

Non-profit Organisations' capacity-building in small cities: Exploring current practices, challenges and opportunities in central Saudi Arabia

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
List of Tables	7
List of Figures	8
List of Abbreviations	9
Abstract	10
DECLARATION	11
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT	12
DEDICATION	13
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	14
Chapter 1: Introduction	15
1.1 Introduction	15
1.2 Problem statement.....	16
1.3 Research scope	17
1.4 Research aim	17
1.5 Research objectives.....	17
1.6 Research questions	18
1.7 Significance of the research	18
1.8 Research methodology	18
1.9 Thesis outline	19
1.10 Conclusion	19
Chapter 2: Research Context.....	20
2.1 Introduction	20
2.2 Context of Non-profit Organisations	20
2.2.1 The origins of non-profit organisations	20
2.2.2 Non-profit organisations and non-governmental organisations.....	21
2.2.3 Definition and characteristics of non-profit organisations.....	21
2.2.4 Importance and impact of non-profit organisations.....	23
2.3 Context of Saudi Arabia.....	23
2.3.1 General information on Saudi Arabia	23
2.3.2 Political system in Saudi Arabia	24
2.3.3 Religion in Saudi Arabia.....	25
2.3.4 Culture in Saudi Arabia.....	25
2.3.5 Saudi economy	26
2.3.6 Villages and urban life development in Saudi Arabia	27
2.4 Background of Saudi NPOs	28

2.4.1	Islam and charities	28
2.4.2	Overall view of the Saudi NPO sector	28
2.4.3	Non-profit organisations in the new Saudi Vision.....	32
2.5	Previous relevant studies.....	32
2.5.1	Studies on Saudi NPOs	32
2.5.2	NPO capacity-building studies in Saudi Arabia	35
2.6	NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia.....	35
2.7	Conclusion	36
Chapter 3: Theoretical Overview		37
3.1	Introduction.....	37
3.2	Capacity-building overview.....	37
3.2.1	Capacity-building origins.....	37
3.2.2	Capacity-building definitions.....	39
3.2.3	Capacity-building types	43
3.3	NPOs' capacity-building.....	43
3.3.1	Organisational capacity-building.....	44
3.3.2	Academic context of NPOs' capacity-building	44
3.3.3	NPOs' capacity-building goals	45
3.4	NPOs' capacity-building stakeholders.....	46
3.4.1	Employees and NPOs' capacity-building	46
3.4.2	Donors and NPOs' capacity-building	46
3.4.3	Government and NPOs' capacity-building.....	47
3.4.4	Capacity-building implementers	47
3.5	Capacity-building market.....	48
3.6	NPOs' capacity-building implementation.....	50
3.6.1	NPOs' capacity-building approaches.....	50
3.6.2	NPOs' capacities.....	52
3.6.3	NPOs' capacity-building process.....	54
3.6.4	Capacity-building and organisational change	56
3.6.5	Capacity-building and culture.....	58
3.7	NPOs' capacity-building critical success factors.....	60
3.8	NPOs' capacity-building challenges	61
3.9	Applying Lewin's theory to NPOs' capacity-building	63
3.10	NPOs' capacity-building evaluation	64
3.10.1	NPOs' capacity-building assessment tools	65
3.10.2	Impact assessment of capacity-building programmes	68
3.11	Interactions with other management practices.....	68
3.11.1	Capacity-building in the private sector vs the third sector.....	68

3.11.2	NPOs' capacity-building and organisational quality frameworks	69
3.11.3	NPOs' capacity-building and organisational development.....	72
3.11.4	NPOs' capacity-building and strategic planning: Balanced scorecard	73
3.12	Summary and conclusion	73
Chapter 4: Research Methodology.....		76
4.1	Introduction	76
4.2	Research ontology	76
4.3	Research epistemology	77
4.4	Methodology	78
4.5	Qualitative research approach	79
4.6	Research design.....	80
4.6.1	Research Aim, objectives, questions and interview questions.....	81
4.6.2	Interviews.....	82
4.6.3	Focus groups	83
4.6.4	Questionnaire	84
4.6.5	Document analysis	86
4.6.6	Reflexivity.....	86
4.6.7	Sampling	87
4.6.8	Data collection	88
4.6.9	Data analysis	89
4.7	Research ethics.....	91
4.8	Reliability and validity	93
4.9	Conclusion	94
Chapter 5: Current Understanding, Practices, Priorities and Impact of Capacity-building in Non-profit Organisations		95
5.1	Introduction	95
5.2	Context and background of the research sample	95
5.3	Research participants' general information	97
5.4	The current conceptualisation of capacity-building.....	99
5.4.1	Overview of the conceptualisation of capacity-building	99
5.4.2	Financial capacity in the conceptualisation of capacity-building	102
5.4.3	Employees' development in the conceptualisation of capacity-building..	104
5.4.4	Other capacities in the conceptualisation of capacity-building	106
5.5	NPOs' current practices in capacity-building	107
5.5.1	Overview of current practices in capacity-building.....	107
5.5.2	Current practices in building financial capacities	108
5.5.3	Current practices in building automation capacities	110
5.5.4	Current practices in building employees' capacities.....	112

5.5.5	Current practices in building other capacities.....	114
5.5.6	Current NPOs' capacity-building approaches.....	116
5.5.7	Comparing NPOs' capacity-building conceptualisation with the current practices	118
5.6	Current priorities in building NPOs' capacities.....	118
5.6.1	NPO managers' priorities in capacity-building	119
5.6.2	Comparing NPO managers' priorities with the current practices in capacity-building	123
5.7	NPO managers' views of capacity-building impact	123
5.8	Summary	130
Chapter 6: Difficulties and Potential Improvements in Building Non-profit Organisations' Capacities		132
6.1	Introduction	132
6.2	NPO managers' views of current capacity-building difficulties	132
6.2.1	Financial difficulties in building NPOs' capacities	133
6.2.2	Employment difficulties in building NPOs' capacities.....	135
6.2.3	Location-related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities	137
6.2.4	Employees' development difficulties in building NPOs' capacities	139
6.2.5	Board-member related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities.....	141
6.2.6	Ministry-related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities.....	143
6.2.7	Donor-related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities	144
6.2.8	Other difficulties in building NPOs' capacities	147
6.3	NPO managers' views on potential capacity-building improvements.....	148
6.3.1	Internal improvements in building NPOs' capacities	150
6.3.2	External improvements to building NPOs' capacities	151
6.4	Overview comparisons.....	153
6.5	Summary	154
Chapter 7: Donors' Position vis-à-vis Non-profit Organisations' Capacity-building.		156
7.1	Introduction	156
7.2	Donors' current views of NPOs' capacity-building.....	156
7.3	Donors' understanding of capacity-building.....	157
7.4	Capacity-building in grant-making organisations' policies	162
7.5	Donors' current practices in building NPOs' capacities.....	163
7.6	Donors' priorities in building NPOs' capacities.....	166
7.7	Donors' views on the impact of capacity-building programmes.	169
7.8	Donors' views of capacity-building difficulties.....	173
7.9	Donors' views of capacity-building potential improvements	178
7.10	NPO managers' views of donors' support	182
7.10.1	Negative views of current donors' support.....	182

7.10.2	Positive views of current donors' support.....	184
7.11	NPO managers' views of government support	187
7.11.1	Positive views of the current government's support.....	188
7.11.2	Negative views of the current government support	191
7.12	Comparing NPO managers' and donors' views of capacity-building.....	192
7.13	Summary	192
Chapter 8: Discussion of the Main Findings.....		195
8.1	Main findings overview	195
8.2	Summary of the main findings.....	196
8.3	Discussing the main findings	202
8.3.1	Observations on participants' general information	202
8.3.2	Current understanding of NPOs' capacity-building.....	204
8.3.3	Current practices of NPOs' capacity-building	208
8.3.4	Current approaches to NPOs' capacity-building	210
8.3.5	Current priorities in building NPOs' capacities.....	211
8.3.6	Impact of capacity-building programmes on NPOs.....	213
8.3.7	Challenges in NPOs' capacity-building programmes	214
8.3.8	Improvements to NPOs' capacity-building programmes	217
8.3.9	Donors' current position vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building	219
8.3.10	Government's current position vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building	221
8.4	Summary	222
Chapter 9: Conclusion.....		223
9.1	Introduction	223
9.2	Summary of the main findings.....	224
9.3	Research implications and recommendations	225
9.3.1	Theoretical implications and contributions.....	225
9.3.2	Practical implications and recommendations.....	226
9.4	Research limitations	229
9.5	Suggested future studies.....	230
9.6	Closing remarks	230
References		232
Appendices.....		268
I.	Ethical approval	268
II.	Research privacy notice	269
III.	Interview guide	271
IV.	Consent form.....	272

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List of Tables

Table 2.1	: NPOs' characteristics mentioned in various definitions.....	22
Table 2.2	: NPOs' key performance indicators (KPIs) from the Ministry of Social Affairs.....	29
Table 2.3	: Forms of NPOs in Saudi Arabia.....	30
Table 2.4	: Distribution of NPOs in Saudi Arabia based on field of work.....	31
Table 2.5	: Overview of current research work on the third sector in Saudi Arabia.....	32
Table 3.1	: Analysis of 'capacity' definitions.....	40
Table 3.2	: Analysis of 'capacity-building' definitions.....	42
Table 3.3	: NPOs' capacities.....	53
Table 3.4	: Capacity-building critical success factors.....	60
Table 3.5	: Capacity-building assessment tools.....	66
Table 3.6	: Capacity-building assessment tools and quality management frameworks.....	71
Table 3.7	: Linking the research objectives and questions with the discussed topics.....	74
Table 4.1	: Research objectives, questions, interviews questions, methods and audience.....	81
Table 5.1	: Participants' general information (interviews).....	97
Table 5.2	: Participants' general information (questionnaire).....	98
Table 5.3	: Examples of practices broader than the capacity-building definition.....	100
Table 5.4	: Capacities repetition frequency in NPO managers' answers for the concept.....	102
Table 5.5	: Capacities repetition frequency in NPO managers' answers for their current practices.....	107
Table 5.6	: Capacities repetition frequency in NPO managers' answers for current understanding and practices..	118
Table 5.7	: Capacities repetition frequency in NPO managers' answers for their current priorities.....	119
Table 5.8	: Capacity-building impacted areas according to NPO managers' views.....	123
Table 5.9	: Capacity-building impacted areas linked to implemented capacities.....	129
Table 5.10	: Main findings for the first research question.....	130
Table 6.1	: Summary of NPO managers' difficulties in building their organisational capacities.....	132
Table 6.2	: Summary of improvements suggested by NPO managers.....	149
Table 6.3	: Main findings for the second research question.....	154
Table 7.1	: Donors' understanding of capacity-building.....	158
Table 7.2	: Main relevant granting areas mentioned in GMOs' policies.....	162
Table 7.3	: Main findings for the third research question.....	193
Table 8.1	: Summary of the main findings.....	197
Table 8.2	: Comparing previous research work with participants' answers in conceptualising capacity-building..	205
Table 9.1	: Main research findings.....	224
Table 9.2	: Practical implications linked to related findings.....	226

List of Figures

Figure 2.1	: Map of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).....	24
Figure 2.2	: Saudi Arabian cultural dimensions.....	25
Figure 2.3	: G20 countries' GDPs in December 2018.....	26
Figure 2.4	: Middle East GDP in December 2018.....	27
Figure 2.5	: Research work distribution over the years.....	35
Figure 3.1	: Historical use of the term capacity-building.....	38
Figure 3.2	: Capacity-building process.....	55
Figure 3.3	: Applying the organisational change process to NPOs' capacity-building.....	58
Figure 3.4	: Driving and resistance forces in NPOs' capacity-building.....	63
Figure 4.1	: Thematic analysis process.....	90
Figure 4.2	: Thematic analysis stages.....	91
Figure 5.1	: Impacted areas by capacity-building activities.....	124
Figure 6.1	: Cause-and-effect relationship in capacity-building difficulties.....	133

List of Abbreviations

BOE	: Bureau of Experts in Saudi Arabia
BSC	: Balanced Score Card
CBO	: Community-Based Organisations
CGC	: Saudi Government Communication Centre
CIDA	: Canadian International Development Agency
DFID	: Department for International Development in the UK
EFQM	: European Foundation for Quality Management
G20	: Group of Twenty
GASTAT	: General Authority for Statistics
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
GMO	: Grant-making Organisation
GPF	: Global Policy Forum
HDI	: Human Development Index
ICNL	: International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law
KAQA	: King Abdulaziz Quality Award
KKF	: King Khalid Foundation
KSA	: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MBNQA	: Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
MEP	: Ministry of Economy & Planning
MLSD	: Ministry of Labour & Social Development
MOFA	: Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Saudi Arabia
NAO	: National Audit Office
NCCS	: National Centre for Charitable Statistics
NCVO	: National Council for Voluntary Organisations
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	: Non-Profit Organisation
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PQASSO	: Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations
SCTC	: National Statistical Office in Canada
SEA	: Subaiee Excellence award
SNA	: System of National Accounts
SPA	: Saudi Press Agency
TQM	: Total Quality Management
UK	: United Kingdom
UN	: United Nations
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNSTATS	: United Nations Statistics Division
US	: United States
USAID	: United States Agency for International Development
WHO	: World Health Organisation

Abstract

The role of non-profit organisations (NPOs) in development is vital, especially with the recent economic and political challenges and crises. NPOs are among the leading players in the third sector, they provide several services to less fortunate people. In small cities and rural areas, NPOs play a more critical role as people are in more need of their services. Building NPOs' capacities will be reflected in NPOs' effectiveness, sustainability, outreach and quality of services. Thus, building NPOs' capacities in small cities will enable and sustain development efforts.

After exploring the extent of previous research work on the third sector in Saudi Arabia, there is a gap in third-sector studies that examine NPOs' performance and capabilities. Furthermore, there is a gap in research work on NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia. More specifically, also there is a gap in studies on the third sector in small cities in Saudi Arabia.

In this research, NPOs' current capacity-building practices, challenges and enhancements are explored in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia. To give the research a different perspective, donors' positions and views on supporting NPOs' capacity-building were investigated. This research was conducted by adopting qualitative mixed methods where 35 NPO managers were interviewed, 52 NPO employees participated via a qualitative questionnaire, 10 Grant Making Organisation (GMO) managers participated in two group discussions and 12 GMOs granting policies were reviewed.

Even though the results showed a positive atmosphere regarding NPOs' capacity-building with several practices, there is room for improvement, such as enhancing capacity-building conceptualisation to improve and expand current practices. Second, better communication is required to enhance the alignment in practices and priorities between NPOs, government and donors. Collective work will tackle many difficulties in building NPOs' capacities. This research highlights the crucial role of GMOs in supporting NPOs' capacities, which requires a strengthened partnership between NPOs in small cities and GMOs to plan and implement capacity-building programmes.

Keywords: Third Sector, Non-Profit Organisations, Grant Making Organisations, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning

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DEDICATION

To my family

And to third-sector organisations

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In many towns, small cities and urban areas, non-profit organisations (NPOs) play a major role as alternative providers of government services (Pozil and Hacker, 2017). Both government and local communities acknowledge the role of third-sector organisations in supporting societies and enhancing lives (Chan and Li, 2016). To sustain and expand the effects of NPOs, more effort should be made to build their capacities and enhance their effectiveness (Hasan, 2010). Researchers are, therefore, exploring the challenges to, causes of and methods for sustaining and increasing third-sector work (Krishnaveni and Sripirabaa, 2008). Capacity-building has been mentioned as one of the main enablers of NPO sustainability (Sobeck and Agius, 2007; Kabdiyeva, 2013).

The term ‘capacity-building’ describes boosting an NPO’s capabilities or the abilities of the wider society (Hailey and James, 2004). Building NPO capacities is essential for them to fulfil their duties (Low and Davenport, 2002). Because these practices have had such positive outcomes, increasing focus has been given to strengthening and enhancing them, to maximise their benefits (Lempert, 2015).

In general, the importance of an NPO’s capacity-building stems from the significance of its mission and the critical fulfilment of its roles and responsibilities (Low and Davenport, 2002). All major players in the development sector agree on the importance of building NPOs’ institutional capabilities to enhance their performance (Li and Guo, 2015; Andersson et al., 2016). Based on numerous examples, good practices in NPOs’ capacity-building have an extended, positive impact on NPO beneficiaries (James and Hailey, 2008). Among the various benefits gained from NPOs’ capacity-building, improved organisational performance is a valuable outcome that strengthens organisational sustainability (Cole and Garner, 2010). The development research field is, therefore, increasingly focusing on studying and evaluating these capacity-building practices (Lyon, 2009).

In recent years, capacity-building has earned an important position in development dialogues for several reasons. First, NPOs, with limited resources, have high workloads, which places pressure on organisations and requires them to build capacities for efficient operation (Hailey and James, 2003). Second, NPOs face various challenges in this rapidly changing world, requiring them to build organisational and individual capacities to overcome these obstacles (Gilmer, 2012). One recurring example of such challenges is that NPOs are expected to be among the first victims of economic crises, which makes them prioritise ways to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness and sustain their work during periods of economic uncertainty (Al-Thomaly, 2017). Third, when many governments begin

delegating some of their duties to the third sector, the focus on building NPOs' capacities increases to ensure that service delivery will satisfy customers (Suárez and Marshall, 2014). Finally, numerous donors realise that the lack of essential capacities in NPOs prevents them from delivering their services effectively and efficiently; therefore, these donors redirect parts of their funds to capacity-building to enhance NPOs' outcomes (Minzner et al., 2014).

Capacity-building practices are widely accepted and used by both international development institutions and donors. Although NPOs' capacity-building is not a new concept, it remains high on the agenda in the dialogues of international development sector organisations (Sobeck, 2008; Afaq, 2013), such as the United Nations (UN), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank (Petroney et al., 2014), and it has become part of their operational strategies in developing countries (Johnson and Ludema, 1997).

