the University which include; informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity of respondents.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION – THE NGO-FUNDED PROJECTS

7.1 Introduction

The role of the third sector in sustainable rural development remains contested. While it is accepted that NGOs play a significant role in rural development in general, it is simplistic to assume that their interventions always have the desired impact. This chapter engages these debates using empirical data. Focusing on selected projects implemented by World Vision and RuLiv in these Local Municipalities, this chapter attempts to understand the characteristics, objectives and rationale of the NGO sponsored and supported interventions. This examination is comparative in nature since it evaluates interventions implemented by a well-funded international NGO (World Vision) with global operations compared to those of a national NGO (RuLiv) with a relatively smaller budget and limited operational scope. Such a comparative analytical angle is essential in laying a foundation for further critical debates about the effectiveness of these NGO projects in the study communities. The data analysis and presentation in this chapter pertain to the first research question, which was stated earlier as follows:

- What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development, and how do the modes of project implementation impact on project viability?

7.2 World Vision and RuLiv's Rural Development Interventions

The sociological portrait in chapter 5 clearly indicates that Ndlambe, Dikidikana and Mxumbu villages are underdeveloped. Their underdevelopment, which is due to a

combination of historical factors and failures of the post-apartheid state, were the entry points for World Vision and Ruliv. As third sector organisations, one of the reasons for World Vision and Ruliv's existence is to address human development gaps that are products of state inadequacies, inefficiencies and failure. True to this mandate, these two NGOs are sponsoring (financially and technically) implementation of food security projects in the study communities. The implementation is led and done by locals, while World Vision and Ruliv provide financial and technical support as shown in the sub-sections below.

7.3 Mxumbu Horticulture Project

In Mxumbu (under Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality), community members run a horticulture project. They specialise in the production of a variety of vegetables that include tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, butternut, spinach and beetroot (see pictures 7.1 and 7.2 below)

Picture 7.1: Horticulture Project in Mxumbu village

Source: Field data (2015)

Picture 7.2: Horticulture Project in Mxumbu village

Source: Field data (2015)

The Provincial Department of Social Development (DSD) played a key role in the initiation of the Mxumbu project in 2006. It did this as part of its community development mandate. Community members were asked by the DSD's community development practitioners to submit project proposals that would help to address local development needs identified by community members themselves. The response by community members was very positive as they identified pressing community needs, developed project ideas around these and came forward to register these ideas as a collective. As one key informant observed:

> *Each community held meetings to discuss a project that would be viable to them and which would be easy for them to run. During those meetings, members of the community who were interested in the projects were requested to register their names so that they could become projects members (Key informant 1, Mxumbu 18/08/2015)*

This participatory approach by the Department of Social Development was designed to give locals ownership of the projects while also creating a development partnership between the provincial government and local citizens. The provincial

government's 'thinking' was that projects identified, formulated and run by locals would be sustainable since they would be owned by the community. As an implementing partner, the DSD provided the necessary financial, material and technical support at project inception. This was confirmed by the chairperson of the Mxumbu horticulture project, who noted that *"things were going well under the Department of Social Development as we got support for setting up the project. We got funds for buying the fence, farming equipment, Jojo tanks and seeds"* (Key Informant 1, Mxumbu 18/08/2015).

As partners in their own development, the Mxumbu project members (who were initially 55) provided the manual labour. They cleared the farming site, fenced it and tilled the land in preparation for growing their vegetables. However, the labour intensive nature of the project set-up dissuaded some of the 55 members who had initially registered for the project. These members had erroneously been under the impression that the Department of Social Development was going to either hire manual labourers to do the labour intensive work or pay them for doing the work. When these expectations were not met, almost 20 members withdrew from the project.

The withdrawal of some project members was the first major operational challenge which the Mxumbu horticulture project faced, threatening its viability in the process. With fewer members remaining, this meant some farming preparations were not done on time. This had a negative effect on the production cycle, leading to reduced overall output. Secondly, the DSD stopped sponsoring (financially and technically) the horticulture project soon after set-up. The DSD's reasoning was that since the project was now functional, responsibility had to be transferred to community members who had to nurture the project, make it viable and sustainable for their own

benefit. The researcher found that had not been properly communicated to the community at the beginning. Even so, project members were ill-equipped to independently run and sustain the project, as explained by one project member:

> *Our project almost collapsed at the initial stage when we were 'abandoned' by Social Development, we thought it would be the end of it because we did not see any other way out. (Respondent 2: Mxumbu, 18/08/2015)*

It was at this point that World Vision intervened. Seeing a development gap left by the withdrawal of the DSD, World Vision provided a development grant and agricultural extension advice. The grant was used for operational expenses such as buying of seeds, pesticides and irrigation equipment. This was complemented by technical advice given by World Vision community development officers who trained the project members on tomato production techniques and project management. The net effect of this support was positive, as will be shown in the following chapters. Overall, project members managed to harvest significant vegetable quantities for sale in local markets as well as in nearby Alice Town. They raised some income for subsistence purposes, as was confirmed by one of the respondents:

> *After all the hard work and scare of being abandoned by Social Development, we were very excited after our first major harvest, we managed to sell our produce to local markets, we sold to our community and even neighbouring communities and we banked a lot of money which we later on shared at the end of the year, and that year we had enough money for our families during the festive season. (Respondent 2, Mxumbu 18/08/2015).*

The genesis and development of the Mxumbu horticulture project provides some positive reflection points. Firstly, the role of the DSD in partly initiating this project in partnership with local people demonstrates the positive potential of a participatory

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approach in local rural development. By asking locals to develop project proposals based on identified local needs, the DSD recognised their importance in determining the development path of their community based on their own vision and aspirations. Secondly, the financial and technical support provided by the DSD emphasizes the ever crucial role of the state in supporting rural development initiatives within a developmental state paradigm. Given South Africa's colonial and apartheid history which created and entrenched rural poverty, it is incumbent upon the state to continue to play an active role in reducing and ultimately eradicating this poverty through supporting local development initiatives. Thirdly, the free manual labour by project members at inception phase shows that when local people identify a development intervention themselves, they are willing to invest their time and energy in project implementation. This commitment by some of the project members who did not quit at inception phase is evidence of the power of community in driving local development initiatives.

7.4 Dikidikana Poultry Project

In Dikidikana (the second project in Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality), local residents run a broiler poultry production project alongside vegetable production (see pictures 7.3 and 7.4 below):

Picture 7.3: Dikidikana Poultry Project

Source: Field data (2015)

Picture 7.4: Dikidikana Poultry Project

Source: Field Data (2015)

This poultry project is the brainchild of Dikidikana locals. They independently initiated it as a local income generation venture without external influence or guidance. They chose broiler poultry production since they already possessed knowledge (human capital) of village free-range chicken nurturing. At inception,

locals ran this broiler poultry production from their homes, as explained by one of

the respondents:

> *Since we did not have a big fowl-run we decided we should divide ourselves into small groups of four people per group. In total we ended up with five groups. We then contributed some money to buy our first batch of chicks. We then divided these chicks so that each group would have their own chicks to look after. Things went well and we often got together and discussed progress as well as visiting each other to see how well our chickens were doing (Respondent 1, Dikidikana 01/10/2015).*

This small group based poultry production model was a success. A 'captive'

market of neighbours and other locals regularly purchased the broiler chickens.

This stable local market guaranteed returns on investment thereby generating

much needed income for the project members. This income partly covered their

household basic needs.

The success of this small group poultry production model, however, had

unintended consequences. Upon seeing the success of their project, members

decided to expand the production process through increasing the number of

birds. Their limited project capital was supplemented by the DSD which

provided funding under its community development grant. The increased

funding enabled project members to construct a well-equipped fowl run for

broiler chickens production. This veneer of project growth and expansion

attracted more community members. As a result, project membership grew

from 20 in 2009 to 40 in 2013. However, just like in the Mxumbu horticulture

project discussed above, the DSD stopped funding the poultry project as soon

as it was fully operational. Again, the DSD argued that the project members as

owners of the initiative must operate the project independently and profitably for their own benefit.

The withdrawal of the DSD had negative consequences on the project. Members failed to effectively and efficiently run the project due to its sheer size. They had no project management skills or experience for a poultry production enterprise of that size. Consequently, the project ran at a loss and was no longer a viable business. It was on the verge of collapse, as noted by one of the founding members:

> *We have faced a lot of challenges but still we remain standing, the worst one was when we were left unfunded by Social Development, we did not know what to do next, we thought it was the end of our project. We did not have enough resources to carry on with the project alone, let alone the confidence to do it on our own. That was really a tough time but we managed to pull through when World Vision came along and assisted us. (Respondent 2, Dikidikana 05/10/2015)*

It was during this difficult operational phase that World Vision came into the picture. As part of its ongoing rural development intervention in the Eastern Cape, World Vision provided a development grant for the poultry project. This funding was used for operational running expenses, to build a storeroom and to install a security fence around the fowl-run complex. This cash injection from World Vision and technical assistance revitalised the poultry project. Chicken sales increased once again and the project returned to profitability thereby benefiting project members.

Furthermore, World Vision community development officers advised the project members to start a vegetable garden since they had a huge plot within the

poultry complex which was underutilised. With technical assistance from World Vision and the University of Fort Hare's Department of Agriculture as part of its community engagement activities; this vegetable production was a success (see picture 7.5 below).

Picture 7.5: Dikidikana Vegetable Garden

Source: Field Data (2015)

Vegetable production helped project members to generate extra income in addition to proceeds from the poultry project. As one project member remarked:

> *We thank our sponsors a lot, Social Development started us off, and World Vision came at a time when we needed them most, they supported us and taught us a lot that we did not know about how to run a project. We are truly thankful; today we have smiles on our faces because of them. (Respondent 5, Dikidikana, 01/10/2015)*

There are four positive observations to make about this poultry project. Firstly, this is a locally conceived income generation project. It was initiated by local people who used their own indigenous poultry production knowledge to venture into broiler

chickens production. Secondly, their initiative means the local rural people did not wait for the government or NGOs to 'save' them and ameliorate their poverty. Instead, they used their own initiative and resources at inception of the project – a demonstration that they were active agents in local development. Thirdly; the significant income generated for subsistence purposes shows that local development initiatives have potential in partly addressing local people's existential needs. Fourthly, even though the locals own this project, they fully understood and recognised that its success was a product of the working partnerships they had with World Vision and the provincial DSD. The interventions of the DSD and World Vision during difficult phases of the project were crucial in ensuring project viability and sustainability.

7.5 Ndlambe Pomegranate and Household Food Plots

In Ndlambe, RuLiv (a local Eastern Cape NGO) was at the time of the study assisting (financially and technically) the community in running two projects concurrently; namely, a household food security project and a pomegranate fruit income generation project. In contrast to the public participation process used in initiating the Mxumbu project discussed above, the pomegranate plantation was initiated by the DSD in 2007 through a 'top-down' development approach. This project is a massive pomegranate plantation sprawling over 115 hectares of fertile land. It is well equipped with water pipes and irrigation equipment which draws water from a nearby river. The sheer size of the plantation indicates that the DSD designed and implemented it as an employment creation and income generating enterprise that would ultimately alter the local development landscape. The choice of fruit – the exotic pomegranate which is a cash crop used for the production of juice not casual

rural consumption – also signifies the commercial intents of the plantation from the outset.

Picture 7.6: Pomegranate Plantation in Ndlambe

Source: Field data 03/11/2015

As alluded to above, this pomegranate plantation was a DSD initiative intended to benefit locals. According to one key informant:

> *the initial agreement was that the DSD would employ community members to look after the plantation, manage the irrigation scheme, harvest the fruits when they were ready, send them off to the markets and the general maintenance of the plantation as they do in commercial farms. The profits from the plantation would be used to pay the workers and also assist in developing their community (Key Informant 1, Ndlambe, 03/11/2015)*

In order to achieve the above objectives, the DSD thus superintended the planning and implementation of the plantation. Fruit trees were planted; irrigation equipment laid out and tested for functionality and a security fence erected around the plantation. All that was left was for the community members to tend the fruit trees, harvest at maturity and package for transportation to urban markets.

At face value, this appears like a well thought-out and designed local community development initiative which Ndlambe community members could easily manage in a sustainable manner. However, this was not to be. The plantation project immediately faced operational challenges when the DSD withdrew its support just before harvest time. As one respondent noted:

When the DSD left, the community was supposed to carry on with the project on their own. This should not have been a problem since the trees were planted; the irrigation system was in place all that was left was for community to carry on looking after their plantation until harvest time. However, harvest time came but the community failed to organise themselves to harvest and to find a market for their produce. The result was that instead of commercially selling these fruits to generate income, the community members harvested the fruits for family consumption. There was no control of the plantation so individuals started harvesting the fruits for family consumption (Respondent 12, Ndlambe,03/11/2015)

Another respondent added:

Since 2007 when the project was started to date, not a single pomegranate fruit has been commercially sold from the plantation but rather every year they harvest for family consumption. It is easy to blame the community members for their failure to play their part in maintaining the plantation and selling the fruits but again more blame should go to the government for setting up such a huge project and leaving the community to carry on without proper training on how to run it (Key Informant 2, Ndlambe, 03/11/2015)

However, some community members attempted to resuscitate the plantation. Through their co-operative Sakhudlambe, they approached RuLiv in 2013 for financial and technical assistance. In contrast to the 'top-down' DSD approach used at plantation inception, RuLiv appear to use a 'bottom-up' inclusive approach in resuscitating the plantation. Through this participatory approach, RuLiv partnered the local community in creating an Integrated Community Development Plan (ICDP)

between 2013 and 2015. While this ICDP had a number of projects and programmes in the pipeline, one of its immediate objectives was to revive the pomegranate plantation. As one key informant observed:

> *As RuLiv, we work with different communities in trying to enable them to be self-reliant. This means educating and training them on various skills which they identify and are able to use to be productive. For example, in Ndlambe we are working closely with the community to resuscitate a pomegranate project which was started in 2007 but has not been beneficial to the community (Key Informant 2, RuLiv, 06/07/2015)*

Guided by the ICDP, RuLiv had been training co-operative members on how to efficiently and effectively run the plantation. Since the plantation was already well equipped and functional, RuLiv had only been conducting capability training focusing on how to use the plantation for employment creation, income generation and general local development.

In addition to resuscitating the pomegranate plantation in Ndlambe, RuLiv in mutual partnership with locals initiated household food plots adjacent to the pomegranate plantation (see picture 7.7 below):

Picture 7.7: Household Food Plots in Ndlambe

Source: Field data 03/11/2015

A total of 180 households were allocated these plots measuring 0.25 hectares of fertile communal land which had been lying idle for decades. This allocation was done by community members themselves without interference from RuLiv. The major motivation behind these food plots was to ensure food security at household level. In pursuance of this objective, RuLiv (informed by its 'asset-based' development approach) conducted farmer training workshops and capacitation programmes so as to equip locals with the necessary skills to make the food plots productive. RuLiv further facilitated the establishment of links between the community and other institutions which offer agricultural technical and material support. These are, for example, the University of Fort Hare's Department of Agriculture which trained the locals on land management techniques and different crop varieties suitable for their agro-ecological region.

The study found that the household food plots initiative was relatively successful. During data collection, 100 households had successfully planted and harvested maize, water melons and pumpkins. This locally produced food was consumed at household level thereby addressing household food gaps. At the same time, this household food production reduced dependency on social grants since many households could now produce their own food as confirmed by the chairperson of the Sakhudlambe co-operative: "*this land is everything that we ever needed, now we grow whatever we need for our families, we don't need those far away jobs, we are alright here.* (Key informant 1, Ndlambe, 03/11/2015). Furthermore, the local chief added that

> *Quite a number of people had abandoned their homes and left for the cities, but I hope this migration will come to an end when people realise that the land is enough to feed them if they work on it properly. I am grateful to this organisation [RuLiv] because they have brought a big difference in my community. I personally have harvested some maize from my plot and I can testify that it is a good project. (Key informant 6, 15/11/2015).*

The foregoing suggests that these household food plots are indeed addressing food security gaps in those households which are productively utilising their plots. Secondly, this means those households which are productive on their plots can now use their social security grants to cover other basic needs instead of purchasing food thereby reducing their sole dependency on the state for survival. Thirdly, from the chief's perspective which is emphasized herein, the food plots also have potential to partly reduce rural-urban migration once people realise they can make a living out of farming. Once many rural people recognise that land is a natural asset (as explained in the sustainable livelihoods framework above) that can be used to

build and sustain rural livelihoods, there is indeed a possibility that many in Ndlambe might consider building their livelihoods in the rural economy rather than migrate to big cities and towns.

The relative success of the household food plots can also be explained by a number of factors. While this project was financially and technically supported by RuLiv, its foundational ethos and objectives were participatory and based on partnership between the NGO and local people. RuLiv's local asset based participatory approach enabled locals to fully and effectively participate in the above mentioned farming workshops thereby creating a strong sense of ownership of the food plots and partnership with RuLiv. This asset-based development approach is directly related to the sustainable livelihoods framework used as a heuristic theoretical tool in this study. By building on and enhancing the Ndlambe community's inherent strengths through the ICDP, RuLiv utilised local assets (natural capital: land, water and human capital: labour, skills, local knowledge) to make the food plots a success. Through utilising these local assets, some Ndlambe community members are thus food secure and less dependent on social security.

Lastly, there are some interesting observations to make about the two Ndlambe projects (food plots and pomegranate). While they were both initiated for the socio-economic benefit of the same community members, their levels of success strikingly differ. This is partly because of the different approaches used in their conceptualisation, planning and implementation. A 'top-down' approach was used by the DSD in initiating the pomegranate fruit project. There was no baseline done to assess community needs as the locals were invited by the DSD to participate in

the project for their own benefit. As discussed above, the consequences of this were catastrophic as local people never fully participated in crucial farming activities on the plantation leading to its failure and collapse.

On the other hand, RuLiv used a 'bottom-up' approach in the household food plots initiative: a local needs assessment was done with full participation by local people and this informed the ICDP. This full participation by locals cultivated a sense of ownership and responsibility hence their productivity on the food plots. This positive uptake of the plots and the level of productivity therein challenge a long held myth which wrongly portrays some rural based people in parts of South Africa as being 'lazy'. Evidence presented above shows that if a 'bottom-up' participatory approach is used in identifying the needs of rural people, they will actively and productively participate in livelihood projects and programmes. This evidence also speaks to the sustainable livelihoods framework which correctly argues that poor rural people are not just passive recipients of state and donor largesse but active agents who can use their human and natural capital (as is the case in Ndlambe) to build and sustain their livelihoods.

7.6. Rural development intermediation: transformation Paradox

Another interesting observation made was that there appears to be a transformation paradox that has come with the introduction of these projects in all three study communities. While it has long been believed that the patriarchal society tends to put women at a disadvantage by excluding them in development issues and limited them to household duties while men dealt with development issues, the study found quite the contrary. These NGO projects seem to have replaced one kind of lop-sidedness

in rural development (exclusion of women) with another (the exclusion of men), by focussing on 'community projects' that were culturally deemed as 'women jobs'. In this way, the interventions appeared like a systematic attempt to do away with the 'feminisation of rural poverty' and entrench the 'feminisation of rural development interventions. Evidence in all three communities shows that more women than men were actually involved in the intervention projects supported by NGOs. The table below summarises the numbers of people involved in the projects:

Table 7.1: Total number of Project Members

Village	Males	Females	Total Number
Mxumbu (Tomato Project)	7 (20%)	28 (80%)	35 (100%)
Dikidikana (Poultry farming)	5 (13%)	35 (87%)	40 (100%)
Sakhundlambe (Household food plots)	80 (44%)	100 (56%)	180 (100%)
Total	92 (36%)	163 (64%)	255 (100%)

Source: Field data (2015)

Statistics of the research reflect a huge margin between men and women involved in the projects. The horticulture project in Mxumbu village initially had 55 members, but due to technical reasons some members withdrew until at the time of data collection they had 35 members. Out of these 35 members, a mere 7 (20%) were males while 28 (80%) were females. The same applied with the other two projects where the poultry project of Dikidikana had a total of 40 members and out of that 40 only 5 (13%) were males and 35 (87%) were females. In Ndlambe community, with the highest number of project members, the total number was standing at 180 at the

time of collecting data and they were anticipating that more would join. Out of those 180 who had already joined 80 (44%) were males and the other 100 (46%) were females. Out of a total of 255 members in all three projects, only 92 (36%) were males and the remaining 163 (64%) were females. The statistics described here shows what is rather unusual as far as literature on women and development is concerned. Women are assumed to be side-lined and excluded with men dominating and making up the higher numbers yet these figures above reflect otherwise. This has been observed to be a transformation paradox, solving one problem yet creating another.