Although international development organisations and donors fund NPOs' capacity-building initiatives, smaller NPOs still lack funding and resources for such programmes (Umeh, 2016). Many dedicated efforts and resources have been directed to large and medium-sized NPOs (Umeh, 2016). Many NPOs also fundraise for aid projects that are attractive to donors, but capacity-building projects do not easily capture donors' interest (Umeh, 2016).

Therefore, this study focuses on NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia. This introductory chapter describes the importance of NPOs' capacity-building, explains the research area and determines the problem statement by narrowing the research focus. The aim, objectives and research questions are stated to provide a clear idea of the research directions and boundaries. The significance of this study to Saudi NPOs is also emphasised. Finally, the outline of the project is delineated.

1.2 Problem statement

This research topic was selected based on the following issues. First, there is a clear gap in the current literature on NPO work in Saudi Arabia (Almaiman and McLaughlin, 2018). This knowledge gap is due to research scarcity and the lack of updated official statistics and information. Most studies on Saudi charities focus on the effects, issues and contributions of Saudi NPOs working in foreign countries, resulting in a lack of research concerning NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia. Thus, in this respect, the current situation, challenges and opportunities should be disclosed. Second, as capacity-building is essential to NPOs' sustainability and efficiency, this study explores the current practices of NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia and compares them to international practices. Third, NPOs in rural

areas are usually affected by a lack of experienced staff and scant resources (Walters, 2019). Expertise is also often rare in areas with low population densities because they are geographically far from knowledge and training centres (Fuduric, 2008). Therefore, the study considers NPOs in small cities and explores the specific difficulties and challenges they face. Finally, donors are among the main enablers to strengthen and support NPOs' capacity-building. Thus, they need to be aware of the need to redirect part of their donations to NPOs' capacity-building programmes and should be offered justifications for doing so (James, 2009). Linking capacity-building programmes to the results of sustainable charity work is a convincing approach that may encourage donors to invest in these capacity-building projects (Crisp et al., 2000). Therefore, the research investigates and highlights donors' views towards NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 Research scope

As there is a lack of knowledge on the Saudi NPO sector, this study contributes to this knowledge by looking into NPOs' capacity-building, it explores its current practices, challenges, priorities and opportunities. With higher demand expected for capacity-building programmes in rural areas, this study examines NPOs in rural areas of Saudi Arabia. Rural areas are defined by various characteristics, such as low population numbers, their distance from large cities and official categorisations (Deavers, 1992). Saudi Arabia consists of 13 regions, but this study only considers rural areas in the central region (the Riyadh District), which has more than 250 registered NPOs (Medad, 2018). In this study, the official classification from the Saudi government is adopted to distinguish small cities.

Previous studies have examined NPOs' capacity-building in various contexts, such as community capacity-building, individual capacity-building, project management capacity-building or organisational capacity-building. Occasionally, researchers have considered capacity-building in one or more of the previous areas. This study focuses on NPOs' capacity-building, covering different aspects of these organisations.

1.4 Research aim

This study aims to explore current NPOs' capacity-building practices within small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia and to examine related challenges and opportunities.

1.5 Research objectives

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.

2. To explore NPOs' challenges and opportunities regarding capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.
3. To assess and understand donors' position vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.

1.6 Research questions

To achieve the previous objectives, the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?
2. What are the difficulties and potential improvements for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?
3. What are donors' views and practices regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?

1.7 Significance of the research

This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the issues and challenges facing Saudi third-sector organisations. More specifically, it highlights NPOs' current capacity-building practices and methodologies in small cities in central Saudi Arabia. As many current studies on the Saudi third sector focus on external funding and the ideological impact of Saudi charities on other countries, this study contributes to building a new theme of interest in Saudi third-sector studies. It also explores the impact of capacity-building activities, and one of its important objectives is to understand donors' priorities as compared to current NPOs' capacity-building needs in small cities in central Saudi Arabia. This project also aligns with the new Saudi Vision 2030 (Vision 2030, 2017), which aims to empower the third sector as one of its sub-objectives.

1.8 Research methodology

This study begins by describing the context of the topic, specifically NPOs in Saudi Arabia, and continues by developing a theoretical view of capacity-building in NPOs, focusing on good practices, current tools, frameworks and challenges. Related theories are then explored in NPOs' capacity-building context. Reviewing the literature will highlight the research gaps to be filled. Adding this comprehensive view to the research questions provides a platform for interviewing NPO managers in small cities in central Saudi Arabia. To include different views on the subject, Grant Making Organisations (GMOs) and NPOs' capacity-building specialists were interviewed. These interviews were conducted in semi-structured and focus-group formats. A questionnaire was distributed to NPOs' capacity-building managers, which yielded updated views on current practices and highlights NPOs' needs and requirements. Current practices and challenges resulting from the fieldwork were analysed according to

previous capacity-building efforts and studies, aiming to provide a critical, updated view of the topic in the Saudi context. The research methodology is explained in further detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

1.9 Thesis outline

The study is presented in nine chapters as follows: In the first chapter, the importance of the main topic is highlighted; the research aim, objectives and questions are stated; also, the significance of the study. As part of the research introduction, in the second chapter the origin, definition and importance of NPOs are discussed. The Saudi context is also described through an overview of the country. Then, the origins and current situation of the Saudi NPO sector are presented, and previous studies on and practices for NPOs' capacity-building are overviewed.

In the third chapter, NPOs' capacity-building for different related topics are discussed and linked with various theories to gain a deep understanding of the topic and identify research gaps. Then, the research methodology is described and justified in detail in the fourth chapter, with a focus on data collection, analysis, quality and ethics. Then, the research findings are presented in three chapters corresponding to the research questions. The main findings are discussed by referring to recent literature in the eighth chapter. Finally, in the ninth chapter, the research concludes by presenting the main findings, along with the research's theoretical and practical implications. Also, the research limitations and challenges are presented, with suggestions for future studies.

1.10 Conclusion

Capacity-building is important for NPOs to sustain their services and increase their impact; NPOs in rural areas are expected to face more difficulties in building their organisational capacities. Therefore, this study explores current NPOs' capacity-building practices in small cities in central Saudi Arabia. Both challenges and opportunities are explored. As donors play a major role in supporting NPOs' capacity-building initiatives, their priorities and roles are also studied. This study is expected to contribute to filling some research gaps on the third sector in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 2: Research Context

2.1 Introduction

To understand NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia, the term 'NPO', as well as the country context, should first be grasped. This chapter discusses the origin, definition and contribution of NPOs. Then, a summary of Saudi Arabia's place in the world is given. The background of the Saudi NPO work is also explored to highlight the importance of this study. Finally, previous studies and NPOs' capacity-building practices in Saudi Arabia are presented.

2.2 Context of Non-profit Organisations

In this section the term non-profit organisation will be explored by looking into the term's origins, usage and different definitions. Moreover, the characteristics of NPOs will be listed to shed light on the term. Finally, the importance of NPOs will be highlighted by noting the impact of NPOs' work.

2.2.1 The origins of non-profit organisations

Several theories have sought to explain the existence of NPOs from different knowledge fields, such as politics, sociology, economics and religion (O'Leary and Takashi, 1995). These theories are interlinked, as these fields are influenced by and impact on each other through historical and cultural factors (Onder, 2011). Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive theory or framework to describe NPOs' roots (O'Leary and Takashi, 1995). Onder (2011) argues that NPOs might have emerged due to changes in the community. Many of these theories been affected indirectly by authors' regional cultures, religions and political systems (Lewis, 1998). Market failure and government failure theories are among the ones most discussed (Onder, 2011) and position the third sector between the government and the private sector as a distinctive version of the government (Crampton et al., 2001). As many authors claim that market failures could be resolved in the third sector via both for-profit and non-profit approaches, Valentinov (2008) argues that a non-profit approach is more effective than a profit approach, as it aims for self-sufficiency without exchanges. Sociological theories investigate the existence of NPOs by studying a community's ties and responsibilities and individual triggers for giving (Onder, 2011). Politically, countries vary between opening up the market with fewer responsibilities for public organisations and keeping it as a mandate of the government (Crampton et al., 2001). Another political argument is whether the third sector is a result of democracy and an open market or the failure of political systems to fulfil their duties (Crampton et al., 2001). From a social perspective, voluntary actions can be understood as exchange processes whereby volunteers gain desired benefits (Valentinov, 2008). Another social theory of the third sector views NPO stakeholders as supply-and-demand providers for required services (Crampton et al., 2001). Finally, Onder (2011) finds that charity actions are triggered and influenced by religious reasons more than other factors.

2.2.2 Non-profit organisations and non-governmental organisations

Many researchers and writers use the terms ‘NPO’ and ‘non-governmental organisation (NGO)’ interchangeably (Ahmed and Potter, 2006). However, Badelt (1999) argues that, although the terms ‘NPO’ and ‘NGO’ are often used for the same purpose, ‘NGO’ is generally used in the context of developing countries to differentiate these organisations from governmental organisations, whereas ‘NPO’ is used in the context of richer countries to differentiate these organisations from private or for-profit organisations. Gerasimova (2017) argues that the meaning of each term is based on the scientific field and context of the research. Madisha (2012) attempts to differentiate NGOs, NPOs and community-based organisations (CBOs), which are similar, though CBOs are usually smaller than NGOs and NPOs. Parisi (2009) further explains that the terms ‘NPO’ and ‘NGO’ are used differently in each context, country and language, and the term ‘NGO’ might change its meaning when translated into other languages. For example, in Arabic, ‘NGO’ mainly refers to for-profit organisations in the private sector.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, for various political and economic reasons, Saudi law does not permit foreign charities to work in the country (ICNL, 2017). The absence of international aid organisations in Saudi Arabia has made the term ‘NGO’ unpopular in the Saudi third sector. Economically, Saudi Arabia can be classified as a rich and advanced country (Niblock, 2015), which is another reason why the term ‘NGO’ is not popular in the third-sector context in Saudi Arabia. In Arabic, the term ‘charities’ is more popular than ‘NPOs’ or ‘NGOs’.

The term ‘NPO’ has been selected for use in this study for the following reasons:

1. NPO is used in official Saudi government documents.
2. The Arabic translation of NPO is more accurate than NGO.
3. As Saudi charities do not receive funds from international development organisations, charities need to be differentiated from for-profit organisations.

2.2.3 Definition and characteristics of non-profit organisations

The 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA) – which is recognised by the UN, the World Bank, the Commission of the European Communities, the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – defines non-profit institutions as:

...legal or social entities created for the purpose of producing goods and services whose status does not permit them to be a source of income, profit or other financial gain for the units that establish, control or finance them. In practice, their productive activities are bound to generate either surpluses or deficits but any surpluses they happen to make cannot be appropriated by other institutional units. The articles of association by which they are

established are drawn up in such a way that the institutional units which control or manage them are not entitled to a share in any profits or other income which they receive. For this reason, they are frequently exempted from various kinds of taxes. (UNSTATS, 1993)

This definition, clearly influenced by the field of accountancy focuses on the non-profitability of an organisation and the people working in it. The UN defines an NGO as

...any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to Governments, monitor policies and encourage political participation at the community level. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, the environment or health. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the United Nations System differs depending on their goals, their venue and their mandate. (GPF, 2020)

This definition presents several specific characteristics of NGOs: (1) non-governmental, (2) non-profit, (3) voluntary-based and (4) organised. Also, in this definition, all organisations with different coverage scopes are included (local, national and international). Organisational types are listed as humanitarian, people's common interests, local community-oriented and political. Finally, this definition does not consider the official registration of the organisation as a condition for defining an NGO.

By reviewing various definitions, Table 2.1 lists all the characteristics of NPOs.

Table 2.1: NPOs' characteristics mentioned in various definitions

#	Characteristic	Reference(s)
1	Performs as an organisation	UNSTATS (1993), Legutko (2018) and KKF (2018)
2	Independent from the government	UNSTATS (1993) and Legutko (2018)
3	Established and works independently	Legutko (2018), KKF (2018) and Kusmanto (2013)
4	Does not aim for profit	UNSTATS (1993), Legutko (2018), KKF (2018) and Kusmanto (2013)
5	Serves the public	KKF (2018) and Kusmanto (2013)
6	Established on a voluntary basis	UNSTATS (1993), KKF (2018) and Kusmanto (2013)
7	The organisation is officially registered	KKF (2018)

Source: Constructed by the author.

All definitions agree on the non-profit characteristic of NPOs. A second observation is that the King Khaled Foundation (KKF) adds 'officially registered' for statistical accuracy purposes.

2.2.4 Importance and impact of non-profit organisations

Many governments decentralise their services by delegating them to local NPOs (Harris and Schlappa, 2008). In many developing countries, NPOs are generally more effective and efficient than government agencies (Tappin, 2000), filling gaps left by the government and the private sector (Walters, 2019).

The importance of the NPO sector also stems from its significant contributions in various areas. Economically, NPOs contribute in many ways, such as through direct, financial contributions to gross domestic product (GDP), third-sector contributions to employment, and the economic boost provided by a volunteer taskforce (JHSPH, 2013). For example, in the United Kingdom (UK), 900,000 employees work in the NPO sector, contributing almost £18 billion per annum to the UK economy (NCVO, 2020). In the United States (US), the annual estimated contribution from the NPO sector is more than \$900 billion (NCCS, 2019). The latest statistics state that the workforce in the US third sector numbers 12.5 million employees (Mercer, 2019). In Canada, the NPO sector represents 8.5% of the country's GDP (almost \$200 billion) and accounts for 2.4 million jobs (SCTC, 2019). More than 13% of the European workforce is in the NPO sector; the latest count, across 28 countries, is 29 million employees (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2018).

NPOs also contribute to many other fields, such as medicine, education and social support for poorer people in society (Salamon, 2010). NPOs play a major role in stabilising societies (Ghani et al., 2006), and they take part in political movements, raising citizens' levels of participation in public affairs (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2018).

2.3 Context of Saudi Arabia

In this section, the researched country will be introduced by presenting its generic background, including the politic and economic position of Saudi Arabia. To obtain more insights, the culture and religion of Saudis will be described. As the research is looking into NPOs in small cities, development in Saudi villages will be explored. This overview will give a contextual base for other chapters of the thesis.

2.3.1 General information on Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the largest countries in the Middle East, occupying 830,000 square miles. As shown in Figure 2.1, it is surrounded by eight bordering countries: Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Iraq and Jordan (MOFA, 2017). According to the latest official report, the population of Saudi Arabia is 33,413,660, including 12,645,033 non-Saudis (GASTAT, 2018). Considering the country's land size and population, it seems there is potential for further growth in both the population and Saudi cities (Khalil and Karim, 2016).

Figure 2.1: Map of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



Source: (UN, 2011).

2.3.2 Political system in Saudi Arabia

The current Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is the third Al-Saud kingdom, which was re-established by King Abdulaziz in 1932. In line with previous Al-Saud kingdoms, King Abdulaziz established the KSA as a monarchy, and he proclaimed Islam to be the main source of legislation (Carlisle, 2018). The king is also the prime minister and directly involved in managing and ruling the country, with the help of the crown prince (MOFA, 2017). The main three organisations in the government are the Cabinet, the Majles Ashura and the Emarat (Alhazmi and Nyland, 2015).

Cabinet meetings began 60 years ago, including eight ministers appointed by King Saud, the second king of Saudi Arabia. After many developments, the current Cabinet consists of 21 ministers (CGC, 2019). Recently, two main committees were initiated to coordinate the ministries' work and programmes: the Economic Affairs Council and the Political and Security Affairs Council. Both are led and managed by the crown prince (Alyaum, 2015). The Economic Affairs Council is responsible for development plans and programmes in Saudi Arabia (ICNL, 2017).

The Majles Ashura is the Saudi version of the Perlman, and all 150 members are nominated by the king (Shura, 2019). The member selection process ensures that all Saudi regions are represented (Hertog, 2006). The independence of the Majles Alshura hinges on the election of its members, which might not happen anytime soon (Raphaeli, 2005).

The Emarah is the local government for each of Saudi Arabia's 13 administrative provinces. Each province is led by one of the royal family members, who are also appointed by the king (MOFA, 2017). It is, therefore, clear that the Saudi political system is heavily controlled by the king and the royal family, as there are no elections for important political positions in the country (Althaqeel, 2017). There have, however, been some steps towards democracy taken at the local administration level, such as the municipal elections beginning in 2005 (Kapiszewski, 2006).

2.3.3 Religion in Saudi Arabia

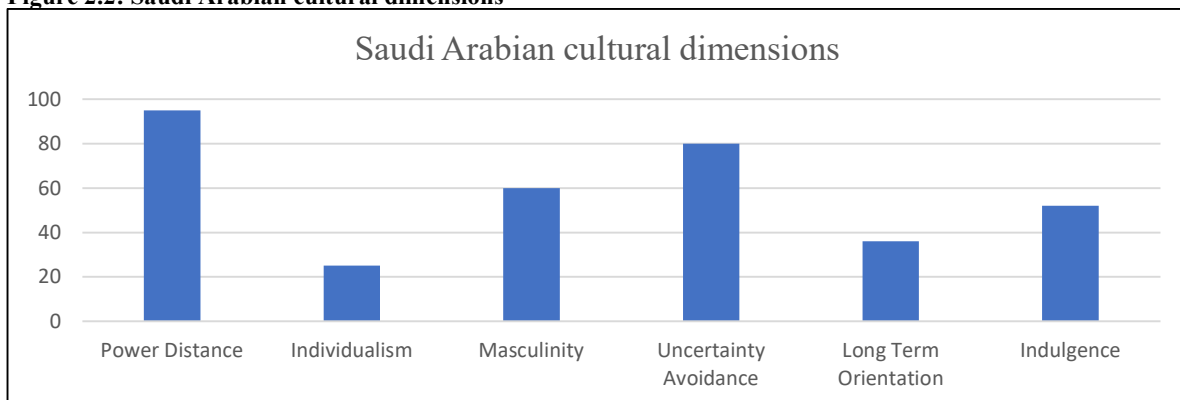
The religion of Saudi Arabia is Islam, which is heavily embedded in Saudi lives. Islam affects and shapes all details of Saudi culture, legislation and daily life (Rabaah et al., 2016). Saudi Arabia's destiny is to serve and represent Islam, as it houses the Islamic holy mosques in Makkah and Al-Madinah, which have led many Muslims to call it 'The Land of the Two Holy Mosques' (Aljabreen and Lash, 2016). Millions of Muslims worldwide visit Saudi Arabia to perform Haj and Omrah. Finally, regarding Saudis and religion, most of them are considered religious as most Saudis practise their daily religious duties (Maisel, 2018).