The dynamics observed were not only about quantitative statistics but it goes further, where women seemed to have taken over in leadership positions as well. These NGO projects seem to have introduced the feminisation of rural development initiatives - the researcher further discovered that all the three projects were headed by women. The chairperson of the horticulture project was a female with a male deputy, same as the Ndlambe household food plots where the chairperson was female with a male deputy but the poultry project had both positions occupied by females.

It seemed rather strange that projects that were intended to benefit everyone in the community seemed to favour one gender over the other which is yet another indication that something was not right in the way they were implemented. That said, the researcher noted that the projects brought a change in the way poverty was viewed in the rural communities as women were given the opportunity that they

are also capable of providing for their families and it is not just men. By utilising these opportunities they have earned the respect which was only given to men.

7.7 Conclusion

The role of third sector organisations in sustainable rural development has been aptly demonstrated in this chapter through an analysis of the human development interventions supported by World Vision and RuLiv in the Eastern Cape Province. In Mxumbu and Dikidikana villages, World Vision supports a horticulture and poultry project while RuLiv supports food plots and a pomegranate plantation in Ndlambe. The initiation approaches and implementation strategies of these projects partly explain their success and failure. For example, even though the Mxumbu horticulture project was initiated through a participatory 'bottom-up' process, the withdrawal of some project members mid-way caused operational challenges thereby threatening its viability. Furthermore, the Department of Social Development's premature withdrawal of financial and technical support for the horticulture project (in Mxumbu) and poultry project (in Dikidikana) was a project planning and implementation posed a challenge because community project members were under resourced and ill-equipped to sustainably operate the projects. The intervention of World Vision, which provided a development grant and agricultural extension advice, prevented the projects from total collapse. The same applies in Ndlambe, where RuLiv's intervention through financial and technical support assisted in revitalising the pomegranate plantation and in initiating the household food plots.

Lastly, it has to be noted that in all three projects, NGO intervention emerged when a provincial government department (DSD) had 'prematurely' terminated financial and technical support for the community projects. There appears to confirm a view held by some scholars that Third Sector organisations fill the gap created by state inefficiencies in project and programme implementation in rural areas. The question, however, is the effectiveness of these interventions. Findings on the second and third research questions will bring this to light – and these are the key focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

**EFFECTIVENESS, IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THIRD SECTOR-
COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

8.1 Introduction

This study also examined the effectiveness of the Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe community projects in ameliorating deprivation and poverty. This was done in response to the second and third research questions which are:

- How effective are the non-governmental organisation sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods?

- What factors affect the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects?

In order to fully understand whether the Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe projects were effective in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods, it is important to firstly examine their local relevance and efficiency. This is important because for a project to be seen as effective by local people in a specific community, it must be addressing their requirements and priorities (i.e., relevance). Relevance in project implementation is thus about the significance of a particular intervention in view of the livelihood requirements and priorities of local people. Furthermore, active participation by locals in project implementation is an essential element which partly determines its effectiveness. The level of local participation also has an effect on whether locals see themselves as 'stakeholders' in a particular project. When these two elements – 'stake holding' and 'quality of local participation' – are assessed in a particular project, they can provide an empirical basis for determining project 'efficiency' and contribution towards sustainable livelihoods. All this suggests that in

examining whether the Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe projects were effective, there is need to firstly assess their relevance and efficiency. This is essential because each community has its own specific needs hence any development intervention by the state or NGOs should aim to address these relevant needs in an efficient manner. Failure to identify specific community needs has a bearing on the success or failure of a project.

8.2 Relevance and Efficiency of the Ndlambe, Mxumbu and Dikidikana Projects

The Ndlambe pomegranate plantation provides a case study for examining the 'relevance' element. This pomegranate plantation was initiated and implemented by the DSD as discussed in chapter seven of this thesis. As much as the DSD had good intentions in introducing the cash crop, believed to be capable of generating income for and developing the local community, the project failed to meet these objectives (see chapter seven) because the DSD did not prperly conduct a baseline or needs assessment to ascertain its relevance to the community. Many respondents did not see how the pomegranate plantation would contribute to their basic needs, especially household food security. As one of them explained:

> *This pomegranate plantation was an insult to us. How can the government say they are helping us when they plant pomegranate? Who eats pomegranate in this village? This is a fruit for 'white' people, we don't care about it here, so when they decided to grow it here we were all surprised at what they were trying to achieve. We are black people and we survive on maize and vegetables, it would have been much better if they had grown cabbages and potatoes, at least we would have harvested and fed our children. This fruit does not mean anything to us here, even if they said we would sell it, who was going to take the money? They would have taken all the money and that is why no-one was interested in working there (Respondent 17: Ndlambe 04/11/2015).*

Another respondent added that:

We did not see the need of the pomegranate project in our community because we wanted something that would enable us to feed our children. We wanted something that would immediately put food on the table that is why we were angry when it started and did not show interest. I can say it came at a bad time when many people were struggling with food, people expected a project like crop production where they would harvest and feed their families (Respondent 8: Ndlambe 03/11/2015).

This negative attitude towards the pomegranate plantation reflects the views of many respondents in the study community. They felt the provincial government and DSD had misdirected priorities since they spent money and time on a project that was irrelevant to community needs. Instead of consulting the Ndlambe community on their needs before project conceptualisation and implementation, the DSD officials used a 'top-down' approach and took decisions about and for the locals without their input. Consequently, the pomegranate plantation failed as it was irrelevant to immediate local needs and livelihoods.

The pomegranate plantation fiasco highlights the crucial importance of prior robust engagement with a community when a major development project is to be introduced. The needs assessment is crucial because it assists in determining whether a particular project will meet the requirements and priorities (i.e., relevance) of local people. Failure to do so will result in the introduction and implementation of an irrelevant project which will be met with negativity by locals leading to its failure hence wasting public resources as happened in Ndlambe. On the other hand, proper consultation and active participation of local people in project conceptualisation and initiation results in the implementation of locally relevant interventions as demonstrated by the successful Ndlambe household food plots discussed hereunder.

The Ndlambe household food plots (see chapter seven) were of immediate relevance to locals due to two key reasons. Firstly, they were introduced through a

consultative process that involved RuLiv and active participation of community members in the development and adoption of the ICDP as a conceptual foundation. A 'sense of local ownership' of the food plots was thus enhanced due to the quality of community participation from inception. Secondly, the food plots addressed an immediate relevant need, - the issue of household food security. Households with plots, or 'natural capital' (DFID, 1999), were able to use their labour, agricultural production knowledge and skills – 'human capital' (DFID, 1999) to produce a variety of food crops such as maize, pumpkins and water melons for their subsistence needs. The food plots were thus relevant to prevailing community needs. Relevance could thus be seen as one of the driving factors behind the success of the thriving household food plots.

The local 'relevance' element gets even clearer when the Dikidikana poultry project and the Mxumbu horticulture project are further analysed. These two projects were relevant to community needs hence their success. During focus group discussions, members of the horticulture project revealed that they started growing a variety of vegetables (potatoes, cabbage, spinach, carrots and beans) because that is what they needed most to feed their families. One project member explained:

> *Our plan was always to grow and sell tomatoes on a large scale because we knew that tomatoes are always on demand. We were trying to make a living so that we could be able to feed our children, however, we knew that we were not going to make a profit all at once and so we started with a small vegetable garden where we grew a variety of vegetables so that we could be eating while still trying the tomato business. It worked out because within a few months we were harvesting our vegetables and other community members started buying from us. We started with what everybody needed and then our tomato business slowly emerged from there* (Respondent 2: Mxumbu 18/08/2015).

The horticulture project members thus prioritised relevant household and community needs. Although they envisaged running a tomato business in the long term, they did

not start off with it. Instead, they started with other staple vegetables which are always in demand in their community. These staple vegetables were beneficial to project members since they consumed some while selling other stock thereby raising some income which assisted in establishing their bigger tomato project.

The relevance and efficiency of a project in local sustainable livelihoods can also be discerned from the Dikidikana poultry project. Subsistence poultry production is common in Dikidikana, just like in many other rural areas in the Eastern Cape. In a desire to generate income from their locally acquired poultry production skills (human capital, DFID, 1999) some households in Dikidikana decided to organise themselves into a small poultry farming enterprise. A group of 13 women and 7 men initiated this project. The availability of a local market for selling chickens was the other reason for forming this group. Poultry farming was therefore a relevant and efficient venture in their community because it was locally created and attempted to address the income needs of group members. It also became a success because local community members could easily purchase chicken at affordable prices in their local environment.

In addition to their poultry project, Dikidikana project members further identified a need for vegetables in their community. They therefore started a vegetable garden adjacent to their poultry shades. Although this garden was not initially planned for it, it filled a gap in the local produce market. As the vice-chairperson of the project explained:

> *When we were allocated this land to run our project, we saw that it was big, well fenced to keep livestock out and there is a source of water close-by hence we decided to start a vegetable garden. We realised that vegetables are an essential part of our diet and that the chicken we sell is always served with vegetables so we took a decision to start this garden. It went according to our plan and was successful because each time*

people bought a chicken they also bought vegetables, and now we are making a little extra income (Key Informant 2: Dikidikana 01/10/2015).

Based on the above, a few observations can be made about the relevance and efficiency of projects implemented in any community. Firstly, it is crucial to have background livelihood requirements and priorities in a community before embarking on any form of intervention. This background data will inform the kind of project implemented, thereby avoiding 'rolling-out' irrelevant and inefficient projects. Secondly, the Dikidikana poultry and vegetable project demonstrate that although rural people may be poor, they have local assets that they can utilise to improve their livelihoods. These assets are natural and human capital (DFID, 1999) which they have used to successfully run their poultry project and vegetable garden. The rural poor should thus be seen as active agents who can initiate and run projects which are relevant to local livelihoods.

8.3 The role of local assets in optimising project effectiveness

The positive role of local assets in optimising project effectiveness was apparent in all three study communities. As discussed in chapter six, these assets include natural, human, physical, financial and social capital (DFID, 1999). These assets were used as livelihood building blocks through local development partnerships forged between local communities and the two NGOs, RuLiv and World Vision. In Mxumbu and Dikidikana, World Vision partnered locals in the resuscitation of projects which were on the verge of collapse. Working together with project members, World Vision fieldworkers addressed challenges faced by the horticulture (Mxumbu) and poultry (Dikidikana) projects through utilising local resources, skills and knowledge in conjunction with external technical and financial support. The local resources utilised in this partnership include fertile soils (natural capital) for

agriculture production, individual/group financial resources used for project operational expenses (financial capital), as well as the skills and knowledge (human capital) utilised in horticulture and poultry production. This recognition and utilisation of local assets by World Vision fieldworkers in the revival of the Mxumbu and Dikidikana projects demonstrates their confidence in using available resources in alleviating rural poverty. This also means World Vision built on local community strengths and assets in revitalising local development interventions.