2.3.4 Culture in Saudi Arabia

As mentioned, Saudi culture is heavily shaped by religion and the political system. Hofstede et al. (2010) describe it using the following five dimensions, as depicted in Figure 2.2:

1. Saudi people highly accept power and deal with others based on their power positions.
2. Saudi people are a collectivistic society in which the extended family, friends and relationships carry great significance; they take care of their wider relations.
3. Saudi Arabia is a masculine society in which individuals compete to gain better life positions.
4. Saudis are more likely to prefer remaining in their comfort zones without exploring new experiences.
5. Saudis have tremendous respect for their traditions and beliefs.

Figure 2.2: Saudi Arabian cultural dimensions



Source: Hofstede (2020).

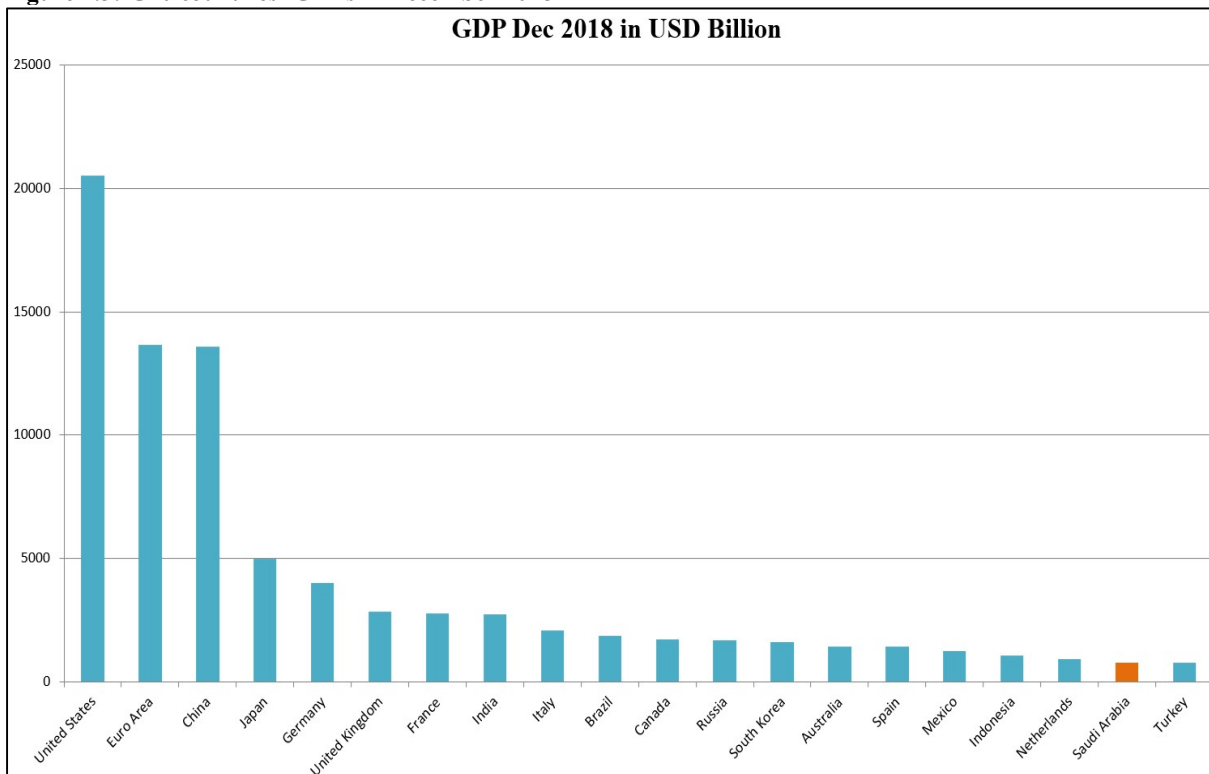
Hofstede's model has been criticised for making generalisations about the country's culture, as various cities, societies and families may score differently on these dimensions (Baskerville, 2003).

In the researched topic, there might be some issues with the Hofstede's model as the culture in the small cities in Saudi Arabia are varying based on different factors such as their heritage, political power and education levels. Another issue with these dimensions concerns how Saudi culture changes under the influence of major global changes, and with the latest social changes directed by the new government.

2.3.5 Saudi economy

Saudi Arabia is one of the largest economies in the Middle East. It has the greatest natural reserves of oil, and is the largest oil producer in the world (Alrashidi and Phan, 2015). It is a member of the Group of Twenty (G20), which forms and reviews global financial policies (Almaiman, 2018). According to the World Bank, Saudi Arabia's GDP in 2018 was \$786.522 billion (World Bank, 2020). To paint a clearer picture of the Saudi position in the world economy, Figure 2.3 shows the GDPs of the G20 countries in December 2018.

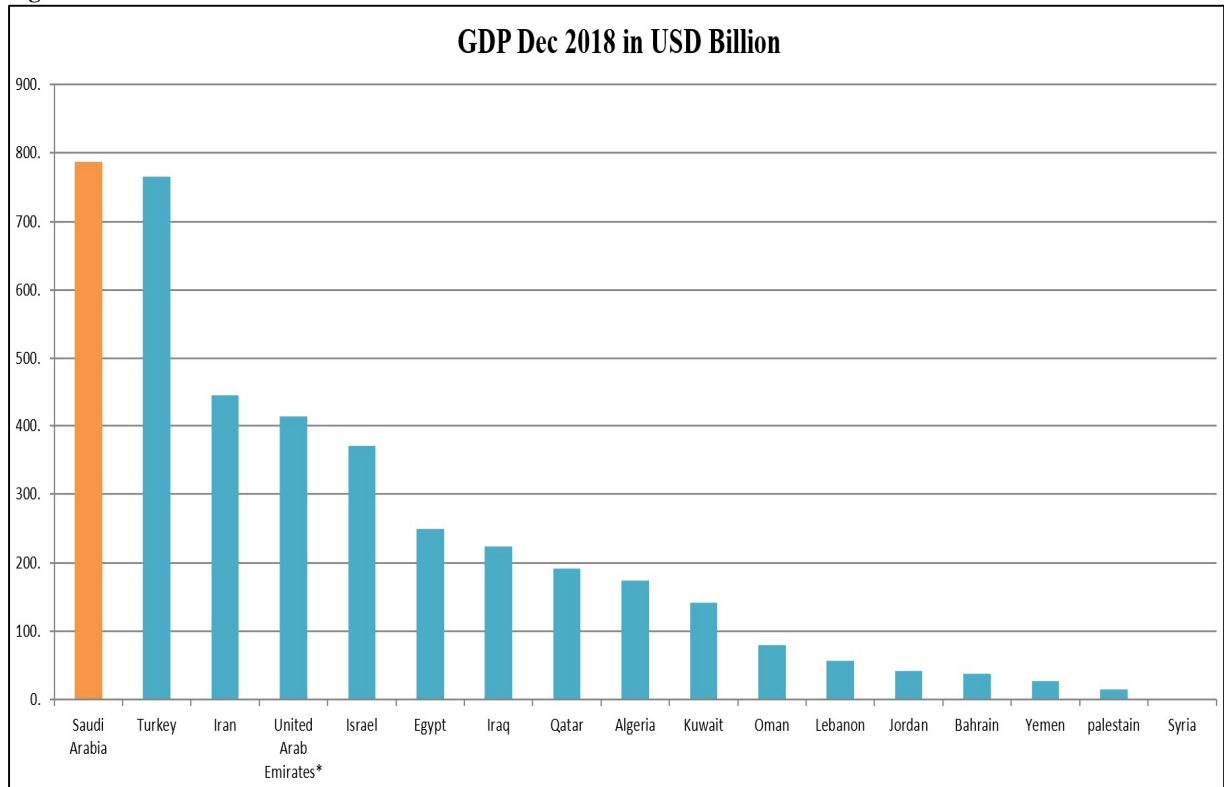
Figure 2.3: G20 countries' GDPs in December 2018



Source: Trading Economics (2020).

It is clear from Figure 2.3 that although Saudi Arabia is one of the G20 countries, it has, comparatively, one of the smallest economies. However, Saudi Arabia leads the economies in the Middle East, as shown in Figure 2.4, which depicts the GDPs of the Middle Eastern countries in December 2018.

Figure 2.4: Middle East GDP in December 2018



Source: Trading Economics (2020).

The main source of Saudi Arabia's economy is its oil-related industries (Niblock, 2015). Although the KSA's Five-Year Plans introduced strategies for reforming the economy and moving away from its dependence on oil (MEP, 2018), the Saudi economy has remained heavily based on oil in recent decades (Albassam, 2015). In the new Saudi Vision 2030, the private sector and a non-oil-based economy are being encouraged, intending to shift the economy away from oil to more diversity (Alkadry, 2015; Young, 2016). The strong Saudi economy has allowed the country to develop quickly in recent decades and to improve Saudis' quality of life. Healthcare, education and higher education are all free in Saudi Arabia (Alessa, 2018), and there are more than 50 universities and 30,000 schools across the country's various regions (Sani, 2018).

2.3.6 Villages and urban life development in Saudi Arabia

Before the oil era began (c. 80 years ago), Saudi people lived as tribes, and many of them migrated across the desert, looking for food and water for their cattle (Alhazmi and Nyland, 2015). Almost all of these itinerant tribes now live permanently in villages and towns (Cole, 2003). The current shape of Saudi cities and villages has developed over time and been influenced by many factors, such as pilgrims' routes, water availability and the modernisation of large cities, where many Bedouins settled looking for modern services (e.g. education, water, electricity, governmental jobs, modern houses and healthcare) (Al-Hathloul and Edadan, 1993). By 1930, the Saudi government began many settlement projects,

building small towns for Bedouins, and some of these towns developed into small cities (Shamekh, 1977). According to official statistics, there are 136 cities and 1,530 towns in Saudi Arabia. Of these, 22 cities and 502 towns are located in the central region (Riyadh District), which is the research's geographic scope (GASTAT, 2010).

2.4 Background of Saudi NPOs

As this research is looking into NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia, the third sector in Saudi Arabia will be explored by introducing the charity position in Islam; then, the current status of NPOs in Saudi Arabia will be presented. As the new vision in Saudi Arabia is the main driver of ongoing changes in Saudi Arabia, NPOs' context in the vision will be presented.

2.4.1 Islam and charities

Because religion has a strong influence on different aspects of people's lives in Saudi Arabia, it is relevant to explain the concept of charity in Islam. Giving money to poor people is mandatory in Islam, as it is considered to be its third pillar (P. Dhar, 2013). Islam also encourages Muslims to be charitable since, in Islam, the reward for helping others is greater than that for fasting and praying all night (Yumna and Clarke, 2011). Muslims give money to good causes for different reasons, as they believe this is a direct way to erase sins, recover from illness and increase their rewards in the second life (Hasan, 2015). According to Islam, it is not necessary for charity to include monetary donations or to occur at a specific time. An act of charity could be smiling at others or removing a hazard from the road, and Muslims are encouraged to do charitable work every day of the year (Hassan, 2010). This position of charity in Islam positively affects the Saudi charity sector because Saudis believe strongly in giving and participating in charity work.

2.4.2 Overall view of the Saudi NPO sector

Since the beginning of Islam, many charities have existed in different organisational forms. The most famous organisational form was the endowment – 'WAQF' – in which the use or outcome of a piece of land, a building or any object is dedicated to a specific charitable cause (Dafterdar, 2015). With the establishment of Saudi Arabia, many of these endowments continued, and new charities were established (Alsaleh, 2015). To organise and encourage the Saudi third sector, the government established the Social Affairs Department in 1960. In 1964, the Social Affairs Department published the first version of the legislation and procedures for charities and NPOs (MLSD, 2019). Recently, in 2016, the Saudi government merged the Ministry of Labour with the Ministry of Social Affairs. Many NPOs benefited from this merger, and many joint initiatives and programmes have been implemented in more cooperative and effective ways, such as fund programmes dedicated to hiring Saudis in NPOs (ICNL, 2017). The Saudi third sector developed from providing traditional financial aid and offering more varied

services and support, such as health, education, social counselling services and NPOs' capacity-building services (Medad, 2018).

Internationally, Saudi Arabia is a large financial contributor to many humanitarian crises (Al-Thomaly, 2017). It ranks 39th out of 188 in the UN Human Development Index (HDI), and it ranks 41st out of 145 in the Charities Aid Foundation World Giving Index. Saudi Arabia's ranking in this index was low because of their low score in the volunteering time index. The Saudi government recently approved new policies related to voluntary work, which may enhance the Saudi volunteering sector (ICNL, 2017). Saudi volunteering is a developing concept, which is beginning to evolve (Alaish, 2015). The government is encouraging volunteerism through members of the new generation, spurring them on to participate in development and charitable causes (Medad, 2018). The other factor affecting the accuracy of these ranking results is the absence of any accurate estimation of the real amount of charity work carried out in Saudi Arabia.

The Ministry of Social Affairs has also acknowledged the low level of contribution from the Saudi third sector. In its 2020 plan, it outlined ambitious objectives, as shown in Table 2.2:

Table 2.2: NPOs' key performance indicators from the Ministry of Social Affairs

Strategic goal	Key performance indicator	Results in 2015	Targeted results in 2020
Expanding third-sector work and impact	Contribution to GDP	4.4 billion Saudi riyal	16 billion Saudi riyal
	Percentage of development spending	21%	51%
	Percentage of development organisations	26%	44%
	Percentage of sector growth	-	40
Building NPOs' capacities	Number of employees	30,000	90,000
	Percentage of NPOs applying the new governance model	-	100%
	Number of defined professional jobs	1	30
	Percentage of qualified employees	-	50%
Improving volunteerism	Economic value of volunteers	22 million Saudi riyal	450 million Saudi riyal
	Number of volunteers	24,550	300,000

Source: MLSD (2018).

Although there is a focus on enhancing the impact of the Saudi NPO sector, the sector requires significant improvements. For example, the NPO sector's economic contribution to the country is only 0.3%, whereas the average contribution of the NPO sector globally is 6% (Chamber, 2018).

Referring to the official definition of charity organisations in Saudi Arabia, they are ‘non-profit organisations which aim for public benefits’ (BOE, 2015). Many NPOs operate in different legal forms because there is no single, comprehensive umbrella for all NPOs (KKF, 2018). Thirteen ministries monitor the different types of NPOs in Saudi Arabia, which decreases the sector’s level of control (KKF, 2018). Montagu (2010) argues that, for internal political and financial reasons, the NPO sector was heavily regulated and controlled in its early stages in the early 1960s; by 1980, the government eased the legislation for new NPOs, which increased the number of registered organisations. There is no accurate number of Saudi NPO workers, but the estimated number, according to official Saudi pension statistics, is about 47,000 employees (KKF, 2018).

According to the latest official statistics, 646 different charities operate in 13 Saudi regions. The statistics show that this number (which only shows information from those organisations officially licensed by the Ministry of Social Affairs) has doubled over the last decade (MLSD, 2018). In another set of statistics compiled by a non-profit research centre, the number of Saudi NPOs is 1,002, including all faith-based NPOs, which operate under the umbrella of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs (Medad, 2018). According to the KKF (2018) research department, the official number of registered NPOs in the Ministry of Social Affairs is 1,125, and this number increases to 2,598 when adding other organisations listed in other ministries’ records. However, many specialist estimates indicate that the Saudi voluntary sector is larger than the official records show, as voluntary work is often conducted informally in families, extended families and local societies (Montagu, 2010). It is, therefore, not easy to estimate the number of Saudi NPOs accurately, as there are many non-registered charities and charities registered under different ministries. After the implementation of the new NPO laws and online facilitation, the Ministry of Social Affairs received more than 9,000 requests for new NPOs, which is exponentially more than the current NPO count (KKF, 2018). Also, the real level of donations in Saudi Arabia cannot be accurately measured because many donations are given directly to poor people (Matic and AlFaisal, 2012). The Saudi government does not recognise non-registered NPOs. However, official Saudi NPOs can operate in one of the forms shown in Table 2.3, below:

Table 2.3: Forms of NPOs in Saudi Arabia

#	NPO Type	Brief Explanation
1	Associations	Association of many people; not for profit; serves the public.
2	Foundations	Organisation established by one or more persons; not for profit; individuals and companies can establish foundations.
3	Family Funds	Similar to foundations, with the specific aim of serving extended families.
4	Waqf (Endowment)	A business outcome dedicated to a charitable cause.
5	Cooperatives	A group of people form an association for their own benefit.

#	NPO Type	Brief Explanation
6	NPOs established by royal decrees	Can operate in different forms.
7	Sports unions	Created to serve a sport cause.
8	Associations in universities	Operates under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education.
9	Professional associations and unions	A group of professionals, such as lawyers and engineers.

Source: ICNL (2017).

Recently, many government schools have also begun operating during evenings and holidays as community centres (Royah, 2010).

The distribution of Saudi NPOs, according to their specialities, is shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Distribution of NPOs in Saudi Arabia based on field of work

#	Sector	Count of registered NPOs	Percentage
1	Social services	674	25.95
2	Development	666	25.64
3	Religion	601	23.14
4	Professionals	301	11.59
5	Education	18	0.69
6	Advocacy	33	1.27
7	Health	83	3.20
8	Environment	17	0.65
9	Volunteerism	169	6.51
10	Art and culture	35	1.35

Source: KKF (2018).

The financial situation of many Saudi NPOs has recently been boosted by support from the government and numerous GMOs (Medad, 2018). Saudi government support for local NPOs takes various forms, including financial, property, technical support and reduced utility bills (Hasan, 2014). In the last decade, main supporters of the Saudi NPO sector have included GMOs, endowments and social responsibility programmes in the business sector. By 2014, there were 89 officially registered GMOs in Saudi Arabia, and more than 60% of them are located in Riyadh, ‘the capital city of Saudi Arabia’ (Medad, 2018). According to a report from the Saudi Eastern Region Chamber (2018), registered endowments amounted to 54 billion Saudi riyals, with only 14 billion under the management of governmental endowment organisations. Many non-registered endowments come from non-formal wills and are managed by family members.

Many enhancements in the Saudi third sector have been driven by Excellence Awards, which encourage NPOs to engage in good practices in different areas of charity work (SEA, 2020). Academic support for the Saudi third sector can be seen through conferences, programmes, studies and courses, as well as the

establishment of four new research centres specialising in NPOs and new postgraduate programmes in NPO management (Medad, 2018).

2.4.3 Non-profit organisations in the new Saudi Vision

The Saudi government recently launched a comprehensive programme with various themes and for multiple sectors called Saudi Vision 2030. NPOs are mentioned in this plan under the theme ‘Enable Social Responsibility’, which has established many objectives, such as ‘Enable Larger Impact of the Non-Profit Sector’. Two sub-objectives have also been developed to enable NPO empowerment: ‘Support Growth of the Non-Profit Sector’ and ‘Empower Non-Profit Organisations to Create Deeper Impact’ (Vision 2030, 2017). These mark clear movements towards empowering and building the Saudi third sector’s capacity. However, Vision 2030’s optimistic goals for the non-profit sector require significant capacity-building efforts for both NPOs and the sector as a whole (Almaiman, 2018).

2.5 Previous relevant studies

In this section, all found related studies will be reviewed, starting with accomplished studies on Saudi NPOs, followed by any studies found on NPOs’ capacity-building in Saudi Arabia. These studies will contribute to contextualising the study, they will also help to identify current gaps in the research on NPOs in Saudi Arabia generally and, more specifically, NPOs’ capacity-building in Saudi Arabia.

2.5.1 Studies on Saudi NPOs

A comprehensive scan for Saudi NPO studies was conducted across six research engines. Different, yet related keywords were used while employing various techniques. After excluding articles within the international or political context, only 29 studies concerned Saudi NPOs. The results are presented in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Overview of current research work on the third sector in Saudi Arabia

#	Title	Author(s)	Year	Type	Brief Summary
1	Empowering the Saudi social development sector	Natasha Matic, Banderi AlFaisal	2012	Conference paper	Studying challenges facing the Saudi third sector
2	Developing a framework to facilitate a culture for continuous improvement within non-profit organisations: The case of Saudi Arabia	Sulaiman Almaiman	2018	PhD thesis	Facilitating a continuous improvement culture in Saudi NPOs
3	A critical evaluation of performance measurement models in Saudi Arabian charities	Entisar Amasha	2018	PhD thesis	Evaluating performance measurement models in Saudi charities
4	Non-profit organisations in Saudi Arabia: Reforming to achieve Kingdom Vision 2030 goals	Hamza Ahmed Mohamed	2018	Paper	Discussing the enhancements required in the Saudi third sector in the context of Vision 2030
5	An exploratory study on the relationship between organisational innovation and	Abdulsattar Alshammara, Amran Raslia,	2014	Paper	Studying the relation between organisational innovation and performance in Saudi NPOs

#	Title	Author(s)	Year	Type	Brief Summary
	performance of non-profit organisations in Saudi Arabia	Majeedah Alnajem, Azlin Shafinaz Arshad			
6	Deconstructing the information and technology adoption process for the NGO sector in Saudi Arabia	Abdul Aziz Al-Thomaly	2017	PhD thesis	Studying the adoption of IT within Saudi NPOs
7	Financial stability for non-profit organisations: The case of the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI)	Ghada AlTassan, Umara Noreen	2015	Paper	Studying the financial stability of Arab NPOs
8	Modern third-sector organisations in MMCs: People, property and mutuality	Samiul Hasan	2015	Paper	Comparing third sectors in different Muslim countries
9	Third-sector regulatory systems in MMCs (Muslim majority countries): Present character; future concerns	Samiul Hasan	2014	Paper	Comparing third-sector legislation in different Muslim countries
10	A regression analysis of motivations for Saudi university male student volunteers	Rana Alkadi, Guoping Jiang, Shafi Aldamer	2019	Paper	Analysing volunteers' motivations in Saudi universities
11	Civil society and the voluntary sector in Saudi Arabia	Caroline Montagu	2010	Paper	Exploring Saudi civil society and the third sector
12	Civil society in Saudi Arabia: The power and challenges of associations	Caroline Montagu	2015	Book	Exploring Saudi civil society and the third sector
13	Civil society, language and the authoritarian context: The case of Saudi Arabia	Mariwan Kanic	2012	Paper	Exploring Saudi civil society and the third sector
14	Corporate social responsibility perception, practices and performance of listed companies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Nisar Ahamad Nalband, Mohammed Al-Amri	2013	Paper	Studying executive managers' perceptions of corporate social responsibility programmes in Saudi companies
15	Governance and accountability in corporate WAQF institutions in Saudi Arabia	Mohammed Alomair	2018	PhD thesis	Studying the governance of WAQF foundations in Saudi Arabia
16	Individualism behind collectivism: Reflection from Saudi volunteers	Guoping Jiang, Christopher Paul Garris, Shafi Aldamer	2018	Paper	Studying Saudi volunteers' motivations
17	Information model for representing people's needs in charity organisations' work in Saudi Arabia: Towards a user-oriented evaluation	Ahmed Al Othman	2017	PhD thesis	Designing a model for users' needs in Saudi charities
18	Market-orientation impact on the organisational performance of non-profit organisations (NPOs) in developing countries	Tawfeeq Alanazi	2018	Paper	Studying the impact of the market on NPO performance in developing countries
19	Organisational learning capacity as a predictor of individuals' tendency towards improvisation in non-profit organisations in Saudi Arabia	Saleh Alhumaid	2015	PhD thesis	Studying organisational learning in Saudi NPOs regarding individuals' improvisation
20	Regulation governing non-profit organisations in developing countries	Muhamed Zulkhibri	2014	Paper	Comparisons of third-sector regulations in developing countries

#	Title	Author(s)	Year	Type	Brief Summary
21	Regulation of NGOs and charities: The need for a balanced approach	Dharitri Dwivedy	2012	Paper	Presenting third-sector regulation in developing countries
22	The impact of community service in colleges on volunteerism in Saudi Arabia: An interpretive case study	Mahmoud Alaish	2015	PhD thesis	Studying the impact of colleges' community-service programmes on volunteerism in Saudi Arabia
23	The mediating role of organisational innovation in the relationship between the strategic planning process and organisational performance in non-profit organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Abdulsattar Alshammari	2015	PhD thesis	Studying organisational innovation effects on strategic planning in Saudi NPOs regarding organisational performance
24	Saudi Arabia charity-sector strategies	Medad Research Centre	2018	Report	Developing Saudi third-sector strategies and requirements
25	Current Saudi Arabia third sector studies	Medad Research Centre	2018	Report	Exploring current studies on the Saudi third sector
26	The Saudi third sector on the horizon	King Khaled Foundation	2018	Report	Overview report on the Saudi third sector, discussing challenges and opportunities
27	Saudi charities list and distribution	Ministry of Social Affairs in Saudi Arabia	2018	Report	Report on Saudi charities
28	Are partnerships in nonprofit organisations being governed for sustainability? A partnering life cycle assessment	Kassem, H.S., Bagadeem, S., Alotaibi, B.A. and Aljuaid, M.,	2021	Paper	Governance in NPOs partnership
29	Regulating Non-Profit Organisations Against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing in Saudi Arabia	Alowaymir	2021	PhD thesis	Studying regulations related to money laundering in Saudi NPOs

Source: Constructed by the author.

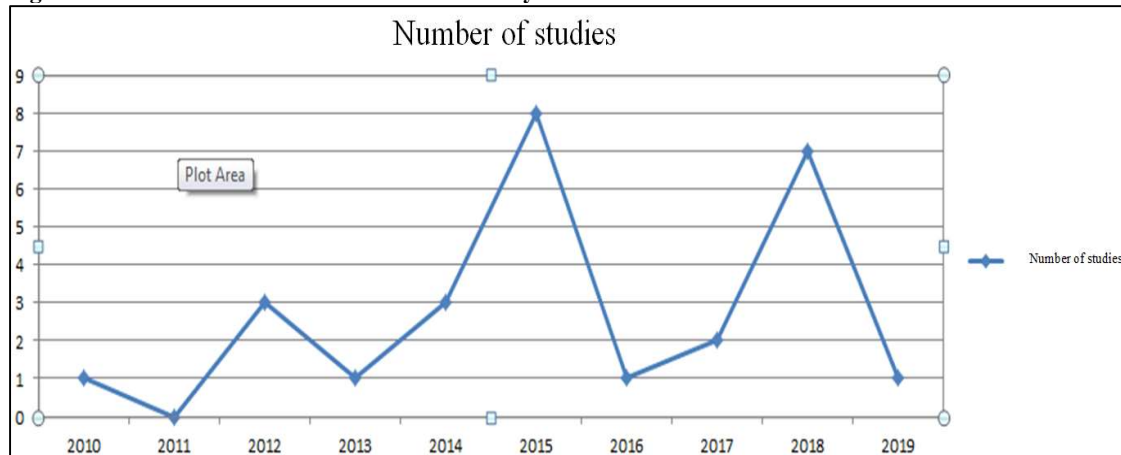
From these results, the following points emerge:

- Compared with the results of studies on NPOs in the West, the number of studies on Saudi NPOs is low.
- The main language in Saudi Arabia is Arabic, but studies in Arabic are usually not available online or the full content is inaccessible.
- Most non-Saudi researchers investigate international Saudi NPOs, their impact on international aid and some related political topics without studying NPOs' organisational aspects.
- Research topics are distributed as follows:
 - Twelve titles about the Saudi NPO sector in general.
 - Ten articles about topics related to NPOs' organisational development.
 - Four topics concerning NPO regulation.
 - Three topics about volunteers in Saudi Arabia.
- The research forms are as follows:
 - Fourteen academic papers published in journals.

- One paper introduced at a conference.
 - Nine PhD theses.
 - One book.
 - Four reports.
- The earliest study among the 29 results was conducted in 2010.

Figure 2.5 presents the distribution of these studies over the years.

Figure 2.5: Research work distribution over the years



Source: Constructed by the author.

2.5.2 NPO capacity-building studies in Saudi Arabia

Among the previous search results and including additional searches using more specific keywords related to capacity-building, no studies were found that explore NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia as a main topic of the study. Many articles mention NPOs' capacity-building but only in general or partially by focusing on one feature of NPOs, such as performance management, project management or strategic planning.

2.6 NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia

Saudi NPOs' capacity-building issues are mentioned in some previous studies. Mohamed (2018) argues that many Saudi NPOs are unable to enhance their performance because they lack certain important capacities. Matic and AlFaisal (2012) report a list of issues in the Saudi NPO sector, including lack of capacities, innovation, professionalism and resistance among Saudis against working in NPOs. The Medad Research Centre developed a group of major strategic considerations required by the third sector in Saudi Arabia. It lists capacity-building as a main priority in the Saudi NPO sector for the following reasons (Medad, 2018):

1. Many NPO workers are not specialised in the field.
2. There is a lack of sufficient, tailored training programmes.
3. Financial expertise in the sector is lacking.

4. There is a lack of professional managerial practices.

Matic and Alfaisal (2012) add another reason – the lack of third-sector-related academic programmes.

The following are examples of some NPOs' capacity-building efforts in Saudi Arabia:

1. Eleven research centres in Saudi universities specialise in NPO sector studies (UQU, 2018).
2. A fellowship programme in NPO management from the Alanoud Foundation (Alanood, 2020).
3. PQASSO NPOs' UK quality system, translated and adapted into Arabic (Rabeez), which has been implemented in over 50 Saudi NPOs (SPA, 2014).
4. Alsubaiee NPOs' Excellence Award (SEA, 2020).
5. King Khaled Foundation capacity-building programme for NPOs (KKF, 2020).
6. NPO leaders' programme from the Ibn Mahfoudh Foundation, with more than 300 leaders trained to date (SBMF, 2020).
7. Bill Gates Foundation programme to train Saudi NPO leaders (MISK, 2017).
8. King Abdulaziz Excellence Award for non-profit organisations (KAQA, 2020).
9. Al Fozan Academy fosters Non-profit Leadership (AlFozan, 2020).

2.7 Conclusion

The NPO sector plays a major role in a country's development by filling gaps left in the market by government and the private sector. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the third sector is evolving and driven by social and religious factors. Although the community and government support the third sector in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi government admits that the sector requires many enhancements. One of these is building NPO capacities, as mentioned in the government's vision as a third-sector objective. A related gap is found in the research work on the third sector in general and, more specifically, on building NPOs' capacities in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Overview

3.1 Introduction

With the increased interest in capacity-building programmes, various related aspects have been discussed and examined, such as capacity-building methodologies, evaluation, impact assessments and organisational capacities (James, 2002). This chapter aims to provide a deeper understanding of the term ‘capacity-building’ by exploring its historical origins and various definitions. Capacity-building process components are also investigated in different contexts. Major challenges, opportunities and critical success factors are described based on previous studies. Further knowledge areas, such as change management, organisational culture and quality management, are examined in the context of NPOs’ capacity-building.

3.2 Capacity-building overview

In this section the origins of the term capacity-building will be explored; followed by presenting and comparing different definitions. Also, capacity-building types will be explored. This section will build the theoretical scope of the main term of the research.

3.2.1 Capacity-building origins

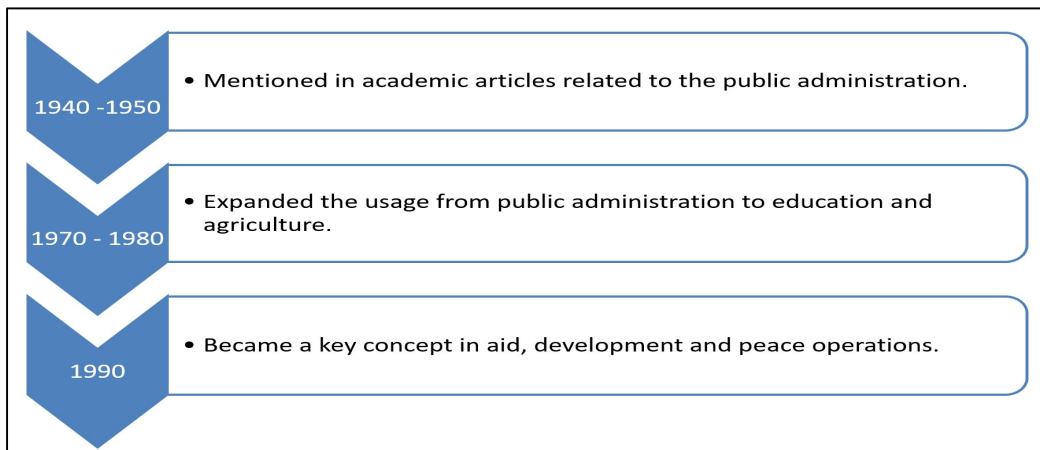
The focus on capacity-building has evolved and increased due to the need for (1) the empowerment of local communities and their ownership of development (Wilén, 2009) and (2) sustainability and efficiency in developing countries’ aid programmes, which has caused donors and major development organisations to focus on building local capacities (Poleykett, 2018).

Although the term ‘capacity-building’ is applicable in many contexts, it is widely used in the development sector (Hailey and James, 2003; Parisi, 2009). Wilén (2009) argues that ‘capacity-building’ was first used by researchers in the public administration context and then expanded into education and the development sector. In the development field, the term was first associated with economic growth and the stability of targeted countries, but it has evolved to include the wider meaning of strengthening and building societies (Vernis et al., 2006). The objective of capacity-building has also evolved, from empowering individuals to improving organisations and sustaining and operating organisations effectively (Khan, 2014). This development of the term began when authors such as Kaplan and Soal (1995) applied it to organisations in the same way it had been applied to individuals (Krishnaveni and Sripirabaa, 2008). Organisational capacity-building is, in fact, often a result of individual capacity-building (Roberts, 2001).

Although ‘capacity-building’ is widely used, its origins are uncertain (Kaplan, 1999). In many articles, plans and documents from the 1970s, capacity-building was mentioned as a concept, but without the use of the term (Biswas, 1996; Shepherd, 2007). One early author who used the term ‘capacity-building’ was Anthony Brown, who suggested that ‘capacity-building’ should be used as a more effective term than ‘technical assistance’ for building rural US communities (Kapucu et al., 2011). Brown (1980) also listed the following four differences, which are required to move from traditional technical assistance to capacity-building: assuring continuous and sustainable assistance sources, offering wider development for the community to solve the root causes of issues, enabling the community to solve its own problems and investing more in soft skills programmes.

Since 1990, the UN has focused on building capacities for targeted countries through its Development Program, and it has named capacity-building as one of its main goals (Dinham and Crowther, 2011). In 1996, the World Bank used the term ‘capacity-building’ in its goals for developing countries (Krishnaveni and Sripirabaa, 2008). Wilén (2009) presents the historical use of the term ‘capacity-building’, as shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Historical use of the term ‘capacity-building’



Source: Wilén (2009).