In order to optimise local livelihoods, a needs assessment was conducted by W World Vision fieldworkers in Mxumbu and Dikidikana. This baseline study revealed that even though local people had relevant skills for horticulture and poultry production, these were not adequate. This skills gap had been overlooked by the Department of Social Development (DSD) when it first sponsored (financially) the projects. Limitations in this crucial asset – knowledge and skills – thus hindered their efficient and effective operation. To address this skills gap, World Vision, in collaboration with the local people, designed a capacitation programme with the aim of improving production in both projects. As one of the Dikidikana respondents explained:

> *We were taught that when the chicks are still small we have to keep them warm so that they are not affected by the cold. Once they are cold they die easily. And the lights are kept on all night to allow them to feed anytime when they are hungry. Remember these chicks are broilers so they have to eat all the time and grow fast and be ready to be sold in 6 weeks (Respondent 20; 01/10/2015).*

The researcher observed project members in Dikidikana using some of the skills acquired in the World Vision facilitated capacity building workshops. For example, they were observed disinfecting their fowl runs and painting them in preparation for the arrival of a new batch of small chicks. This was being done to prevent the spread

of diseases from the old batch of chickens to the young chicks. They were further observed feeding and caring for young chicks during a return research visit. The chicks were kept in a smaller well heated fowl run with lighting so as to keep them warm and able to feed anytime (see picture 8.1 below).

Picture 8.1 Broiler chicks under light

(Source: field data 01/10/2015)

The Dikidikana project members were therefore using human capital, specifically knowledge and technical skills acquired by project members through capacity building workshops conducted by World Vision to improve poultry production. This is an indication of how local assets can be used to partly optimise project effectiveness.

In Ndlambe village, a mutually beneficial local development partnership between local community members and RuLiv based on effective utilisation of local assets has developed over the years. Based on the objectives of the inclusive Ndlambe ICDP discussed above, this partnership culminated in the initiation of household food plots. Local assets, namely, fertile land and water (natural capital), farming knowledge and skills (human capital) and farmer networks (social capital) drove the productivity of these household food plots. This productivity is a result of a

collaborative farming development programme facilitated by RuLiv with active participation of locals. How did this partnership develop? When RuLiv started working with the Ndlambe community in 2013, it conscientised community members about the value of using locally available assets for livelihood diversification. As a result, community members allocated each other available fertile land for household food plots. An irrigation system for the food plots was installed. Within months, local people were producing quality food crops and vegetables. As one respondent explained:

We did not know that we were 'sitting on gold'. We had tried various projects which did not work. Some of us stopped because we thought we did not have money to carry on, little did we know that our own land and our labour are all that we ever needed. We thought that the commercial farms used expensive machinery, top quality seeds and fertilizers to be able to produce high quality produce, not knowing that we could also produce the same without spending a lot of money (Respondent 38: 03/11/2015)

Another respondent added:

I had never grown butternut and beetroot before. I always thought that they were difficult and complicated to grow and that only big farms could grow them but look at my plot now it is full of them. I really cannot believe that we wasted our land for so many years. Had we started this a long time ago we would be rich by now through selling our produce. (Respondent 36: 12/11/2015)

The above responses, which mirror many other similar ones in the sample, indicate the productive utilisation of food plots by community members. Food produced was for household consumption while surplus was sold in the community thereby raising income for other household basic needs (see picture 8.2 below):

Picture 8.2: Ndlambe Food Plots

Source: Field data 2015)

The high levels of productivity achieved in the food plots were achieved through dedicated hard labour of community members, their farming skills and further farming skills capacitation workshops conducted by RuLiv. This was confirmed by the respondents:

> *RuLiv came and taught us how to do these things and now we are harvesting quality vegetables just by utilising our land and our water. I have learnt that being rich is not about money but it is about what you have and how you use it. Who needs government money now when we can grow our own food and feed our children?* (Respondent 37: 03/11/2015)

Another respondent elaborated:

> *The land which we are planting our crops on now has been lying idle for as long as I can remember. It was used as grazing land by those who had livestock but it never occurred to us that it could be used more productively. It is not just the land but we as a community did not have adequate skills and knowledge to use the land wisely. We are grateful to this organisation for helping us. We have been going hungry for all these years waiting for the people in government to come and feed us not knowing that our community has everything that we need* (Respondent 33: 03/11/2015)

As demonstrated by the above responses, farming skills training conducted by RuLiv fieldworkers had a positive impact on plot holders' production skills. Their farming techniques were enhanced leading to the production of different food crops and

vegetables at minimum cost. This farming success illustrates how an NGO's (RuLiv) partnership with local people resulted in the utilisation of local assets for the benefit of the community. The partnership thus enhanced the Ndlambe projects' efficiency and effectiveness since it responded to local livelihood needs and priorities through active participation of locals. The fact that locals saw themselves as stakeholders in the household food plots project further boosted its efficiency and effectiveness.

It also has to be highlighted that the aforementioned capacitation of locals by RuLiv and World Vision so as to improve project effectiveness and production led to community empowerment. The knowledge and skills acquired are a form of empowerment themselves since they are life-long human capital. Such empowerment cultivates in individuals a sense of confidence and capacity to build and sustain livelihoods in challenging Eastern Cape rural environments. Furthermore, this kind of empowerment had immediate benefits. It provided a foundation for community members to run their projects more efficiently and productively. Project members were thus empowered to use their own assets and local resources for their own benefit as opposed to perpetual dependence on NGO 'hand-outs' and state social security safety nets. In other words, the various capacity building activities had the potential of leading to community empowerment, which eventually could lead to community self-sufficiency.

8.4 Livelihood impacts and sustainability of community projects

This study also examined the livelihood impacts and sustainability of the Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe community projects. The impact and sustainability appraisal (which further answers research questions two and three) was guided by the study's evaluation criteria discussed in chapter 4 of this thesis. To fully understand project

impact, respondents (project members and non-project members) in all three communities outlined benefits derived from the projects and rated these against the founding objectives. These benefits, in this study, are defined as material or any other gains resulting from the projects. This suggests that a project with significant gains (material or immaterial) and had visible livelihood benefits for project members and other community members had a positive impact.

There were direct and indirect subsistence benefits for project members in all three study communities. They directly accessed a variety of consumable food products for household consumption. This was not only observed by the researcher but confirmed by respondents, as stated below:

> *Our lives have improved a lot in this community since we started this tomato project, we sell the tomatoes and make some money, we donate to the elderly and to schools around us for feeding programmes and we have managed to occasionally employ the youth during harvest times. Everybody is benefiting not just us the members (Key informant 2, Mxumbu 18/08/2015).*

Another respondent added:

> *This poultry project has benefitted everyone in the village. We have easy access to chicken and vegetables at reasonable prices, and not only that but we are able to take some produce on credit and pay later when we have money. Our children are at least guaranteed of food everyday even during times when we have no money. We are grateful for the work that the project members are doing because we are all getting something out of it (Respondent 8, Dikikidana 05/10/2015).*

A respondent from Ndlambe echoed the same sentiments*:*

> *Life has really changed for the better for most people in this village. There is no excuse for being hungry, in fact being hungry is now a choice because we have all been given land and all other resources and have been taught how to utilise our land productively so whoever is not doing that chooses to go hungry. Before the food plots life was really hard for us, we had no jobs and no means*

of feeding our children but now that is a thing of the past, we have enough food and to spare hence I am saying going hungry is a choice (Key informant 2, Ndlambe 03/11/2015).

The above responses reiterate the subsistence benefits accruing from the projects. Project members' livelihoods have improved since they can now easily feed their families compared to the past. This resonates with Poku (1997) who argues that appropriate indicators to measure the success of projects can be placed in three categories: individual improvement, socio-economic development and community development. Individual improvement includes self-advancement of project members whereby they improve their food security as well as their ability to generate income for domestic expenditure such as clothing items and other household needs. The Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe project members have thus entered the individual improvement phase as confirmed by their observations above. Their livelihoods are not exactly the same as they were prior to the project. For example, a Mxumbu project member (respondent 5), noted that she always has enough vegetables for her family and some surplus which she gives her neighbours. This has earned her a lot of respect from neighbours who now value her contribution to their livelihoods. Furthermore, other Mxumbu project members indicated that they donate vegetables to local schools and old age people. These donations are therefore benefiting different community members and contributing to social cohesion. These emerging good neighbourhood relations and donations are an element of social capital which is anchored on positive project impacts.

In addition to subsistence food benefits, project members were also able to sell surplus agricultural produce. Profit from this surplus was shared among project members. For example, in Mxumbu, project members equitably shared profits as

'salaries' on average R2000/annum at the end of each calendar year. This was confirmed by the respondents:

In as much as we get vegetables from our hard work throughout the year, we also get a form of salary at the end of the year in December. Throughout the year we bank all our money and then after calculating and budgeting for the following year we reward ourselves with a salary from our profits. This is a motivation for us to work hard during the year knowing that there is something that we will get in December (Key informant 1, Mxumbu 18/08/2015)

Another member added:

We are always looking forward to the end of the year when we get our salaries, it puts a smile on our faces knowing that our hard work is paying off. The work is hard but spending the festive season with some money keeps us working and not giving up (Respondent 4, Mxumbu 18/08/2015).

This income enabled them to purchase other basic household commodities. Even though this cash income was not 'ten-of-thousands rands' per annum, project members were content with it as it supplemented their other livelihood resources.

In order to have a balanced view about the livelihood impacts of the projects, non-project members were also interviewed. The aim here was to ascertain the impact of the projects for the project members and the broader community. In other words, do these projects socio-economically benefit and develop the broader local community or they are a small enclave for project members only? A significant number of community members (non-project members) positively assessed the projects noting their livelihood benefits. For example, 82 percent of respondents in Mxumbu village, 64 percent in Ndlambe and 34 percent in Dikidikana village indicated that project

members do benefit a lot from their work. Various reasons were given to support these affirmations. These include livelihood changes and lifestyle improvements of some project members. One responded noted that:

> *There is a significant change in the households of project members since they started their project. We can all see how healthy their families appear; they never run out of food to eat. While some of us may skip meals here and there to make ends meet, they always have their full meals per day and we can all see they look good (Respondent 8, Mxumbu 19/08/2015).*

Another respondent added:

> *Everybody can see the efforts of their hard work especially in December when they share their money. They are able to buy things that most of us cannot afford. December is the best time of the year for them and we all wish we were members during that moment (Respondent 6, Mxumbu 19/08/2015).*

Furthermore, constant availability and access to vegetables was cited by many respondents. This constant supply of vegetables is an indication that these households are assured of relish served with *stiff-pap (*a type of thick porridge made from maize meal)*. In the rural Xhosa communities, *stiff-pap* is a staple food served with meat and/or vegetables relish. Vegetables grown locally are thus enabling project member households to have a balanced staple diet more regularly.