Although many papers about NPOs’ capacity-building are in the context of developing countries, developed countries still need to build their charities’ capacities; however, the context and the nature of the challenges are different (Tappin, 2000). In Western countries, governments have invested in building their local NPOs’ capacities to improve their services since 1990 (Weir and Fouche, 2016). In 2002, the UK government mentioned the term ‘capacity-building’ as a government mandate aiming to enhance UK NPOs’ outcomes and enable them to deliver high-quality services to the public (Cairns et al., 2005b).

3.2.2 Capacity-building definitions

Because of the wide variation in the usage of the term ‘capacity-building’, Cornforth and Mordaunt (2011) argue that it cannot be defined. Each organisation, study and researcher has developed their own customised understanding of capacity-building. Many development organisations have adopted a customised definition for capacity-building tailored to their operational requirements (Low and Davenport, 2002). Translating the term into other languages has also given the concept different meanings (Hailey and James, 2003). For example, in Spanish, Hursey (2005) contends that the translation of the term ‘capacity-building’ varies depending on individuals' interpretation and the organisational context. Chaumba and van Geene (2003) argue that to arrive at a more specific definition of capacity-building, ideal organisational characteristics should be defined. Abdul and Edino (2014) argue that the meaning and practices of organisational capacity-building evolve as it develops from a focus on individual development to organisational development and, recently, includes institutional capacity-building. This process of evolution in the scope of its definition results from the ongoing assessment of NPOs’ capacity-building programmes.

For a cumulative understanding of the definition, the term ‘capacity’ is first defined to gain a deeper understanding of the term ‘capacity-building’. Over the years, the definition has evolved with new meanings and dimensions. Kaplan (1999) gave an operational definition of capacity: ‘the ability of organisations to implement and manage projects, to exercise financial and product accountability as per Northern specifications, to employ and train staff competent to undertake specific tasks and to report on their work in ways which are acceptable to their donors’. OECD (2011) gave a broader definition of capacity: ‘the ability of people, organisations, and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully’. UNDP (2009) specifies ‘organisational capacity’ as comprising the ‘internal policies, arrangements, procedures and frameworks that allow an Organisation to operate and deliver on its mandate, and that enable the coming together of individual capacities to work together and achieve goals’. Finally, Shepherd (2007), emphasising the sustainability of NPOs’ capacity-building outcomes, defines ‘capacity’ as ‘the ability of individuals and organisations to solve problems and perform organisational functions in sustainable ways’.

The 12 different definitions reviewed for the term ‘capacity’ can be categorised based on the following dimensions, as shown in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Analysis of ‘capacity’ definitions

Dimension	Categories
Capacity of whom?	Organisational capacities: Kaplan, 1999; UNDP, 2009; Andersson et al., 2016; Despard, 2017; NAO, 2020 Organisational and individuals’ capacities: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Shepherd, 2007; OECD, 2011 Organisational, individual and societal capacities: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; UNDP, 2009 Individuals’ capacities: USAID, 2017 Countries World Bank, 1996
What does capacity mean?	Ability: Kaplan, 1999; Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Shepherd, 2007; UNDP, 2009; OECD, 2011; Andersson et al., 2016; USAID, 2017; NAO, 2020 People, institutions and practices: World Bank, 1996; Despard, 2017 Internal system: UNDP, 2009
What are capacities?	Project management: Kaplan, 1999 Financial management: Kaplan, 1999 Problem-solving: Shepherd, 2007; UNDP, 2009 Internal policies and procedures: UNDP, 2009
What are capacities’ purpose?	Satisfy stakeholders: NAO, 2020 Satisfy donors: Kaplan, 1999 To operate and perform: all studies To achieve targeted objectives: World Bank, 1996; UNDP, 2009; Andersson et al., 2016; Despard, 2017; NAO, 2020
What are the outcomes?	Effectiveness: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003 Efficiency: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003 Sustainability: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Shepherd, 2007; UNDP, 2009; USAID, 2017

Source: Constructed by the author.

To select an appropriate definition for this study, each dimension is examined in the research context. First, as described in Chapter 1, the focus of this study is on organisational capacities; individual and societal capacities are excluded, although they are either inputs for organisational capacity-building or outcomes. Second, specifying the meaning of capacities in aspects such as people and practices excludes the broader meaning; the word ‘ability’ is a large umbrella for all organisational enablers. Third, by defining the required capacities, the definition becomes operational and customised for a specific organisation; capacities can be listed and detailed in a flexible framework that can be utilised by different NPOs. Fourth, achieving NPOs’ objectives is a broad purpose that covers the other mentioned purposes. Finally, including sustainability as a process outcome adds a valued dimension to the definition. Thus, based on the context of this study and a review of the previous definitions of the term ‘capacity’, it is defined as the organisational ability to perform effectively and efficiently while achieving goals in a sustainable manner.

Turning to the word ‘building’, Tandon and Bandyopadhyay (2003) argue that the term means to initiate capacities from scratch or restructure current capacities; however, in reality, organisational capacities are a form of cumulative knowledge, experience and assets gained over time via different tools and channels. In fact, capacity-building may be comprehensive or specific and built from scratch or

enhancements based on the organisational life stage and the NPO objectives of the capacity-building programme (Harsh, 2010).

Different views and definitions are given for organisational capacity-building. Most 'capacity-building' definitions describe it as an organisation enabler to reach their goals (Fu and Shumate, 2019). Eade (2007) argues that capacity-building refers to enabling employees to continue undertaking their work effectively. However, many organisations and academics use a broader scope to include an organisation's capabilities (Cohen, 1995). Crisp et al. (2000) add a new dimension to the term by arguing that organisational restructuring interventions can be called capacity-building. Dill (2000) supports this view by describing capacity-building as reforming organisations to improve their performance and sustainability. Various authors have studied and analysed previous definitions of 'capacity-building' and describe those definitions in themes. Harris and Schlappa (2008) conducted their study based on the following themes: purpose (strengthening the organisation, improving and sustaining services and developing a community), process (individuals' improvement, internal process improvement and organisational reform) and approach (consultations, training and partnerships). Similarly, Lusthaus et al. (1999) define three main themes emerging from a review of eight definitions as follows: describing capacity-building as strengthening abilities and capabilities, targeting capacity-building at individuals, organisations and societies, and using capacity-building to identify and solve development issues.

One comprehensive 'capacity-building' definition is given by the Canadian International Development agency (CIDA): a 'process by which individuals, groups, institutions, organisations and societies enhance their abilities to identify and meet development challenges in a sustainable manner' (CIDA, 1996). Lusthaus et al. (1995) add meaning by describing capacity-building as a continuous process. AUSAID (2004) offers a detailed definition of capacity-building:

...the process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organisations, sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement. Capacity-building includes the building of frameworks, work cultures, policies, processes and systems within an organisation to improve performance to achieve successful outcomes. Training, or building capacity in individuals, is an integral part of this process insofar as it supports the attainment of organisational goals.

Morgan (1993), in his 'capacity-building' definition, extends the goal of capacity-building to include a positive impact on society. UNDP (2009) defines capacity-building differently by focusing on new initiatives only as a 'process that supports only the initial stages of building or creating capacities and

assumes that there are no existing capacities to start from’. From another perspective, the UN describes capacity-building as an intervention (Maconick and Morgan, 1999), which might be in the context of external support for NPOs in developing countries.

In this study, more than 20 different definitions were analysed. The previous discussion and dimensions of the term ‘capacity’ were applied to study ‘capacity-building’ definitions. Three dimensions were determined: how authors describe the word ‘building’, how they approach capacity-building, and the goal of capacity-building. Some definitions lack a goal, and others do not answer the approach question. Table 3.2 shows the analysis’ results.

Table 3.2: Analysis of ‘capacity-building’ definitions

Dimension	Results
How is capacity-building described?	<p>Process: Morgan, 1993; Lusthaus et al., 1995; CIDA, 1996; James, 2001; AUSAID, 2004; Vernis et al., 2006; UNDP, 2009; UNICEF, 2010; OECD, 2011</p> <p>Enabler: IFAD, 2013; Andersson et al., 2016</p> <p>Activities and efforts: Paul, 1995; McGill, 1997; Dayson et al., 2017; NAO, 2020</p> <p>Intervention: Maconick and Morgan, 1999</p>
How is capacity-building approached?	<p>Enhancing organisational abilities: Lusthaus et al., 1995; CIDA, 1996; UNDP, 1997; Maconick and Morgan, 1999; AUSAID, 2004; Vernis et al., 2006</p> <p>Developing individuals: Morgan, 1993; McGill, 1997; Dayson et al., 2017; NAO, 2020</p> <p>Strengthening and maintaining capabilities: UNDP, 2009; UNICEF, 2010; OECD, 2011; IFAD, 2013</p> <p>Supporting initial stages of building capacities: UNDP, 2009</p> <p>Helping to adapt to changes: James, 2001</p>
What is capacity-building’s goal?	<p>Enhance performance: AUSAID, 2004; Vernis et al., 2006; UNDP, 2009; IFAD, 2013; Dayson et al., 2017</p> <p>Achieve organisational goals: Paul, 1995; Maconick and Morgan, 1999; UNICEF, 2010; Andersson et al., 2016</p> <p>Sustainability: CIDA, 1996; UNDP, 1997; James, 2002; Cornforth and Mordaunt, 2011</p> <p>Impact on society: Morgan, 1993; NAO, 2020</p>

Source: Constructed by the author.

In the context of this study, the description of capacity-building as an ongoing process was selected, as it adds to the components of interlinked activities and continuity. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2020), a process is a series of actions taken to achieve a result. Capacity-building is more than an enabler or set of activities; it is the combined forces of capacity-building practices in the organisation to accomplish the organisation’s goals. Also, capacity-building can be approached through different tools, tactics and activities. All these mentioned approaches are applicable in the research context. Combining individual development with organisational enhancements is necessary to gain a wider impact. Finally, the capacity-building process should have a goal. These goals should be related to organisational goals and expected outcomes. Based on the previous discussion, the following definition was compiled from various definitions: an ongoing process of developing individuals and organisations with the required competencies to perform effectively and sustainably achieve organisational goals.

3.2.3 Capacity-building types

The wide use of the term ‘capacity-building’ means that it is not specific to one situation (Gibson, 2001). Organisational capacity is a multilevel, complex and interrelated concept that includes processes, internal and external networking, systems, people and strategies (Cornforth and Mordaunt, 2011). Capacity-building is categorised in many different aspects, such as the NPO’s field, programme aim, targeted area, tools, capacities and approach. Some organisations and authors have categorised organisational capacity-building based on required capacities, such as project management, financial management and programme evaluation (Weir and Fouche, 2016). Puranik (2014) divides NPOs’ capacity-building into the following areas: financial, skills, leadership, commitment, culture, environment and structure. This categorisation produces endless types based on the capacities required by different NPOs.

Howard et al. (2009) categorise capacity-building based on the target audience (individuals, organisation, sector or country). Araya-Quesada et al. (2010) add systematic capacity-building as a new category in which an organisational framework is developed to harmonise internal processes and align them with the external environment. James and Hailey (2008) provide a further dimension by categorising capacity-building based on purpose (social, political, organisational, instrumental or transformational). In this study, the focus is on the wider meaning of organisational capacity-building, in which all capacities are either inputs for processes, such as individuals’ capacities, or external enablers, such as the third-sector market.

Howard et al. (2009) categorise organisational capacity-building based on the intervention approach (knowledge access, training, consultation, organisation restructuring, peer learning and networking). Tandon and Bandyopadhyay (2003) categorise organisational capacities into three types: (1) intellectual capacity, which is the know-how to implement daily activities, solve problems and improve the organisation continuously; (2) institutional capacity, which is the internal system of the organisation and organisational fit in the wider community; and (3) resources capacity, which are the materials and assets required to implement development projects. Similarly, Okubo and Michaelowa (2009) categorise organisational capacity-building into three categories: knowledge awareness, institutional building and project development. In the following sections, more details of organisational capacity-building types are given in discussions of NPOs’ capacity-building goals, approaches and capacities.

3.3 NPOs’ capacity-building

After presenting the terms “capacity-building” and “NPOs”, in this section “NPOs’ capacity-building” will be looked at from different angles. Starting by giving overview of organisational capacity-building;

followed by exploring the current academic usage of NPO's capacity-building. This overview of NPOs' capacity-building will be shaped by exploring NPOs' capacity-building goals.

3.3.1 Organisational capacity-building

ShahulHameedu and Kanchana (2014) argue that NPO sector development goals can be achieved by developing NPOs' capacities, which is a complicated process and consists of multilevel dimensions and interrelated activities (Cole and Garner, 2010). Roberts (2001) argues that successful NPOs' capacity-building strategies should be based on building individuals' competencies. However, adopting this strategy alone may neglect other essential organisational capacities, such as external networking (Reid and Gibb, 2004). In their attempt to differentiate civil society capacity-building from NPOs' capacity-building, James and Hailey (2008) argue that civil society capacity-building practices focus on developing communications and networking, whereas NPOs' capacity-building focuses on organisational enhancements. Reid and Gibb (2004) list the following main components of organisational capacities: human resources, finances, networking, structure, physical resources and systems.

Kaplan (1999) argues that to understand organisational capacity-building, the meaning of 'organisation' should be clarified and the ideal capacities of an NPO should be defined in order to design organisational capacity-building programmes that fulfil the ideal characteristics of an NPO. Lorenz (2001) describes organisations as information processing systems, similar to the human mind. This indicates that organisations are interlinked and can grow and learn. Related resources dependence theory posits that an organisation is based on resources that come from the organisation's environment and are the base of its power (Casciaro and Piskorski, 2005).

Polk (2011) argues that sustainable development requires organisational capacity-building in NPOs. The links between organisational effectiveness, capacity-building and sustainability are obvious and proven in many practical development cases (Shepherd, 2007; Minzner et al., 2014). Sustainability results from organisational capacity-building; it is also a required feature of capacity-building programmes, which should be seen as a means of continuous improvement for the organisation (Humphries et al., 2011). Similarly, Roberts (2001) states that an effective capacity-building process should be a continuous effort to keep the organisation up-to-date and abreast of new challenges; in other words, to make the NPO a learning organisation.

3.3.2 Academic context of NPOs' capacity-building

Using academic search engines, a search for the term 'capacity-building' or 'capacity development' results in thousands of publications. For the purposes of this study, results have been excluded when

they meet at least one of the following criteria: (1) the result is in the educational context, (2) the result is in the medical context, (3) the result is specifically about one capacity or (4) the result is about building social or political capacities in the community. The focus was on results that discuss NPOs' capacity-building using the wider meaning. Additionally, most of the results are in the context of NPOs in developing countries. Although the focus of this study is on NPOs in rich countries, results in the context of developing countries have not been excluded because there are many similarities in their NPOs as organisations. Some research sources include related official reports and guides produced by international development organisations. Finally, many of the papers, theories and studies about organisational development can be applied to developing NPOs capacities in the wider context.

3.3.3 NPOs' capacity-building goals

The aim of NPOs' capacity-building programmes varies based on the context of the NPO and the scope of the programme. One of the fundamental benefits of building the capacities of local NPOs is equipping NPO employees and local communities to take ownership of development in their area (Donais, 2009), thereby resulting in greater engagement with and acceptance from the locals. Furthermore, development work design can be customised to their needs due to a deep understanding of the root causes of problems. In a broad context, one capacity-building goal is to ensure effective NPO operations in the long run, which can be described as NPO sustainability (Hailey and James, 2003; Shepherd, 2007). One indirect and long-term goal is to increase NPOs' financial support, as capable NPOs are more attractive to funders (Reid and Gibb, 2004). De Vita et al. (2001) extend the goal scope of capacity-building to include enhancement of the living conditions of NPO-targeted beneficiaries. Thus, many authors and development organisations argue that capacity-building programmes' ultimate goal is to enhance NPO performance to meet their customers' expectations (Sobeck and Agius, 2007).

The objective of a capacity-building programme can be short-term, with a specific focus on improving part of the NPO, or long-term, with a broader scope to improve and sustain NPO work (Sobeck and Agius, 2007). Letts et al. (1999) add the objective of supporting NPO growth, which requires capacity-building programmes to enable and facilitate expansion plans. For NPOs working on politically related work, James and Hailey (2008), in their list of capacity-building purposes, mention advocating and embracing political or social objectives, which requires specific and customised capacities.

As the objectives of capacity-building programmes vary from one NPO to another, setting clear objectives for programmes is essential to enhance their outcomes and maintain their focus during their implementation (Harris and Schlappa, 2008). Also, setting goals facilitates continuous improvement of

capacity-building programmes through ongoing evaluation according to these goals (Preskill and Boyle, 2008).

3.4 NPOs' capacity-building stakeholders

NPOs' capacity-building is a complex and interlinked process in which various internal and external factors are involved (James and Hailey, 2008). Many external players are involved in NPOs' capacity-building processes, such as the government, local authorities, training centres, donors, consultants and academics (Hursey, 2005; Li and Guo, 2015). James (2002) argues that the main stakeholders in the capacity-building process are the employees, donors, NPO leaders and capacity-building providers. The level of participation in capacity-building programmes from different stakeholders will shape the programme in the interests of the more involved parties (Ondieki, 2016). The involvement and positioning of each stakeholder in the process depend on NPO networks and the country context. Effective cooperation between donors, implementers and NPO staff in the capacity-building stages is vital for successful implementation (Popescu et al., 2010). In the forthcoming sections, some of the main stakeholder aspects will be discussed.

3.4.1 Employees and NPOs' capacity-building

Capacity-building initiatives face a range of challenges and difficulties due to the complex nature of programmes and the human factor involved (James and Hailey, 2008). Capacity-building can be described as organisational change that heavily depends on people; thus, capacity-building can be seen as a human change process (James, 2002). Therefore, the main stakeholders are the employees and successful implementation of the changes required will hinge on their acceptance of change (Smith, 2005). James and Hailey (2008) argue that the capacity-building process is controlled from inside the NPO, while outside stakeholders can influence the process, but the employees are the main enablers of the programme. The human change process requires complex knowledge and theories on personnel characteristics, cultures and motivations (Mahoney, 2003). For successful implementation, it is crucial to give employees ownership of change programmes (James, 2002). Therefore, employees should participate in, understand, own and be accountable for capacity-building programmes in NPOs from the beginning to smooth the required improvements and changes (Ganta and Babu, 2017). Ondieki (2016) mentions that one of the common mistakes in the participation process is to focus on senior employees and ignore the rest, which will not result in a complete understanding of NPO issues and will not elicit the required ownership energy from the employees.

3.4.2 Donors and NPOs' capacity-building

Among donors' types of support given to NPOs, capacity-building programmes are critical, as they are the main enablers of organisational capacity-building (Walton and Macmillan, 2014). Funders

participate in NPOs' sustainability by funding their capacity-building programmes (Schuemer-Cross and Taylor, 2009). Due to the importance of donors, NPOs have a responsibility to maintain their relations with their donors with effective, transparent and continuous communication in order to sustain their support for NPOs' capacity-building programmes (Van Dyk and Fourie, 2015). As an outcome of this communication, donors will better understand NPOs' capacity-building, which will facilitate their programme support (James, 2002). Generally, donors' motivations for donating shape the nature of their relationship with the NPO; thus, donors who wish to benefit the community are expected to be more involved in their donation implementation (García-Mainar and Marcuello, 2007). However, one issue that may arise is that some donors apply their own agenda to capacity-building programmes, which might shift a programme's objectives slightly from the main purpose (Diana-Camelia and Mihai, 2013). The level of donors' understanding of the NPO is another factor that affects their level of participation in programme implementation (Burt, 2014). Donors' involvement in the capacity-building process is not always positive, as some donors focus more on the short term and quick-win tasks (Peou, 2007). Some donors' involvement in capacity-building programmes goes beyond their boundaries of support and supervision to operational implementation (Aldape et al., 2006), which might result in a conflict of interests and power conflicts.

3.4.3 Government and NPOs' capacity-building

Government agencies play an important role in shaping the infrastructure of the third sector, which is essential for building NPOs' capacities (Macmillan, 2013b). Although the development of their countries is a vital mandate of governments, NPOs and donors support and complement this role to expand the impact and coverage of development programmes (Afaq, 2013). Governments vary in their participation in NPOs' capacity-building, from supporting and facilitating to challenging and obstructing (Cavaye and Cavaye, 2000). Governments need to participate strongly and positively in strengthening NPOs to expand their impact and increase the quality of their services (Reid and Gibb, 2004). The political position of the government regarding the third sector reflects the level of support from the government towards NPOs building their capacities (Cavaye and Cavaye, 2000).

3.4.4 Capacity-building implementers

As capacity-building programme implementers, consultants and training centres have practical experience. It is crucial to involve them early in the planning phase of the programme (Harris and Schlappa, 2008). During the planning phase, capacity-building providers should customise their intervention based on the culture and context of the targeted NPOs (James, 2002). There is no one standard intervention applied to all NPOs' capacity-building. To customize a capacity-building programme for an NPO, the implementation should involve various stakeholders, especially implementers (Reid and Gibb, 2004). Ondieki (2016) argues that although many capacity-building

programme implementers claim that their implementation is a participatory process, in reality, it usually only involves providing the NPO with programme updates. In fact, implementers may prefer not to involve the NPO in their plans due to time and resource constraints. Implementers could be professional volunteers who assist in building NPOs' capacities by sharing their knowledge and experience (Valls and Schmeling, 2004). One issue with implementers, however, is the absence of a recognition or qualification system to identify suitable candidates (James, 2002), particularly for short-term volunteers. NPOs should ensure that volunteers' engagement is aligned with capacity-building goals, as many volunteers have little understanding of NPOs' needs (Schech et al., 2019). Even after taking into consideration volunteers' backgrounds and experience, it is a challenge to align NPOs' needs with suitable volunteers (Valls and Schmeling, 2004).

NPOs' stakeholders in capacity-building programmes should cooperate, communicate and work as a team from the early stages in order to set well-defined objectives with common agreement (James and Hailey, 2008). Balanced power and clear boundaries should also be drawn at the beginning of capacity-building programmes between donors, implementers and NPOs to avoid unnecessary conflicts (James, 2002). Agreements and a common understanding of capacity-building programmes among the stakeholders will ensure more effective implementation (James and Hailey, 2008). One challenge in coordinating the different parties is the variation in related knowledge levels (Ondieki, 2016). To overcome this challenge, awareness and training activities should be conducted at the beginning of a programme.

3.5 Capacity-building market

As capacity-building is a set of processes, resources and activities, the capacity-building market consists of sources, implementers and infrastructure (Macmillan, 2016). It is where third-sector policies are shaped and required capacities are provided (Macmillan, 2016). Many factors can shape and affect the market, such as the volume, nature and source of funds, the support provided to capacity-building programmes and the demands from NPOs (Osabutey and Croucher, 2018). One common challenge in the capacity-building market in the third sector involves balancing demand volume and priorities with available supply (Macmillan et al., 2014). Also, the destination of funds will shape the market and shift the control between implementers and NPOs.

Walton and Macmillan (2014) argue that the capacity-building market in the third sector is either a supply-led market in which funds and support go to the implementers, who drive NPOs' development, or a demand-led market in which NPOs take the lead by directing funds based on their development requirements. The fund receiver controls and determines the market direction and priorities. Dayson and

Sanderson (2014) argue that in many capacity-building markets, the focus is more on providers than receivers. It has been claimed that there are two advantages of moving towards a demand-led approach: (1) it improves the communication between NPOs and implementers, as more control lies with the NPOs, and (2) it is more suitable in cases of limited resources, which are directed based on a specific NPO's needs (Walton and Macmillan, 2014). Another issue with the supply-led model is the possibility of implementers working more with the for-profit sector, which reduces the focus on the third sector (Macmillan, 2016). Dayson et al. (2017) support this argument by advising GMOs, international development organisations and governments to give front-line organisations more control in developing and planning capacity-building programmes. However, Macmillan (2013a) argues that the capacity-building market should be neither supply- nor demand-led, as a healthy market strikes a balance between the two models to gain the advantages of both approaches. In fact, it is difficult to categorise the market with one label, as it is changeable and dynamic based on different factors (Fehse, 2003).

The third sector faces many challenges in the capacity development market, as there are many requirements and limited resources. Thus, some NPOs utilise their internal resources, as they are easily accessible and affordable (Aldape et al., 2006). One common challenge for some third-sector organisations is the lack of accessibility to the market, especially for small NPOs in rural areas, due to a shortage of funding or networking (Macmillan et al., 2014). Many small NPOs in rural areas face difficulties in fundraising and competing in the donation market due to a lack of professionalism and required capacities (Harris and Schlappa, 2008). In trying to overcome this issue, many NPOs focus on improving their network in the capacity-building market, which is an enabling factor in accessing a variety of capacity-building programmes (Dayson and Sanderson, 2014). Indeed, NPOs need an accessible and organized network of their peers to gain capacity-building experience, knowledge and tools (Aldape et al., 2006). Governments and international development organisations have a role to play in facilitating these networks and dialogues.

Another challenge in the market is the need to tailor capacity-building programmes based on NPOs' needs, priorities, contexts and organisational cultures (Macmillan et al., 2014). For example, in the UK, the demand shifted from financial management and legal-related capacities towards fundraising and online capacities (Dayson and Sanderson, 2014). There is also the question of who is responsible for developing capacities if the builders require capacity-building themselves (Dayson et al., 2017). There are ongoing arguments and comparisons made concerning the quality of services of profit and non-profit organisations in providing capacity-building programmes (Dayson and Sanderson, 2014). Therefore, an

open market is emerging in which implementers serve both for-profit and non-profit organisations and funds are directed to NPOs and the implementers.

3.6 NPOs' capacity-building implementation

Capacity-building implementation is a complex process with many interactions inside and outside the NPO. For example, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) conceptualises its capacity-building implementation framework as consisting of (1) external factors (stakeholders, external implementers and the environment), (2) organisational capacities and system and (3) internal enablers (resources, capabilities, change acceptance and NPO performance) (DFID, 2010). Schuh and Leviton (2006) introduced a different framework with five main components: governance processes, internal operations, an NPO's core services, organisational development and financial resources. As outsiders (the third-sector environment, programme donors and implementers) are the main influencers in implementing capacity-building programmes (Hartwig et al., 2008), the DFID framework is advantageous, as it includes these external factors, which are ignored by the latter framework. On the other hand, the advantage of Schuh and Leviton's framework is the importance of NPO core services, as they are distinguished from the internal support process. Many other frameworks have been developed for NPOs' capacity-building with many different dimensions. To conceptualise the NPO capacity-building process, the following questions should be answered: (1) what is it for or why it is needed? (2) who is it for? (3) who is going to deliver it? and (4) how is it going to be delivered and what areas will be tackled? (Howard et al., 2009). In the forthcoming sections, these questions are discussed.

3.6.1 NPOs' capacity-building approaches

Capacity-building can be achieved through various approaches, including a top-down approach (such as structure and policies), training, consultations and a participatory approach (Hartwig et al., 2008). In a generic view, capacity-building in the third sector can be achieved through dedicating funds to capacity-building programmes; it can also be achieved via political influence on related public policies (Li and Guo, 2015). An NPO can choose one of these approaches or combine more than one methodology. Determining the best approach depends on the situation, culture and needs of the targeted organisation. Another factor when determining the approach is the shape of the capacity-building market (mainly supply-led or demand-led); thus, market control power determines the available approaches (Macmillan et al., 2014). The approach is also influenced by the implementer (private or non-profit provider) (Macmillan et al., 2014).

NPOs' capacity-building can be approached using various tools such as training, peer visits, partnerships, consultancy, scholarships and mentoring (James and Hailey, 2008; Appe and Schnable, 2019). As

researchers and practitioners have defined many different approaches, they distinguish between them based on their view of the process. DFID (2010) categorises NPOs' capacity-building based on three levels: (1) individual development in the required competencies, (2) an organisational level in which the focus is on internal processes and policies and (3) building institutional capacities to improve networking, the market and related policies. Huyse et al. (2012) explain that different techniques and tools are utilised based on the capacity-building programme level. For example, human capital development theories and tools are used with the individual development level; organisational development, quality management and strategic planning tools are used for the internal operations level; and institutional development is used for developing NPOs' institutional capacities.

UN programmes define capacity-building interventions as either functional (developing abilities in an entire area of the NPO) or technical (a specific skill to be developed) (Petrunev et al., 2014). This approach helps in sustaining intervention outcomes within the NPO. A third view is introduced by Hyden (2005), who classifies interventions as either upstream, which focuses more on the NPO's strategy, policies and governance, or downstream, which is centred more on implementation, skills and technical support. A fourth view is to approach capacity-building by utilizing the NPOs' internal resources or to look externally for new resources or outsourcing some services (Li and Guo, 2015). Another angle is to consider a capacity-building programme as an enhancement of the current NPO situation or restructure the whole organisation and rebuild NPOs' capacities from scratch (Crisp et al., 2000).

The focus on developing external capacities is known as institutional capacity-building, in which third-sector networking and knowledge management are developed to enhance internal organisational capacities (Stamberg, 1998). An example of an institutional capacity is an NPO call centre, which provides networking and access services for NPOs to donors and knowledge resources (Stamberg, 1998). For more effective implementation, the focus on external networking should be aligned with the NPO's objectives and organisational capacities.

A partnership between donors and NPOs is a common approach in building NPOs' capacities, with variations in implementation based on power control and the nature of the relationship (Stamberg, 1998). Another common form of partnership in capacity-building is between the public sector and the third sector, especially if the government supports and participates in the third-sector development (Kara, 2014). Recently, with the emergence of social responsibility programmes in large corporations, the private sector has partnered with the third sector to build NPO capacities (Kara, 2014). This partnership helps in transferring large corporations' best managerial practices to NPOs. It is important to mention that the relationship between NPOs and private sector employees usually faces challenges in

harmonising mixed teams and clearing away negative pre-assumptions of each party towards the other (Kara, 2014). Generally, NPOs' partners should add value to NPOs, which builds confidence during programme implementation (Stamberg, 1998). Many other types of partnerships in capacity-building exist, such as peer partnerships, strategic partnerships and shared knowledge resource partnerships (Kara, 2014).

There is a new shift in the organisational capacity-building approach from the traditional process to a more participatory process in which the consultant plays a facilitating role in the process rather than transferring direct knowledge to the organisation (Howard et al., 2009). In the participatory approach, NPOs' employees analyse and assess the NPO situation then build strategic directions for capacity-building (Chaumba and van Geene, 2003). Cornforth and Mordaunt (2011) distinguish between a deficit approach, in which an external implementer assesses the NPO and defines gaps in the NPO's capacities without internal participation, and an empowerment approach, in which employees discuss and discover gaps and propose solutions. Employees' empowerment is achieved by making them accountable for and giving them ownership of the programme.

Some approaches have been designed to overcome a specific issue in NPOs. For example, when the organisational environment is not ready for implementing a capacity-building programme, the approach should be focused on work environment enablers (Stamberg, 1998). When there is a lack of funding for capacity-building programmes, NPOs might approach universities and development research centres to exchange services; for example, NPOs can provide data access and academics can build some of NPOs' capacities (Howard et al., 2009). Some organisations solve their funding issues by building their fundraising capacity to sustain the NPO work generally and capacity-building programmes specifically (Stamberg, 1998).

NPOs should implement many approaches to build their capacities, as each approach is best suited to a certain area (Gordijn, 2006). For example, USAID implemented a capacity-building programme by mixing three approaches: (1) developing NPO leaders through training, mentoring and scholarships, (2) developing NPO networking and access to international organisations and funders and (3) building a continuous learning programme with the required knowledge access (Stamberg, 1998).

3.6.2 NPOs' capacities

To answer the question of what capacities should be built in an NPO, various capacity categories and dimensions are discussed. The required capacities vary based on the NPO's speciality area, their current needs and surrounding challenges (Suárez and Marshall, 2014). Schuh and Leviton (2006) define

capacities in a comprehensive model linked to organisation size, life stage and capacity maturity level. Taking a different approach, the National Audit Office (NAO, 2020) describes high- and low-capacity organisations, using high-capacity NPO characteristics as a role model.

Different views of capacities have resulted in different categorisations. Lyon (2009) argues that organisational capacities can be human capacities (e.g., technical skills, leadership, management and teamwork), tangible capacities (e.g., physical assets, financial income and endowments) or intangible capacities (e.g., culture, networking and reputation). Although human capacities can be included in the latter two categories, they should remain separate due to their importance. McKinsey & Company (2001) define organisational capacities as interlinked components – upper-level capacities direct and inspire the lower levels and lower-level capacities are enablers of the upper ones. A third perspective is introduced by Tandon and Bandyopadhyay (2003), who categorise organisational capacities as intellectual (intangible capacities) or institutional resources.

Sometimes, NPOs act similarly to businesses when their focus moves to a specific group of capacities to gain a competitive advantage in the third-sector market. Besler and Sezerel (2011) argue that enabler capacities for NPO competitive advantages in the third-sector market should be defined and gain management focus. Also, some NPOs build their capacities in special areas to make them more attractive to governments, donors and development agencies (Mason and Fiocco, 2017).

Table 3.3 lists many of the capacities mentioned in practical reports and research papers under three main categories: individual, organisational and institutional capacities. Additionally, tangible capacities are distinguished from intangible ones because intangible capacities are critical, yet difficult to assess, build and monitor (Petrunev et al., 2014). These listed capacities are the ones most commonly used in NPOs, but each NPO has its own specific capacities according to its unique context.

Table 3.3: NPOs' capacities

Category	Sub-category	Tangible Capacities	Intangible Capacities
Individual	General working skills	Time management, automation skills	Soft skills, leadership, teamwork
	Core services-related skills	Core services, tangible services	Customer satisfaction
	Technical skills	Report writing	
	Functional skills	Fundraising, quality management, planning, marketing, volunteer management	Communication skills

Category	Sub-category	Tangible Capacities	Intangible Capacities
Organisational	Resources	Endowments, physical assets, technological assets	Knowledge
	Technology	Systems, automation, research	Technology acceptance
	Organisational system	Performance management, planning, strategy, human resource management, financial management, quality management, risk management, administrative system, organisational structure, project management, expansion planning	Managing organisational culture, problem-solving, decision-making, shared values, renewal, change adaptation, taking initiatives, ability to deliver, contextualising and engagement, innovation
	Governance	Board governance, policies and procedures	Board accountability
Institutional	Networking	Networking with government, donors, peers, private sector and the community, agreements, membership	Reputation, accessibility
	Developing sector policies	Developing sector policies	Changing political positions towards third-sector interests
	Third-sector market enhancements	Third-sector market enhancements	Stakeholder cooperation

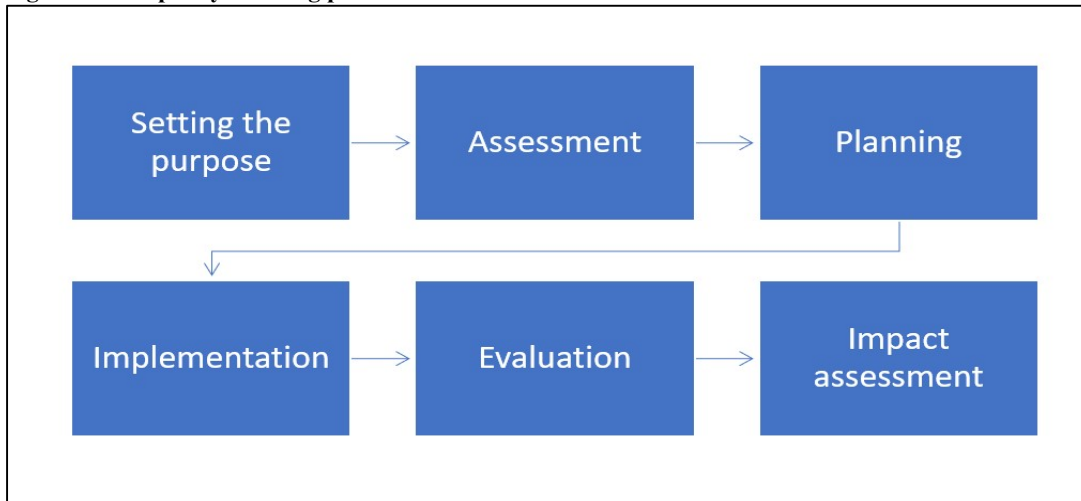
Source: Constructed by the author.