Maize, vegetables and poultry from the projects also benefited the broader community. This was confirmed by non-project members:

> *Although most people in the community are not members of the project, we still benefit from it. We now have a constant and nearby supply of fresh vegetables, prior to the project we used to rely on outsiders who came regularly in their bakkies to sell vegetables. They were too expensive, sometimes their vegetables were stale and they did not come every day so would go without vegetables until their next visit. The project has guaranteed us of fresh vegetables available any time of day (Respondent 12, Mxumbu 19/08/2015).*

Another respondent in Dikidikana also added:

As a member in this community I would say we are all benefiting even if we are not members of the project. I personally have bought chickens and vegetables on credit and have payed after getting some money. They do not refuse to sell to us without money as long as they know that we will pay it back. That to me is a big benefit because I would have gone for some days without food but their project enables us all to feed our children even during those very difficult days. They are part of this community and they understand the problem we face and they help us in those difficult times (Respondent 7, Dikidikana 05/10/2015).

Overall, 80 percent of respondents in Mxumbu village, 68 percent in Dikidikana and 70 percent in Ndlambe said they benefited from the projects despite being non-project members. These community members are now able to buy maize, pumpkins, water melons, tomatoes, vegetables and poultry products which they could not easily access prior to the commencement of the projects. They are now able to buy fresh local produce at comparably lower prices than they used to pay in general dealer shops and supermarkets. They are thus saving some money and time since they no longer travel long distances to purchase these commodities. Moreover, they are able to get these products through a locally agreed credit system. This system is based on the trust that project members have on their fellow community members. They sell their produce to community members even when they have no cash and they write their names in a book and the agreed date of payment. Failure to pay within the stipulated time results in an interest being charged, and never selling to those individuals on credit again. This credit system is a locally relevant innovation which is not available in general dealer shops and supermarkets.

Furthermore, through community social networks (social capital) some Mxumbu residents receive free vegetables. Donations are made by project members to the elderly, disabled and to local school feeding programmes. The school feeding scheme donations supplement diets and nutritional needs of local children. This community donation and practice is in line with Poku's (1997) argument that some projects promote community solidarity by helping the less fortunate. Furthermore, youths benefit from this community solidarity. Unemployed youths were direct beneficiaries through short-term seasonal employment. During good seasons, young men and women are engaged to harvest tomatoes in Mxumbu or to dress chickens in Dikidikana. Depending on the financial position of the project at the time, they pay these youths in cash or in-kind. All this is further evidence of the benefits, however minimal, that the communities derive from the different projects.

On the other hand, a minority within the communities (non-project members) were of the view that members' benefits were so minimal to the point of being irrelevant. Sixteen percent in Mxumbu and 32 percent in Dikidikana shared this view. They based their arguments on the fact that these projects were being operated on a very small-scale, encumbered with high operational costs which eroded their monetary benefits. The little income (or profit) realised from selling produce thus only covered expenditure, hence in their view, project members could not claim to be making money from the projects. Furthermore, non-project members argued that the 'claimed lifestyle' changes by project members were an exaggeration. As two respondents observed:

There is a lot of work involved in running a poultry project, it takes most of their time because they have to ensure that they feed those chickens all the time,

some of the chickens even die especially in winter and that means the run at a loss. One bird does not cost a lot so they cannot be making a lot of profit considering that they have to buy and transport the chicken feed from town, they surely cannot be making a lot of money… (Respondent 13, Dikidikana 05/10/2015).

Another respondent argued:

I do not see any changes in the lifestyle of those project members, they spend days on their site but they are still the same as the rest of us. If they are making huge profits what are they doing with the money because I don't see anything different except maybe that they always have vegetables. I would not work so much for nothing… (Respondent 10, Mxumbu 19/08/2015)

To buttress their negative assessment of the projects, these non-project members further argued that there were no significant changes in local lifestyles since project members still received social welfare grants. Had their projects been successful, then they should have stopped relying on government social security. Furthermore, had their projects been successful these non-project members expected project members to be purchasing assets such as cars, household furniture and renovating their homesteads. The fact that all this was not happening, noted non-project members, was an indication that these projects were perhaps not as beneficial as project members 'punted' them. While these minority views cannot be ignored, it has to be emphasized that they overlook the above discussed material benefits derived from the projects (e.g., maize, chicken and vegetables). These material benefits are clearly benefiting many project and non-project members hence exposing the superficiality of the negative minority views.

Beyond immediate positive impacts, this study also sought to understand the sustainability of the three social development projects using criteria discussed above (see sub-section 4.4). There are a variety of factors which influence project sustainability. An analysis of the three under study unravels most of these factors. It will be recalled that three social development projects (horticulture in Mxumbu, poultry in Dikidikana and pomegranate plantation in Ndlambe) were initiated, technically supported and funded by the DSD on a short-term basis. The DSD however stopped providing funding and other technical support soon after implementing the interventions. This implementation plan by DSD assumed that project members and other beneficiaries would be in a position to manage and sustain the social development interventions in the long-term. Respondents, however, described this as an error on the part of DSD:

> *The Department of Social Development helped us a lot during the initiation of our project; we would not have managed to build all these tunnels without their financial support. However, they left us too soon and we almost lost everything and were close to going back where we started. We were still not sure of how to do many things when they told us that they could no longer sponsor and we had to carry on without them (key informant 2; Mxumbu 18/08/2015)*

This unsustainable short-term support offered by the DSD is typical of many government interventions in rural Eastern Cape. It appears the DSD views its role as that of initiating and setting up these social development projects. Once they are operational, regardless of their sustainability potential or lack thereof, the DSD hands them over to community members to oversee on a daily basis. This was the case in Mxumbu and Dikidikana as above evidence illustrates. These communities struggled to sustain the projects after the withdrawal of the DSD because project training they had received was inadequate. The result of insufficient project management training

and experience was the collapse of the pomegranate plantation in Ndlambe as shown above.

The sustainability challenges faced by these three community development interventions highlight major problems about some of the DSD's social development initiatives. While the DSD's motivation to initiate these projects is noble, since the idea is to encourage rural people to participate and commit to working in partnership with government for their own human development, their implementation plan is wrong. The 'short-termism' inherent in their project planning has resulted in many projects facing challenges and, in some cases, collapse. This obviously has negative effects on the livelihoods of intended beneficiaries. This is corroborated by Burkey (1993:xvi) who argues that in many countries in the global South, huge amounts of money and millions of 'man-hours' of expert efforts have been put into rural development projects, yet the results for hundreds of millions of poor men, women and children have been discouraging in the extreme.

Despite initial sustainability challenges faced after the DSD ceased financial and technical support, the Mxumbu and Dikidikana projects survived and are still operational. Their longevity is not only due to the ingenuity of project members but also financial and technical support received from World Vision. As one of the Mxumbu respondents explained:

> *Things have been difficult at times but we persevered. We have faced many challenges but we have overcome them. The worst part was that our cooperative almost collapsed at the beginning after Social Development left us. We were scared that we would go back to where we began with nothing, but by the grace of the Lord we are still here. We are grateful to World Vision for coming to our rescue when things were tough.*

I can't imagine where we would be today had it not been for World Vision (Respondent 13; Mxumbu 18/08/2015)

The general farmer training, crop production, vegetable marketing and project management workshops attended by project members equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to sustain the horticulture project to this day. As a result of this capacitation, production volumes increased significantly satisfying project member needs beyond subsistence. The remaining surplus produce is sold in the local community, nearby Middledrift and Alice towns raising some income for the project. To ensure sustainability of the project, this income is reinvested in various operational activities. Furthermore, the sheer agency and resilience of the project members has ensured that the project has continued operations for over seven years even though it has faced various challenges.

Similarly, the Dikidikana poultry project has gone through various challenges but remains operational eight years after inception, five of which have been without external funding. This was confirmed by one of the respondents:

The journey has not been easy; there have been a lot of ups and downs where we thought we would have to stop the project. We have been working on our own for at least five years now and we are still carrying on despite challenges here and there. We now know what to do and we will continue doing that and feed our children and grandchildren with our own labour. We have enough food now, what else can we ask for (Key informant 1; Dikidikana 1/10/2015).

This poultry project has thus been successful enabling members to be self-sustainable. Its continued productive operation, without external funding or support, is testimony of its sustainability which has been built on the labour and skills (human

capital) of local people. A key informant, (World Vision official), also attested to the sustainability of the poultry and horticulture projects:

> *We are certain that the projects will last a long time because we have trained them and they are certain of what needs to be done so if they follow that they will be very successful. They already had basic knowledge of their projects they just needed to be assured and trained on a few skills they lacked which we managed to facilitate and now they are ready. We also stopped sponsoring them but we continually visit them to check on their progress and encourage them to carry on because we have seen the differences it makes in their lives (Key informant 4, World Vision, 19/08/2015).*

This sustainability observation by the World Vision official is consistent with responses given by the project members and evidence gathered by the researcher. These two projects have a solid operational plan which is likely to guarantee their continued existence and livelihood benefits for the foreseeable future.