3.6.3 NPOs' capacity-building process

Kaplan (1999) suggests the following steps to build NPOs' capacities: (1) develop a conceptual framework, (2) establish the organisational attitude, (3) develop an organisational strategy, (4) develop an organisational structure and (5) acquire the required resources and skills. Alternatively, Minzner et al. (2014) describe the organisational capacity process in six steps starting from the selection process for the targeted NPO based on funder criteria, then moving to an assessment phase for the current situation, delivering the programme based on that assessment and, finally, evaluating short-, mid- and long-term outcomes. Petruney et al. (2014) add an initial step of engaging with the required stakeholders and partners. Similarly, Kapucu et al. (2011) emphasise recruiting a consultant or programme facilitator at the beginning of the programme. This gives the main players in the programme a deeper understanding.

The DFID (2010) implemented a capacity-building programme by initiating an assessment of targeted NPOs to identify gaps and gain a better understanding of NPOs. Next, a strategic and operational plan was developed, and implementation was conducted using various approaches. In the last and ongoing step, they monitor and evaluate practices to ensure quick responses to challenges. This reveals many gaps in other processes, such as a lack of planning, ongoing monitoring and evaluation steps. By combining different processes and filling gaps, suggested process steps are developed in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Capacity-building process



Source: Constructed by the author.

Step 1: Setting a programme's purpose: Agreeing on the purpose of the programme is an essential element that should be finalised before beginning the programme (Howard et al., 2009). It is crucial to have a shared view and understanding of a capacity-building programme between the donor, implementer and NPO, which will avoid unnecessary conflicts during implementation (Sanyal, 2006).

Step 2: Assessing current organisational capacities: Petruneu et al. (2014) argue that capacity-building programmes should be driven by an NPO's demands rather than market trends or availability. To understand the demands of an NPO, an assessment of current organisational capacities should be conducted. The assessment process is the main input for the planning phase, which customises the programme based on a deep understanding of the NPO (Howard et al., 2009). In the assessment phase, the competencies and capacities required should be defined (Petruneu et al., 2014). In many cases, international development organisations and donors may assess NPOs to examine their readiness and needs to ensure a successful intervention (Stamberg, 1998). Kapucu et al. (2011) suggest that, in parallel with pre-assessment activities, field-based research should be conducted to collect updated and related knowledge.

Step 3: Planning the capacity-building programme: This stage is essential for the success of the programme and is affected by the NPO's organisational characteristics and needs (Despard, 2017). DFID (2010) argues that it is challenging to develop a detailed capacity-building plan, as this process is dynamic involving many changes. However, this challenge can be overcome by being flexible during implementation and continuously evaluating and adapting to changes accordingly. Regarding the planning phase, James and Hailey (2008) advise starting by conceptualising the programme strategy, considering the external factors in planning, preparing a programme budget, including change

management aspects and performing ongoing evaluation to monitor implementation progress. In the case of an outsider implementer, it is important to mention that for a successful exit strategy, the programme outcome should be designed so as to be sustainable (Stamberg, 1998). Also, the following aspects of the programme should be reflected in the planning process: (1) individual capabilities and adaptation to change, (2) organisational capacities and the internal environment and (3) institutional capacities, which consider the external environment and stakeholders (DFID, 2010; Petruney et al., 2014; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014). From an intervention timing perspective, the organisational capacity-building approach is linked to organisational life stages, as each life stage has its own needs and required capacities (Andersson et al., 2016). Finally, ‘soft’ changes that deal with people’s attitudes and cultures should be included in the programme plans (James, 2002).

Step 4: Implementation: With broad experience of implementing capacity-building programmes for NPOs come accumulated learned lessons. The DFID (2010) raises the importance of balancing a focus on the excellence of the process with targeted outcomes. This balance requires a common understanding among the stakeholders of the programme’s objectives, which will direct implementation towards goals rather than tools. Capacity-building implementation might deviate from the plan; thus, ongoing evaluation is required to ensure a rapid response to issues (Petruney et al., 2014). In other words, it is essential to keep evaluating implementation and improve practices accordingly (Johnson and Ludema, 1997; James and Hailey, 2008). Also, capacity-building should be a continuous and flexible process that responds to internal and external changes (Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003). Generally, implementing and searching for good practices is a recommended step that saves time and boosts implementation quality (James, 2002). Finally, as this process is people-centric, more attention should be paid to change management and cultural aspects (James and Hailey, 2008). Good practices in NPOs’ capacity-building can be implemented by applying a combination of change management, organisational culture and capacity-development theories, approaches and tools (Casey et al., 2012). Because change management and culture are critical in capacity-building programmes, they are discussed in further detail in the forthcoming sections. Steps 5 and 6 will be discussed in more detail in later sections.

3.6.4 Capacity-building and organisational change

One organisational change trigger is the gap between current and ideal organisational capacities (James and Hailey, 2008). NPOs’ capacity-building programmes are considered organisational change (Schiavo-Campo, 2005; Morgan et al., 2010; Wetterberg et al., 2015; Govender, 2016). One challenge in considering capacity-building as a change process is the contradiction in implementing timely planned activities (capacity-building) of an unpredictable nature (organisational change) (Kaplan, 2000). Also, Land (2000) argues that change management implementation is often an internal responsibility, whereas

the capacity-building programme implementer may be from outside the NPO. Furthermore, Land (2000) describes capacity-building as an organisational transformation of the NPO through several changes. In many studies, organisational change is mentioned as an approach to capacity-building (Kaplan, 2000; Land, 2000; James and Hailey, 2008) or as a targeted capacity to be built in an NPO (Buono and Kerber, 2008; Ramezan et al., 2013; Sanjaghi, 2013). NPOs need to build change capacity to ease organisational change and capacity-building programmes; in other words, building change capacity is a prerequisite for capacity-building programmes (Drexler, 2019). Thus, it is logical to start a capacity-building programme by enabling the internal environment and building change capacity.

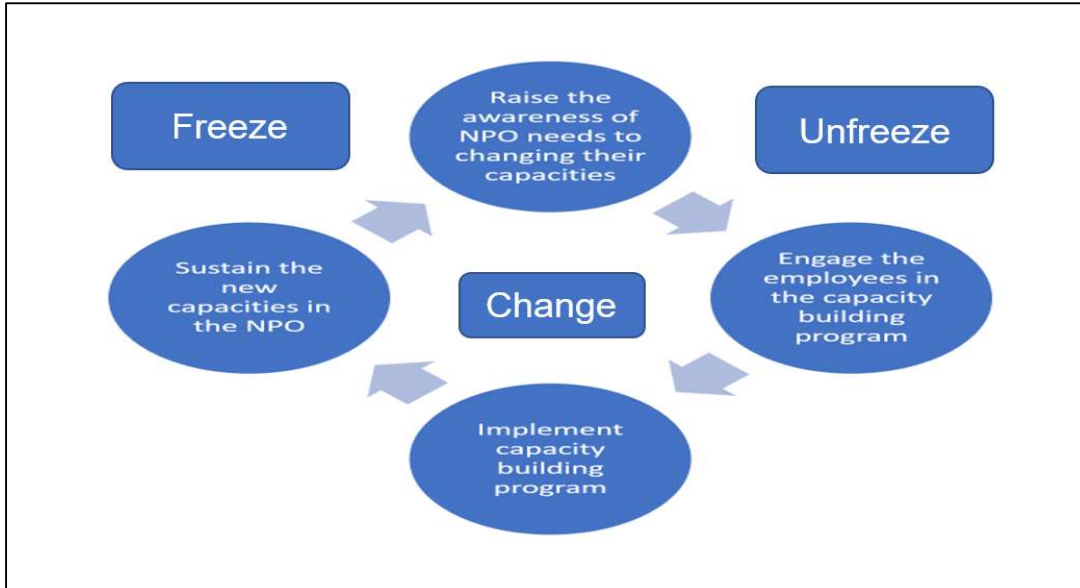
To implement capacity-building programmes as organisational change, implementation should utilise change management practices (James and Hailey, 2008). Implementing change management methodologies in capacity-building programmes will allow the NPO to deal proactively with expected resistance to change (Rist et al., 2011). Change management is not a simple or straightforward approach that can be conducted in fixed steps. Its complexity partially stems from the nature of required changes in capacity-building programmes, as they are multilevel and may be applied individually or collectively, systematically or functionally, internally or externally, strategically or operationally. One expected challenge is the resistance caused by differences in power levels between employees, which might change during implementation (Land, 2000).

Organisational change programmes need to be implemented at the right moment and given sufficient time and resources (James and Hailey, 2008) to be sustainable and rooted in the NPO (Castelloe and Watson, 2000). Thus, capacity-building programmes as a change process require considerable time to produce results (De Grauwe, 2009). Additionally, as capacity-building programmes' strategy changes according to the NPO's life stage, change management strategies are also affected by the programme timeline and progress (Hauck, and Baser, 2009). Brothers and Sherman (2011) emphasise that accurately knowing the current organisational life stage will define the required capacities and appropriate organisational change approaches. Generally, the change management implementer is required to maintain internal team momentum and commitment to change in all change phases (Land, 2000).

By reviewing several organisational change theories and studies, Heward et al. (2007) determined the following three critical success factors for organisational change: (1) preparing the organisation for change by increasing the consciousness of change needs, (2) decreasing the influence of resistance factors and increasing driving forces and (3) considering the context of the people, organisation, sector and country. These factors are mentioned in Lewin's (1947) organisational change model, which begins by 'unfreezing' the current situation, making the required changes and, finally, 'freezing' the

organisation into the desired achieved attitude. Similarly, Goodman et al. (1997) elaborate the organisational stages in the following four steps: (1) change-related awareness, (2) change acceptance, (3) change implementation and (4) institutionalising changes. By applying previous organisational change models to NPOs' capacity-building and Lewin's theory, Figure 3.3 is constructed to describe the change implementation process.

Figure 3.3: Applying the organisational change process to NPOs' capacity-building



Source: Constructed by the author.

Three considerations must be highlighted for the previous model. First, the context of the organisation and the country should be considered when implementing a change process (Pettigrew et al., 1992; Land, 2000; Akingbola et al., 2019). Second, the process is ongoing, which is apparently at odds with sustaining or freezing changes. Finally, as previously mentioned, this process consumes time, effort and resources to achieve the required outcomes.

3.6.5 Capacity-building and culture

Norris (2012) argues that a capacity-building programme can be seen as a cultural change in the organisation and the local community. As an enabler, Kaplan (2000) argues that many capacity-building programmes fail during or after implementation due to the absence of a suitable organisational culture. Organisational culture is related to NPOs' capacity-building because the way people react to any change is strongly unconsciously guided by characteristics rooted in the employees, both individually and collectively (James and Hailey, 2008). Organisational culture is a set of inherent values, behaviours and perceptions that have been formulated and evolved over time (Casey et al., 2012). It is mentioned in three contexts in capacity-building-related studies: (1) as an enabler and stimulating force (Kaplan, 1999; Martins and Terblanche, 2003), (2) as an obstacle and resistance force (Casey et al., 2012) and (3) as a synonym for 'capacity' (Rubin et al., 2016).

One capacity-building programme goal is to enable the organisational environment to deal with specific changes and challenges (Casey et al., 2012); in other words, to have an enabler culture. Another goal is to change the organisational culture because it is not aligned with organisational values and objectives (James and Hailey, 2008). Considering that the organisational culture in NPOs' capacity-building has many implications for programme implementation, Anttonen (2010) argues that to sustain capacity-building results, the organisational culture should be aligned with the targeted changes. From another angle, understanding the current organisational culture is essential when implementing capacity-building programmes (Casey et al., 2012). Also, understanding the conflicts between the NPO's and the implementer's cultures will facilitate implementation (Gregory et al., 2012).

Organisational culture is a complex, sensitive and important component of organisations. As the organisational culture is rooted in the NPO and developed over the years, it is complicated to change or deal with as a resistance force (Casey et al., 2012). Part of the complexity of organisational culture lies in the fact that it is often not visible from inside the organisation (Martins and Terblanche, 2003). Thus, it is important to build the organisational ability to see and understand its culture and monitor planned cultural changes (Kaplan, 1999). Also, it is important to observe the organisational culture as a component interlinked with other organisational aspects, such as the system, technology and the external environment (Martins and Terblanche, 2003).

As culture characteristics vary among countries, cities and organisations, capacity-building programmes should be tailored according to the NPO context (James and Hailey, 2008; Fu and Shumate, 2019). To contextualise the organisational culture, it is necessary to assess it (James and Hailey, 2008) to determine the required organisational capacities. To assess the organisational culture, Martins and Terblanche (2003) suggest investigating the organisation's strategy, structure, encouraged behaviours and communication approaches. Also, the organisational culture should be observed through different lenses. As there is a livelihood culture and the organisational culture (Jackson, 2009).

In many capacity-building practices, a culture clash between the implementer and the NPO might occur and disrupt implementation (James and Hailey, 2008). Also, the organisational culture could vary in groups inside the organisation, such as departments, branches or professional groups (Harris and Kemp-Graham, 2017). Furthermore, there are differences between local and foreign consultants; for instance, locals understand the regional culture (James and Hailey, 2008). Some organisations select a local consultant to avoid culture clashes, whereas outsider consultants can better assess the organisational culture. Thus, organisational culture affects the implementer selection decision and the intervention approach (James and Hailey, 2008).

3.7 NPOs' capacity-building critical success factors

Critical success factors are those components that determine the success of the programme (Bullen and Rockart, 1981). Many authors, researchers and practitioners describe critical success factors in implementing capacity-building programmes in third-sector organisations. Table 3.4 categorises these factors (internal and external) based on the programme phase.

Table 3.4: Capacity-building critical success factors

Environment	Phase	Critical success factor
External factors	All phases	Communicating and engaging effectively with external stakeholders: James, 2002; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; Howard et al., 2009; Afaq, 2013
		Considering the local culture and the context of the country, third sector, donors and NPO: James, 2002; Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003; Vernis et al., 2006; James and Hailey, 2008; DFID, 2010
		Supplying the programme with updated knowledge and research: Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; Netto et al., 2012; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014
		Maintaining accountability from external stakeholders towards the programme: James, 2002; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; James and Hailey, 2008; Netto et al., 2012; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014
	Planning and preparation phase	Building third-sector capacities with capacity builders: Howard et al., 2009; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014
		Utilizing local consultants and implementers: James and Hailey, 2008
Internal factors	All phases	Empowering employees to take ownership of the programme: Johnson and Ludema, 1997; James, 2002; Vernis et al., 2006; DFID, 2010; Afaq, 2013
		Considering the organisational culture, internal contexts and politics: James, 2002; Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003; Vernis et al., 2006; James and Hailey, 2008; DFID, 2010
		Implementing change management approaches: James, 2002; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; James and Hailey, 2008; Howard et al., 2009; DFID, 2010
		Having effective internal communication: Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; James and Hailey, 2008; DFID, 2010; Netto et al., 2012
		Being flexible to adapt to changes during implementation: James, 2002; Vernis et al., 2006
		Having committed and inspiring leadership: DFID, 2010; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014
		Letting implementation evolve based on ongoing learning: DFID, 2010
		Committing to the organisation's values and ethics: James, 2002; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003
		Considering the process as one of continuous improvement: Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003
		Having sufficient funds for the programme: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Myers and Sacks, 2003; Parisi, 2009; Afaq, 2013
		Focusing on dealing with the human factor: James, 2002; James and Hailey, 2008
	Planning and preparation phase	Customizing the intervention based on the NPO context: James, 2002; Vernis et al., 2006; James and Hailey, 2008
		Start by building on existing capacities: Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; Vernis et al., 2006
		Targeting individual, organisational, institutional and sector capacities: Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003; Vernis et al., 2006

Internal factors		Implementing a systematic process linked to NPO objectives: Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003; James and Hailey, 2008
		Considering other organisational and sector components: James and Hailey, 2008
		Starting with an accurate assessment process: Howard et al., 2009
		Setting clear objectives supported by all stakeholders: Howard et al., 2009
		Preparing an enabling environment in the NPO: DFID, 2010
	Implementation phase	Focusing on outcomes and maintaining implementation as objective-oriented: DFID, 2010; Afaq, 2013
		Utilizing a variety of tools and techniques: Vernis et al., 2006; James and Hailey, 2008
		Allowing the implementation and changes sufficient time: Vernis et al., 2006
		Considering intervention timing and the NPO life stage: Netto et al., 2012
		Maintaining employees' commitment and momentum through incentives: Johnson and Ludema, 1997; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003
		Developing targeted capacity in a sustainable matter: Lopes and Theisohn, 2003
		Developing internal resources to sustain the capacity-building process: James and Hailey, 2008
	Evaluation phase	Measuring the programme's impact and evaluating outcomes: James, 2002; Vernis et al., 2006; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014
		Implementing ongoing programme evaluation to maintain programme progress: ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014

Source: Constructed by the author.