Potential for longevity and sustainability could also be discerned in the Ndlambe food plots, although they have only been in operation for three years. The fact that these food plots were initiated by community members, through a consultative ICDP process facilitated by RuLiv, indicates their relevance (as discussed above). Their positive impact on food security driven by the labour commitment of locals sustained their productivity. This further became apparent during a focus group discussion when farmers indicated that their farming knowledge, skills and personal commitment would ensure the sustainability of their operations. One member added: *"this time it is different, Sakhundlambe is not failing, in fact we are growing stronger every day. Our numbers are growing; people are working in the plots and there is no going back (focus group participant 3; Ndlambe, 03/11/2015).* This statement is not

just 'empty rhetoric' from a community member but is backed up by evidence of productivity in their food plots. Given the planning, farmer and project management knowledge these farmers possess, there is enough evidence to suggest that these food plots will continue to be a source of food for locals enabling them to be self-sustainable in the medium to long term.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown why and how the local relevance of a third-sector community development intervention has a bearing on its effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An analysis of the Ndlambe pomegranate plantation demonstrated that as much as the Department of Social Development (DSD) had good intentions in introducing the cash crop, which they assumed would generate income and develop the local community, the project failed to meet these objectives because the DSD did not conduct a needs assessment to ascertain its relevance to the community. Instead of consulting the Ndlambe community on their needs before project conceptualisation and implementation, the DSD officials used a 'top-down' approach and took decisions about and for the locals without their input. Consequently, the pomegranate plantation failed as it was irrelevant to immediate local needs and livelihoods. In contrast, the Ndlambe food plots (which were technically supported by RuLiv), Mxumbu horticulture and Dikidikana projects (which were financially and technically supported by World Vision) were of immediate relevance to locals due to two key reasons. Firstly, they were introduced through a 'bottom-up' consultative process which involved RuLiv and World Vision and locals' active participation in the development and adoption of the ICDP as a conceptual foundation. Locals thus have a 'sense of ownership' of these community development projects due to their

'bottom-up' participatory approach. Secondly, these social development interventions are responding to local livelihood needs. This means project relevance is one of the driving factors behind the success of the thriving social development interventions.

The role of local assets in anchoring the success of community development projects was also noted. These assets, namely, natural, human, physical, financial and social capital, optimised project impact. For example, households with access to fertile land (natural capital) are utilising their labour, agricultural production knowledge and skills (human capital) to produce a variety of food crops such as maize, pumpkins, water melons, vegetables and poultry for their subsistence needs as well as surplus for small-scale retail. These community projects thus have a positive impact on local livelihoods since households have direct material benefits and income generation opportunities. This positive impact is due to a combination of the deployment of local assets, resilience and creativity of local people as well as the financial and technical capacitation availed by World Vision and RuLiv.

Lastly, while all three community development projects initially faced operational and sustainability challenges due to the DSD's short-term approach in project planning, they are now on sustainable path. This sustainability is partly due to the general farmer training, crop production, vegetable marketing, poultry production and project management training conducted by World Vision and RuLiv in the three communities. This capacitation by the two third sector organisations enhanced the knowledge and skills of the farmers thereby ensuring increased productivity and sustainability of the community development projects.

CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Summary of key findings

This chapter discusses and analyses the key findings of the study. For ease of reference, the presentation sequentially follows the order of research questions:

1. What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development and how do the modes of project implementation impact on project viability?

The main findings under this research question are the following:

Both NGOs, World Vision and RuLiv, financially and technically support social development projects in Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe communities in the Eastern Cape Province. The supported projects are horticulture in Mxumbu, poultry in Dikidikana, food plots and pomegranate in Ndlambe. The poultry and horticulture social development projects have been in operation for a decade while the food plot is a fairly new project which has been in operation since 2013. All three are productive and provide project members and the broader local community members with a variety of agricultural products. Two of these projects (Horticulture and poultry) were initiated by the Department of Social development using the top-down model but they both failed and were on the verge of collapsing when they were 'rescued' by the NGO sector who used a bottom-up model of approach when working with the communities and the projects became a success. This was an indication that the

mode of implementation of a project has a huge impact on project viability. The study also found that there were more women than men actively involved in production and management roles in all three social development projects. This new finding, herein called the 'transformation paradox', challenges a predominant narrative which portrays rural women as passive participants in interventions led and directed by men.

2. The second research question of the study was: How effective are the NGO sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods?

The main findings under this research question are the following:

Through a prism which understood effectiveness as the extent to which a social development projects' objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved in a sustainable manner, the study found that all three social development were meeting their objectives since they provided project members and the local community with agricultural products and poultry. All three social development projects demonstrate that although rural Eastern Cape people may lack significant financial capital (in its strict monetary sense), they possess a variety of assets, namely, natural, human, physical, social and financial which they are utilising to build sustainable livelihoods. The effectiveness of all three social development projects in addressing the immediate relevant livelihood requirements and needs for the communities is further enhanced by that locals have a sense of their ownership. This sense of ownership drives from their active participation in their conceptualisation, initiation, implementation and management.

3. The third and final research question of the study was: What factors affect the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects?

The main findings under this research question are the following:

The conceptualisation, initiation and implementation plan of a project were found to be key factors that affect project effectiveness. On one hand, the pomegranate plantation is a good example of how 'top-down' planning usually results in project failure and ineffectiveness. On the other hand, the Ndlambe (food plots) and Dikidikana (poultry) social development projects are good examples of how active community participation, local consultation, community development partnerships and 'bottom-up' planning are crucial factors that drive project effectiveness. A combination of organised labour commitment by project members to their social development projects and calculated reinvestment of capital in their interventions were also noted to be important factors that determine project effectiveness, positive impact and sustainability. Inter-generational transfer of farming knowledge and skills, herein called 'human capital succession plan' was also noted to be a key factor that influenced project effectiveness.

9.2 Discussion and analysis of key findings

The discussion and analysis of findings from here onwards follows the study research questions in their chronological order:

1. What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development and how do the modes of project implementation impact on project viability?

In Mxumbu (under Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality), World Vision has, over the past ten years, provided financial and technical support to community members running a horticulture project. This community project specialises in the production of a variety of vegetables that include tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, butternut, spinach and beetroot. World Vision also advances the same support to Dikidikana (also under Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality) community members. In this social development project, local residents run a broiler poultry production project alongside vegetable production. This project has been has been in existence for the past nine years. In Ndlambe (under Ngqushwa Local Municipality), RuLiv provides technical and financial support to household food plots farmers specialising in maize, pumpkins and watermelons production. Within the same community, RuLiv is also assisting community members in their efforts to revive a collapsed pomegranate plantation which was introduced, implemented and later prematurely abandoned by the provincial Department of Social Development (DSD).

As third sector organisations, one of the reasons for World Vision and Ruliv's existence is to address human development gaps that are products of state inadequacies, inefficiencies and failure. They therefore intervened in the above mentioned three communities to address persistent poverty and deprivation which the state has failed to ameliorate. For example, World Vision offered financial and technical support to the Mxumbu horticulture project following the withdrawal of the provincial Department of Social Development (DSD) from the project. The DSD, through a community participatory process, initiated the Mxumbu project in 2006 as part of its community development mandate. However, it prematurely stopped sponsoring (financially and technically) the horticulture project soon after set-up. The

DSD's reasoning was that since the project was now functional, responsibility had to be transferred to community members who had to nurture the project, make it viable and sustainable for their own benefit. However, this was a monumental project implementation and management error by the DSD because project members were ill-equipped to independently run and sustain the project. They lacked the requisite knowledge, skills and financial capacity to maintain and sustain the horticulture project. Consequently, the horticulture project was on the verge of collapse when World Vision intervened through the provision of a development grant and agricultural extension advice. This grant, which was managed by World Vision but utilised based on needs tabled by community members, was used for operational expenses such as buying of seeds, pesticides, fertiliser and irrigation equipment. This was complemented by technical advice given by World Vision community development officers who trained the project members on horticulture production techniques and project management. The net effect of this World Vision support was positive as it set this horticulture initiative on a sustainable trajectory.

Within the same Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality, World Vision also intervened in the Dikidikana broiler poultry production project after the DSD ceased supporting the social development enterprise. The reasons for the DSD's withdrawal are similar to those it used when exiting the horticulture project. In a nutshell, the DSD argued that the project members as owners of the initiative must operate the project independently and profitably for their own benefit. Predictably, this pulling out of the DSD negatively affected the project as community members could not efficiently and profitably manage the project due to its sheer big size. This was because they had limited project management and small enterprise skills to effectively run a poultry

production initiative. It was during this difficult operational phase that World Vision came into the picture and provided a development grant for the poultry project. This funding was used for operational running expenses, to build a storeroom and to install a security fence around the fowl-run complex. This cash injection from World Vision and technical assistance revitalised the poultry project. Chicken sales increased once again and the project returned to profitability thereby benefiting project members and the broader community.

Similarly, RuLiv intervened in Ndlambe community following the DSD's failure to introduce locally relevant and sustainable social development projects. RuLiv is currently assisting (financially and technically) the community in running two projects concurrently; namely, a household food security project and a pomegranate fruit income generation project. In contrast to the public participation process used in initiating the Mxumbu horticulture project discussed above, the pomegranate plantation was initiated by the DSD in 2007 through a 'top-down' development approach. The DSD conceptualised, superintended the planning and implementation of the plantation with the ultimate intention of creating local employment and income generation opportunities. At face value, this pomegranate plantation appears like a well thought-out and designed local community development initiative which Ndlambe community members could easily manage in a sustainable manner. However, this was not to be. The plantation project immediately faced operational challenges when the DSD withdrew its support just before harvest time. However, some community members are attempting to resuscitate the plantation ably assisted by RuLiv financial and technical resources. In contrast to the discredited 'top-down' DSD approach (see Ellis, 1996; Carney, 1998) used at plantation inception, RuLiv

has been using a 'bottom-up' inclusive approach in resuscitating the plantation. Through this 'bottom-up' participatory approach (see 1996 and 1998) RuLiv community development officers are training community members how to efficiently and effectively run the plantation so that it creates employment opportunities, generates income and contributes to general local community development.

In addition to resuscitating the pomegranate plantation in Ndlambe, RuLiv in mutual partnership with locals initiated household food plots adjacent to the pomegranate plantation. The major motivation behind these food plots was to ensure food security at household level. In pursuance of this objective, RuLiv (informed by its emphasis of using local assets: DFID, 2000) conducted farmer training workshops and capacitation programmes so as to equip locals with the necessary skills to make the food plots productive. RuLiv further facilitated the establishment of links between the community and other institutions (through social capital: DFID, 2000) which offer agricultural technical advice and material support. These are, for example, the University of Fort Hare's Department of Agriculture which trained the locals on land management techniques and different crop varieties suitable for their agro-ecological region. These household food plots initiative has been relatively successful allowing community members to sustainably produce maize, water melons and pumpkins for subsistence and regular surplus for retail.

2. How effective are the NGO sponsored projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods?

In examining the effectiveness of the Mxumbu, Dikidikana and Ndlambe community development projects in contributing towards sustainable rural livelihoods, the study had to first establish their relevance. Relevance refers to the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, needs and priorities (DAC, 2009). Some of the pertinent questions asked in seeking to establish the relevance of the interventions were: How important or significant is the intervention regarding local requirements and priorities? To what extent are local people capacitated to fully implement this intervention? Based on this relevance assessment, it was then possible to examine the effectiveness of the three social development projects. This effectiveness appraisal sought to understand "the extent to which development interventions' objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance" (DAC 2009:14). Some of the key questions guiding this effectiveness analysis were: "Are the objectives of the development interventions being achieved? How big is the impact of the project compared to the objectives planned?" (DAC 2009:14). Furthermore, effectiveness was also understood and implemented as an appraisal of the extent to which an intervention has attained or is expected to attain its objectives efficiently in a sustainable manner with positive impact (DAC 2009:14).

A significant level of effectiveness and contribution towards sustainable livelihoods was established in all three social development projects. For example, the Ndlambe household food plots were effective because, firstly, they were introduced through a 'bottom-up' active participatory process that included local people working in partnership with RuLiv. Such active participation of local people in community development projects cultivates a sense of ownership of the initiative (Homan,

2004:235). As a result, Ndlambe locals have a 'sense of ownership' of the food plots due to the quality of their participation from inception. Secondly, the food plots are addressing an immediate relevant need, which is household food security. Households are using their labour, agricultural production knowledge and skills (human capital: DFID, 2000) to produce a variety of food crops such as maize, pumpkins and water melons for their subsistence needs and surplus for trade. The food plots are thus effective since they are addressing a prevailing community need.

The effectiveness of poultry production in sustaining local livelihoods was also observed in Dikidikana. Utilising locally acquired poultry production skills (human capital, DFID, 2000) some households in Dikidikana organised themselves into a small poultry farming enterprise. Ably supported by World Vision as discussed above, this project was initiated as an income generation venture. It is therefore a relevant scheme in the community because it was locally created in an attempt to address the income needs of community members. It has proven to be an effective social development project since project members are able to sell fully grown broiler chickens after every six weeks. Income raised is used for a variety of household consumption expenditure. The benefits of the project also extend to the broader local community who now easily purchase chicken at affordable prices in their local environment.

Substantial effectiveness of the Mxumbu horticulture project was also observed. Despite initial challenges at inception as demonstrated above, this project is relevant to community needs and is meeting its objectives, essentially contributing towards sustainable livelihoods. The variety of vegetables (tomatoes, cabbage, spinach,

carrots and beans) grown are not only benefiting the project members, but the broader community as well. These staple vegetables are consumed at household level by project members while surplus stock is sold in the community and in nearby towns (Alice and Middledrift) thereby raising financial capital (see DFID, 2000) for other household needs. Just like the Dikidikana project, its benefits are for the whole community, not just project members. Its initiation objectives are thus being realised proving its overall effectiveness.

Based on the above, key observations can be made about the effectiveness of the three social development projects in contributing towards sustainable livelihoods. Firstly, despite initial challenges, all three are locally relevant since they attempt to address immediate livelihood requirements and priorities. Secondly, all three are effective since they are meeting their objectives of providing subsistence food and regular surplus for retail which raises income for other household expenditure and reinvestment in the projects. Their positive impact thus extends beyond households of project members to the broader community since some community members (e.g., in Mxumbu and Dikidikana) buy surplus produce from the interventions. Thirdly, all three projects are clear examples of that although rural people may be poor, they have local assets that they can utilise to improve their livelihoods. These assets include natural, human, financial and social capital (DFID, 2000) which they utilise to run social development projects with positive livelihood impacts.

3. What factors affect the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects?

In assessing factors that affect project effectiveness, sustained focus was on understanding elements that had influenced (or had potential to influence) the

achievement of intervention objectives or their non-fulfilment. Reasons behind positive impacts (or lack thereof) and sustainability (or lack thereof) of the projects were also central in understanding factors that affect effectiveness. Firstly, the conceptualisation, initiation and implementation plan of a project were found to be key factors that affect project effectiveness. Contrasting parallels of the collapsed pomegranate plantation and the successful Ndlambe and Dikidikana projects provide good examples in this regard. On one hand, the pomegranate plantation is a good example of how 'top-down' planning usually results in project failure and ineffectiveness. This plantation was conceptualised, planned and implemented by the DSD with very minimal insignificant local public participation. The DSD's idea of attempting to create employment and local income generation through the plantation did not get local 'buy-in'. As a result, there was no local ownership of the plantation hence its failure to meet its objectives of employment creation and income generation. Secondly, this plantation is another example of how state resources sometimes go to waste through 'white elephant' projects with ill-defined misplaced objectives. Clearly, the DSD did not do a thorough assessment of Ndlambe community needs before funding and implementing this project. A comprehensive local needs assessment (baseline assessment) would have given the DSD evidence of the suitability (or lack thereof) of such a plantation before investing money in this project. Thirdly, the DSD did not adequately train locals on how to effectively run the plantation hence they could not fully comprehend its objectives and potential benefits. This in-turn resulted in the project failing to meet its objectives and eventual collapse.

On the other hand, the Ndlambe (food plots) and Dikidikana (poultry) social development projects are good examples of how active community participation, local consultation, community development partnerships and 'bottom-up' planning are crucial factors that drive project effectiveness. Firstly, even though they have faced challenges at some point, both are primarily the 'brain-child' of local community members. They were conceptualised, initiated, planned and implemented by locals (with minimal external influence from World Vision and RuLiv) for income generation (Dikidikana) and household food security (Ndlambe). Locals knew their needs, had clear objectives hence they chose projects which would assist in building sustainable livelihoods using locally available assets. This 'bottom-up' endogenous foundation partly explains their success and positive impact. Secondly, local people are using their indigenous knowledge and own labour to productively operate these two community projects which are contributing to sustainable local livelihoods. Thirdly, the fact that local people in both communities saw the need to initiate their own successful livelihood projects demonstrates that they are not passive poor people who are totally dependent on state social security and NGO relief programmes. Instead, they are using their local assets to operate social development projects which are partially addressing their socio-economic needs thus laying a foundation for sustainable livelihoods.

A combination of organised labour commitment by project members to their social development projects and calculated reinvestment of capital in their interventions were also noted to be important factors that determine project effectiveness, positive impact and sustainability. Members of all three projects had, over the years, dedicated a lot of time in executing a variety of activities required for maintaining

project productivity. This includes attending farming technical capacity building workshops conducted by RuLiv and World Vision, project management training, providing on-farm manual labour through-out the year and trading surplus produce in local markets. These activities were instrumental in driving ongoing productivity in all three projects for their subsistence benefit and those of the broader local community.

On-farm labour commitment by project members is worth reiterating because it is linked to another effectiveness and sustainability factor. The sustainability of the community development projects also hinges on whether current project members have a human capital 'succession plan' which involves recruiting other local people to assume responsibility for the project when they are unable or unavailable to execute project tasks. While this human capital 'succession plan' was not clear in Mxumbu and Ndlambe, the Dikidikana project members had a well thought-out plan designed to ensure long term sustainability of the project. For example, during focus group discussions, one Dikidikana poultry project members pointed out that

> This project has been running for a while now and it will continue to do so for so many years to come because we have made plans to make sure that it carries on. Seeing that the majority of us here are old and very soon we will not be able to work here anymore, we have trained our children to take over and run the project and hopefully they will also hand it over to their children when they are old. We do not want this project to collapse because it is helping us a lot therefore we are committed to passing it on to our children and their children (Respondent 3: Dikidikana 01/10/2015)

In addition to this inter-generational transfer of knowledge and skills in an attempt to maintain positive project impacts, it is worth highlighting how the injection of capital into operational activities was a factor that influenced project effectiveness. This was apparent in Mxumbu and Dikidikana where project members reinvested some of their income in the projects in order to ensure its sustainability. This investment of

financial capital (DFID, 2000) raised through surplus stock is not only an indication of factors that affect project effectiveness but also how local rural people are utilising their own resources to build a sustainable foundation for their community development interventions.

9.3 Contribution to knowledge

Based on the above, this study makes five major knowledge contributions. Firstly, without necessarily romanticising the third sector (because they are not a universal remedy to all forms of rural underdevelopment), both World Vision and RuLiv are positively contributing to the reduction of 'state dependency syndrome' and chronic poverty among rural people in the studied Eastern Cape communities. Through their once-off development grants and continuing technical support and capacitation programmes, these third sector organisations are cultivating a sense of local empowerment and livelihood sustainability in rural communities through supporting community conceptualised, implemented and run social development projects. This community development approach has a 'long-term' empowerment and poverty reduction focus as opposed to the discredited 'short-term' cosmetic interventions championed by the provincial Department of Social Development.

Secondly, the long-term community development trajectory driven by World Vision and RuLiv builds on local readily available assets. These assets include natural, human, physical, financial and social capital. Local people, working in mutual partnership with the two third sector organisations, have utilised these assets to initiate and productively implement their community development projects. These community development projects are anchored on locally available resources and

assets thus demonstrating how local capital can proactively be harnessed to alleviate rural poverty. This utilisation of local community strengths and assets (land, water, agricultural knowledge and skills, social networks) further shows that the rural poor in the Eastern Cape can easily sustain their livelihoods if they are ably supported by external development agencies such as third sector organisations, or the state for that matter. Thirdly, at a theoretical level, this utilisation of local assets for the development of sustainable livelihoods extends application of this study's sustainable livelihoods conceptual framework in rural development. In tandem with this conceptual framework, the rural poor in the selected Eastern Cape communities have shown that even though they subsist in underdeveloped and deprived rural environments, they possess assets that can be used to build sustainable livelihoods.

Fourthly, this study has challenged a ubiquitous narrative about rural poverty and human agency in rural Eastern Cape. Very often, many academic literature sources, applied research and media accounts portray the rural poor in the Eastern Cape as people who are heavily dependent on state social security without any agency, will or capacity to fend for their existence. This study disputes this erroneous narrative through empirical evidence which demonstrates that many rural poor in the Eastern Cape might not have substantial financial capital (as we know it in monetary terms) but do possess other forms of capital which they have used to initiate social development projects. This proves that they are not passive recipients of public social safety nets but active agents who are able to conceptualise, initiate, implement and manage local social development projects as part of their livelihood diversification.

Lastly, the study contributes to the discourse of women in rural development. Contrary to some common literature accounts which, even to this day, seem to suggest most rural women's roles are subsistence, survivalist and domestic in nature, this study demonstrates that rural women in the Eastern Cape have assumed active roles in community development. There were more women (in quantitative terms) actively involved in the various production and management activities of the projects as opposed to being marginal participants under the direction and leadership of men. Not only were there more women involved in the community development projects, but they were leaders (chairpersons) of the said projects. All this means women's roles in rural Eastern Cape development have transformed over the years from domestic chores to being active agents of development. Women are now playing leading roles in the rural development sphere as agents of sustainable livelihoods, community development and rural transformation.

9.4 Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

9.4.1 Use of appropriate development intervention approaches

The above empirical evidence from all three communities indicates that success or failure of social development projects is partly determined by the approach used at initiation stage. The overarching policy suggestion is that when the 'bottom-up' approach which involves active participation of local community members in the conceptualisation, initiation, planning and implementation is used, then there is a strong possibility of the social development projects fulfilling their objectives and building sustainable livelihoods. Such a 'bottom-up' approach will also ensure

sustainable appropriate interventions which are relevant to the needs of communities are implemented for livelihood diversification.

9.4.2 Introduction of agro-technical skills training in rural communities

The study established a deficiency of agro-technical and project management skills among some community members involved in the social development projects. This limitation in technical knowledge and skills partly affected the level of productivity in their projects. It is therefore recommended that as part of implementing rural development projects, third sector organisations and state agencies must incorporate relevant training and capacity building for community members. This capacity building will assist in local human capital development thereby laying a good foundation for project members and the broader local community to efficiently and effectively implement their social development interventions.

9.4.3 Sustainable technical support by project sponsors

It was noted that one of the major development intervention errors made by the Provincial Department of Social Development was that it ceased financial and technical support for social development projects soon after set-up. Given that the idea behind the interventions is to enable rural communities to be self-sustainable, it is recommended that technical support should be made more long term. While financial support can cease at the appropriate time based on approved budgets, technical support should be more enduring in order to make the social development project sustainable. With such continuing technical support, there is a high likelihood of the interventions benefiting more people over a longer duration.

9.4.4 Involvement of more youth in agro-rural development projects

In all three study communities, there were very few youths involved in the agricultural development projects. This is despite the fact that there is high youth unemployment in all the communities. For some reason, this implies that the projects implemented do not appeal to unemployed rural young men and women. The challenge therefore is to understand why the youth are not interested in such agro-focused projects. A possible policy entry point might be to introduce agrarian studies learning material in the high school and tertiary education level curriculum. Such a specific curriculum focus will inculcate in South African youths the value of land and agriculture. It is then, perhaps, that some youths might be 'attracted' to agricultural development projects once they fully understand their value as a form of self-employment or small to medium agro-business.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

Personal Details

Name and Surname:

Organisation :

Position:

Date, time and venue of interview:

How long have you worked for this organisation?

R.Q 1.What projects do the selected non-governmental organisations support within the context of sustainable rural development, and in which communities?

- Does your NGO implement any food security programmes in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape?
- If yes, what programmes does your NGO promote and in which communities?
- What projects do you have in these programmes?
- What is the size of the projects?
- What do these projects entail?
- For how long have they been running?
- Who are the target and actual beneficiaries?
- What criteria are used to select them?
- How many beneficiaries do you have in your projects?
- How did you select these communities out of the whole of Eastern Cape?
- Who funds the projects?

R.Q 2.How effective are the projects, and by what criteria is effectiveness measured?

- What were your objectives for this project?

- How well did you start your projects? How did you run the projects ie By giving out capital to start the projects or providing the materials ie implements to be used?

- If you provide members with material or even capital, how do they account for it?

- Many projects do not often succeed especially in the rural areas, how do you ensure that your sponsored projects are a success?

- Do you find the beneficiaries to be showing interest in these projects?

- If not, why do you think they are not interested?

- What successes and/or problems have you encountered through running these projects?

- Do you have any medium to long term plans of continuing with these projects in these communities and in Eastern Cape?

- How valuable is the outcome of these projects to the sponsors and the community?

- How helpful do you think your interventions have been in helping these local people alleviate poverty?

- What then happens after your projects reaches the close out stage? Do you do any follow up visits to check on progress and success of the projects or you move on and start other projects in other places?

- How do you ensure that these projects carry on long after you cease the funding?

- Would you say that these projects have made an impact in these rural people's lives?

- Overall, did the projects produce the intended results in the short, medium and long term? If so for whom and to what extent?

- Who owns the projects? Do they belong to the project members or are the community members employed by the NGO?

R.Q 3.What factors impinge on the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects, and does it matter?

- As part of the project organisers, do you think these projects are a success or a failure and why?

- When the project was at the planning stage, what expectations did you have from the beneficiaries and did you get what you expected during implementation?

- Did those expectations have an effect on the running of the project?

- How have been the working relations between you (as an NGO) and the sponsors? And between you (the NGO) and the community?

- Do you think these people will be able to carry on with their projects when funding stops?

- How long do you think they will be able to carry on without funding?

- Given a second chance, would you work with these people (same community) again? Why/why not?

- What would you do differently next time?

- Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about what you have learnt in working with the rural communities in such projects?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS (NON PROJECT MEMBERS)

Dear Respondent

Please note that this questionnaire is purely designed for academic work and that all responses will also be used for academic purposes and nothing more. Please kindly tick the appropriate box from the options given and wherever applicable provide written answers to the open ended questions asked. Lastly, thank you for your cooperation and your support.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Sex:
   Male [   ] Female [   ]

2. What is your age bracket?
   15 – 25 years [   ]
   26 – 35 years [   ]
   36 – 45 years [   ]
   46 – 55 years [   ]
   56 – 65 years [   ]
   66 – 75 years [   ]
   Above 75   [   ]

3. What is your level of education?
   Post graduate level   [   ]
   Undergraduate level [   ]
   Diploma level   [   ]
   College certificate   [   ]
   High School level   [   ]
   Primary School level [   ]
   Never went to school [   ]
   Other (specify) ....

4. Are you employed?
   Yes [   ]
   No   [   ]

5. If you answered Yes to question 5, Please tick your monthly salary bracket:
   Less than R500   [   ]
   R500– R1000   [   ]
   R1001 – R2000   [   ]
   R2001 – R3000   [   ]

R3001 – R4000   [   ]
R4001 – R5000   [   ]
R5001 – R10 000   [   ]
More than R10 000 [   ]

6. If you answered No to question 5, what is your source of income?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Do you receive any social grants?
   Yes [   ]   No [   ]

8. If yes, please tick the boxes which you receive for:
   Old age grant   [   ]
   War veteran's grant   [   ]
   Disability grant   [   ]
   Grant in Aid   [   ]
   Child support grant   [   ]
   Foster child grant   [   ]
   Care dependency grant [   ]

9. How many people do you live with?   [   ]

RQ1. What projects are supported by the selected NGOs within the context of sustainable rural development and in which communities?

10. What is the name of your village?
    ……………………………………………………………………………………

11. In your village are there any co-operatives or groups that you know of?
    Yes [   ]
    No   [   ]

12. If yes, what do they do?
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………

13. To the best of your knowledge, who supports these co-ops/groups?
    …………………………………………………………………………………………..
    …………………………………………………………………………………………..

RQ2. How effective are the projects and by what criteria is effectiveness measured?

14. Why did you not join the co-op/group like others?

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   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………

15. When the co-op/groups were formed, what do you think they were expecting to achieve?

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   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………

16. From your observations, what have they achieved so far?

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   ………………………………………………………………………………………..
   ………………………………………………………………………………………

17. Do you think members of these co-ops/groups are really benefiting from their work?

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   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………

18. Do you as a non-project member somehow benefit from their work?

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   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………

19. Given another chance, would you want to become a member of these co-ops/groups? Why/Why not?

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   ………………………………………………………………………………………

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R.Q3. What factors impinge on the effectiveness or otherwise of the projects, and does it matter?

20. From your point of view, would you say these co-ops/groups are a success or failure?

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21. What makes you say they are a success/failure?

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22. How long do you think they will carry on with their co-op/group?

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23. If you were a member of the co-op/group what would you do differently?

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24. What advice would you give to these co-op/group members to improve things?

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Thank-you for your time!

APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE
REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: AKP061SMOY01

Project title: **Third Sector Intervention and Sustainable Rural Development: An Evaluation of selected projects in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.**

Nature of Project: PhD

Principal Researcher: Thokozani Patience Moyo
Sub-Investigator:

Supervisor: Prof W Akpan
Co-supervisor:

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

APPENDIX 4: PERMISSION LETTER FROM NDLAMBE CO-OPERATION

Kopolotyeni kaNdlambe weSkim (Sakhundlambe Primary Co-op)

Isaziso

Umfundi wase University of Fort Hare, Ms Thokozani P. Moyo wenza izifundo zakhe zePhD ngokuphathelane ne Food Security, ukhethe ilali yakwa Ndlambe ekwenzeni oku.

Ukhululwe yi Bhodi kaKopolotyeni ukuba angene kwimizi ethile ebuza ngokuphathelane nezolimo. Ukhatshwa ngu Ms Ntombikayise Kambi walapha eNdlambe ukuze amncedise.

Sicela nimamukele njalo limncede ngalokho akuphandayo.

Enkosi,

Phumzile Nobongwana

Nobhala kaKopolotyeni.

APPENDIX 5: PERMISSION LETTER FROM NOMVELISO CO-OPERATION

Kopolotyeni kaNomveliso

Isaziso

Umfundi wase University of Fort Hare, Ms Thokozani P. Moyo wenza izifundo zakhe zePhD ngokuphathelane ne Food Security, ukhethe ilali yakwa Mxumbu ekwenzeni oku.

Ukhululwe yi Bhodi kaKopolotyeni ukuba angene kwimizi ethile ebuza ngokuphathelane nezolimo. Ukhatshwa ngu Ms Noluyolo Nyamfu walapha eMxumbu ukuze amncedise.

Sicela nimamukele njalo limncede ngalokho akuphandayo.

Enkosi,

Mr Mdobela

(Mphathisihlalo kaKopolotyeni)

APPENDIX 6: PERMISSION LETTER FROM MASITHEMBANE CO-OPERATION

Kopolotyeni kaMasithembane

Isaziso

Umfundi wase University of Fort Hare, Ms Thokozani P. Moyo wenza izifundo zakhe zePhD ngokuphathelane ne Food Security, ukhethe ilali yakwa Dikidikana ekwenzeni oku.

Ukhululwe yi Bhodi kaKopolotyeni ukuba angene kwimizi ethile ebuza ngokuphathelane nezolimo. Ukhatshwa ngu Ms Siniwe Nquka walapha eDikidikana ukuze amncedise.

Sicela nimamukele njalo limncede ngalokho akuphandayo.

Enkosi,

Mrs Siphokazi Kani

(Nobhala kaKopolotyeni)

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