When analysing the previous factors, the following observations emerge. First, a capacity-building programme's success is strongly based on internal factors, which require internal commitment to the programme. Second, this commitment should be active during all programme phases, as most of the factors apply throughout the process. Third, the planning and preparation phase is critical, as many success factors appear during the planning phase. Fourth, top-cited factors concern the context and culture, accountability, responsibility and change management. Finally, many of these factors deal with people and 'soft' skills, which should be an area of focus.

3.8 NPOs' capacity-building challenges

Vernis et al. (2006) categorise the challenges for capacity-building programmes into three areas: people, organisational and sector-related. The third sector faces challenges due to the absence of capacity-building standard practices (Cairns et al., 2005a; Eade, 2007; Wilén, 2009; Lempert, 2015). Standards are required in practices, qualifications and the evaluation process (McBride, 2010). The absence of standards might be as a result of multiple definitions of capacity-building (Cairns et al., 2005a; Wilén, 2009), or the variety of NPOs and the considerable differences between them (such as the differences between medical and educational NPOs); thus, each NPO should have its own standards (Wing, 2004). Another challenge is the lack of third sector-infrastructure readiness to support NPOs (Harris and Schlappa, 2008). This support requires coordination between the third sector and the government, donors, implementers and GMOs (James and Hailey, 2008). Organisational challenges arise from the complexity of NPOs' interlinked relations both internally and externally (Eade, 2007). Also, NPOs are often

overwhelmed by their daily work pressure and solving community issues, which might distract them and deprive them of the time and resources to build their capacities (James, 2002; Wing, 2004; James and Hailey, 2008). Finally, dealing with the human factor in change programmes is a complex and difficult process (De Grauwe, 2009). Zinke (2006) describes these characteristics as an iceberg, where the surface is the organisational attitude and underneath are the deep components. Overall, the culture is a challenge in all implementation phases and areas and should be considered and addressed (Afaq, 2013).

Generally, NPOs face challenges regarding financial and human resources. Specifically, for capacity-building programmes, there are limited financial resources (Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Afaq, 2013). The lack of financial resources is caused by inaccessibility to donors (Lyon, 2009; NAO, 2020) or because funds are only directed towards development projects (Low and Davenport, 2002; NAO, 2020). A further challenge in resources is to find qualified human resources to build capacities (James and Hailey, 2008; Afaq, 2013). In other words, capacity-builders need capacity-building (Chaumba and van Geene, 2003). Also, human resources need updated knowledge to build their skills and capacities (Harris and Schlappa, 2008).

Capacity-building programme implementers, as key players in the process, face their own challenges. First, the lack of coordination with other capacity-building providers might cause some duplication in implemented programmes (Lyon, 2009). Second, there is a lack of official support from the government for the sector (Cairns et al., 2005b; Afaq, 2013). Third, there could be a lack of trust from targeted organisations (Afaq, 2013), resulting from previous experience of abusing allocated funds (Lempert, 2015), unfair distribution for funded programmes (Harris and Schlappa, 2008) or a conflict of interests (James, and Hailey, 2008).

Many NPOs' capacity-building programmes face significant challenges in the implementation phase (James and Hailey, 2008). Many of these challenges occur due to the absence of clear objectives for the programme (Tappin, 2000). An unclear vision will result in disparate views from programme stakeholders. One common challenge is the long period of time required to implement changes in programmes (Castelloe and Watson, 2000; Eade, 2007). Many capacity-building plans are designed with an unrealistic timeline for activities (Wing, 2004; Wilén, 2009), which might affect the resources allocated and result in implementation failure. Additionally, donor pressure to see quick results from their donations could foster unrealistic time-planning (James and Hailey, 2008). The long time required for these programmes is linked to the need to implement changes sustainably (Castelloe and Watson, 2000). To sustain new NPOs' capacities, continuous hard work is required rather than just simple

training programmes. Finally, another embedded challenge is dealing with organisational management issues and an unwanted rooted culture (Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Afaq, 2013).

3.9 Applying Lewin's theory to NPOs' capacity-building

Change management theories and concepts are required to deal with NPOs' capacity-building challenges (Aragón and Giles Macedo, 2010). One of the main organisational change theories that combines success factors is Lewin's theory of change forces. With any change, there are some driving and resistance forces; the strength of these forces shape the change results (Lewin, 1951). Using Lewin's theory for NPOs' capacity-building programmes, Figure 3.4 depicts some previous critical success factors and challenges as driving and resistance forces. A programme will succeed if the driving forces in the NPO are stronger than the resistance forces.

Figure 3.4: Driving and resistance forces in NPOs' capacity-building



Source: Constructed by the author.

3.10 NPOs' capacity-building evaluation

When discussing evaluation in the capacity-building context, four different meanings appear in the literature: (1) the evaluation capacity of the NPO, (2) assessing the NPO's capacity before, during and after the intervention, (3) evaluating the capacity-building process and (4) the capacity-building programme's impact and outcomes. As in the 'capacity-building' definition and scope, evaluated capacities should be at the individual, organisational and institutional levels (DFID, 2010). The evaluation process is important because it is the first step in building NPO capacities; to determine the required capacities in the NPO, an organisational capacity assessment should take place, which will help in the programme planning phase and also set the baseline for forthcoming evaluation (Bozzo, 2002). As the evaluation process is vital in capacity-building planning, ongoing evaluation is also important for continuous learning and improvement (James, 2002; James and Hailey, 2008). Furthermore, the evaluation process assists in responding to donors' and stakeholders' requirements by assessing the impact of their previous investment in capacity-building (Weir and Fouche, 2016). With the importance and challenges of the evaluation process in an NPO, many donors and international development organisations focus on building the evaluation capacity of NPOs (James, 2002).

The evaluation process is linked with an NPO's definition of capacity-building and its adopted framework (Wilén, 2009; Despard, 2017). This association with the definition has produced several tools based on the conceptualization of capacity-building. Although there are various definitions of capacity-building, there are common characteristics in the evaluation process. One example is the implementation of evaluation using a systematic approach in which evaluation is linked to the management cycle and used as an input for future enhancements (James, 2002). A second example is that evaluation outcomes should be linked to the operation plan for continuous improvements to the programme (James and Hailey, 2008).

As capacity-building programmes are complex and interlinked, the evaluation of organisational capacities should consider these complexities and relations (James and Hailey, 2008). The complexity of evaluation should be balanced by designing an evaluation process equally detailed and comprehensive, yet uncomplicated and succinct (James, 2002). In other words, capacity-building evaluation should be systematic, comprehensive and simple. Unnecessary complexity could cause resistance from employees and challenge implementation (Blackman et al., 2013). Another reason for avoiding complexity is to minimise additional costs of the programme (Mackay, 1999). Part of the complexity arises from the fact that an NPO's internal culture and context affect the evaluation process, specifically, the employees' perception of evaluation and their acceptance of negative results (James, 2002). Considering the

organisational culture, Mattila (1999) argues that evaluation results should account for the local context and culture.

Generally, the capacity-building evaluation process is full of challenges, as in any organisational and individual change evaluation (James, 2002). However, it is more complicated and linked to many organisational components (Huyse et al., 2012). One common issue in assessing NPOs' capacities occurs when assessors shift their focus from programme implementation to evaluation techniques and indicators; further distraction occurs when the evaluation process is influenced, and its results are directed in favour of some stakeholders (James, 2002). A lack of evaluation expertise and sufficient budget are other common challenges in the evaluation process (Bozzo, 2002). Furthermore, there may be difficulties in determining the causes of failures or successes, as many capacities are affected and linked to various factors (James, 2002). Finally, the evaluation process needs to employ standardised and well-recognised tools to unify the judgement of capacity maturity. This requires defining metrics and definitions at different maturity levels (Wing, 2004). In the next section, NPOs' capacity-building tools are discussed in detail.

3.10.1 NPOs' capacity-building assessment tools

Organisational capacity assessment tools may be designed for different purposes, such as capacity-building programme pre-assessment, readiness assessment and partnership purposes (Stamberg, 1998). With these different tools' frameworks, Lempert (2015) argues that capacity-building evaluations are challenged by a lack of consensus on the definition of 'good' NPOs with sufficient capacities. This challenge also reoccurs in assessing the capacity-building process (James, 2002). This absence of standardisation puts donors in a challenging position to evaluate whether there are high-quality outcomes from their investment in capacity-building programmes (Lempert, 2015; Despard, 2017). Initially, there were some efforts to have benchmarks for good practices (James, 2001); these efforts evolved into developing assessment tools to overcome these challenges and unify the understanding of good capacity-building practices (Lempert, 2015).

There are many assessment tools, which have been developed in various ways. The DFID (2010) categorises some of these tools into three areas: individual, organisational and institutional capacities. Huyse et al. (2012) categorise NPOs' capacities into five areas: (1) commitment and engagement, (2) core services, (3) resource management, (4) internal review and (5) change management. Some assessment tools focus on measuring NPOs' capacity-building implementation, whereas others measure NPOs' capacities (Krishnaveni and Sripirabaa, 2008). Six organisational capacity assessment tools are presented in Table 3.5, below.

Table 3.5: Capacity-building assessment tools

Assessment Tool	Capacities Covered	Mechanism	Notes
A Simple Capacity Assessment Tool (Levinger and Bloom, 1997)	Governance, Management practices, Human resources, financial resources, Service delivery, External relations and partnering.	Four-grade scoring for each indicator (nascent; emerging; expanding; mature).	Assessment is based on the average score from four assessors.
McKinsey's Capacity Assessment Grid (UNGANA, 1990).	Aspirations, Strategy, Organisational skills, Human resources, Systems and infrastructure, Organisational structure, Culture.	Four descriptive maturity levels for each indicator (1 – clear need for increased capacity, 2 – basic level of capacity in place, 3 – moderate level of capacity in place, 4 – high level of capacity in place).	The assessment tool is linked to a capacity-building framework.
Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (Koop et al., 2015)	Governance and leadership, Human resources management, Financial management, Organisational planning, Innovation and learning and Programme management	Statement ranking on a five-point scale (0 – don't know/ Not applicable, 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree).	This self-assessment tool consists of 90 questions and is followed by a discussion session with the NPO team.
Marguerite Casey Foundation Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (Marguerite Casey Foundation, 2012).	Leadership capacities, Adaptive capacities, Management capacities and Operational capacities	Based on a description of four maturity levels for each of the 59 listed capacities	After assessing the indicator, there is another assessment of the priority or urgency of the indicator.
Participatory Capacity Assessment (Van Geene, 2003)	Human resources management, financial resources management, Equitable participation, Sustainability of programme benefits, Partnering, Organisational learning and Strategic management/ governance	Statement ranking on a five-point scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree).	The average score of several assessors will accumulate in each area to indicate the capacity level in that area.

Assessment Tool	Capacities Covered	Mechanism	Notes
SVP Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (SVP, 2001)	Mission, Vision, Strategy and planning, Programme design and evaluation, Human resources, CEO/senior management team leadership, Information technology, financial management, Fund development, Board leadership, Legal affairs and Marketing, communications, external relations	Four descriptive maturity levels for each indicator (1 – clear need for increased capacity, 2 – basic level of capacity in place, 3 – moderate level of capacity in place, 4 – high level of capacity in place).	The capacity area will be given a score based on its urgency.

Source: Constructed by the author.

Some of these tools were designed for generic utilisation, while others were designed for a specific organisation or field (Krishnaveni and Sripirabaa, 2008). Generic tools should be based on a flexible framework in order to be adaptable for different NPOs and programmes (Huyse et al., 2012). As it is important to select a tool that fits the NPO, the correct utilisation and implementation of the tool is a critical success factor (Hailey and James, 2003). To obtain more in-depth results, James (2002) advises combining evaluation methods such as surveys, interviews and participatory approaches.

Although assessment tools may be categorized differently, they have some similarities. For instance, many of these tools adopt maturity model scoring, in which the NPO is assigned a maturity level in each capacity area; during assessment, reviewers will use their best judgement and understanding to allocate the NPO to one of the levels and plan for future improvements (Popescu et al., 2010). These levels assist implementers in tracking improvements in NPOs' capacities (Schuh and Leviton, 2006). Also, some of these tools capture implicit organisational capacities, which are more comprehensive but challenging to measure (Wing, 2004; Zinke, 2006; Huyse et al., 2012). Some tools are dedicated to an area of an NPO's core services capacities, such as the models developed by Lamy and Lessard (2001), Schuh and Leviton (2006) and Chahine et al. (2009). Finally, some of these tools consider different viewpoints by requiring more than three assessors. Umeh (2016) argues that self-assessment might require an independent review to ensure assessment quality and avoid any bias caused by internal politics. To capture all the thoughts and feedback from assessors, James (2002) recommends that NPOs use a participatory method in the assessment and have a mixture of quantitative and qualitative indicators.

3.10.2 Impact assessment of capacity-building programmes

As the changes implemented in capacity-building programmes are time-consuming, the impact of these programmes also requires a long timeline to be assessed (James, 2002). Short-term outcomes might not give the desired answers to donors about the impact of capacity-building programmes, nor will they assess the sustainability of programmes or their impact on beneficiaries (Hailey and James, 2003; Netto et al., 2012). Although the impact might require a significant amount of time, it should feed ongoing enhancements to development efforts (Despard, 2017). DFID (2010) views the impact of the capacity-building process as a result of a chain of activities starting from the pre-assessment process, through implementation, which ends in outcomes with short- to long-term results, ultimately enhancing the services offered to NPO-targeted audiences. Also, James (2002) conceptualises the capacity-building impact as a cumulative result of individual capacities, which build upon organisational capacities, thereby enhancing NPO services to beneficiaries. Finally, Hailey and James (2003) argue that the impact may reside in individual capabilities, organisational capacities, service quality, beneficiary behaviours and cultural changes.

James and Hailey (2008) argue that most of the good practices for assessing organisational capacities' impact face difficulties. One common challenge in assessing individual outcomes is the difficulties associated with measuring human behaviours (Wing, 2004). Additionally, impact assessment is an expensive process that requires sufficient funds to implement properly (Hailey and James, 2003). There are also difficulties in finding related historical data to be used as a baseline (James, 2002; Wing, 2004). Lastly, the impact assessment process need to strike a balance between ease of implementation, accuracy and holistic coverage (James and Hailey, 2008).

3.11 Interactions with other management practices

Consultants and practitioners utilise different management tools and methodologies to build NPOs' capacities (Parisi, 2009). In the forthcoming sections, different management tools and practices are discussed in the context of NPOs' capacity-building.

3.11.1 Capacity-building in the private sector vs the third sector

As there are clear differences in the nature of profit and non-profit organisations and their objectives, Lyon (2009) argues that capacity-building practices in the private sector should not be applied to third-sector organisations without amendments. Thus, NPOs need tailored approaches that fit their unique characteristics (Goulet and Frank, 2002). Generally, the areas of organisational capacity-building covered are similar in both sectors, with some differences related to the core services of the organisation and the main differences being seen in approaches and priorities (Parisi, 2009). One implication of these differences appears in the impact assessment tools, as the required impact in the private sector is mainly

linked to financial profit, while in NPOs the impact should be seen in development areas (Myers and Sacks, 2003). Thus, when NPOs use these tools, they must adapt them to align with their objectives.

Parisi (2009) summarizes the differences in capacity-building practices between the two sectors. First, environment influencers shape NPOs' development needs, which determine specific organisational capacities. Second, the obvious variations between for-profit and non-profit development goals affect the desired attitude of the organisation and the required capacities. Third, the limited budgets within NPOs for capacity-building direct them towards cost-effective approaches. To improve third-sector management practices, there have been many dialogues within and across the sectors to adapt these tools to fit NPOs (Myers and Sacks, 2003).

3.11.2 NPOs' capacity-building and organisational quality frameworks

As many of the quality management tools are designed and developed for factories and businesses, repeated arguments as to whether these practices can be applied to the non-profit sector have been discussed and examined (Hodge-Williams, 1995). Many of these studies have resulted in positive outcomes from adopting quality management in the third sector (White et al., 2009; Melão et al., 2017). In this research context, capacity-building can be seen as an enabler of quality programmes by equipping organisations with the required capacities to implement quality initiatives successfully (Sripirabaa and Krishnaveni, 2007). Alternatively, quality management systems can be used to build NPOs' capacities (Bardfield et al., 2015).

One of the most common organisational quality management methodologies is Total Quality Management (TQM), which has been developed to improve organisational effectiveness (Jung and Wang, 2006; Zabadi, 2013; Oruma et al., 2014; Al-Qahtani et al., 2015). Bardfield et al. (2015) argue that TQM could be a suitable tool for organisational capacity-building. Al-Shamayleh (2019) argues that TQM helps an organisation to transition into a learning organisation and focus on continuous improvement. TQM covers the following organisational areas: strategic planning, leadership, human resources management, customer focus, supplier management and process management (Ooi, 2009). Many of these areas are covered by several capacity-building tools. As a practical example, the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2001) implements TQM as an approach to build its projects' capacities.

In responding to the absence of a third sector-tailored quality framework, a quality mark for the third sector has been developed in the UK. The practical quality assurance system for small organisations (PQASSO) is a comprehensive quality standard that can be utilised to build NPOs' capacities (Manville and Greatbanks, 2016). It is the most common tool utilised in UK NPOs for quality management because

it is tailored for third-sector organisations (Cairns et al., 2005b). Recently, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) adopted PQASSO and introduced it as an enhancement tool for NPOs' effectiveness and efficiency (NCVO, 2018). As PQASSO is based on a self-assessment tool, it can be utilised in the capacity-building assessment phase. Also, as one of the quality areas of PQASSO looks for results from building capacities in other areas, it might be useful for measuring capacity-building impact.

Many quality awards have been built on the TQM methodology, with some differences in terminology or categorization; for example, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) uses the term 'workforce' instead of 'human resources management' and the operation area includes the organisational processes in TQM (ASQ, 2018). Although these awards have been developed for the private sector, they could be applied to the third sector with some amendments (Al-Tabbaa et al., 2013). Today, many excellence awards have a branch for the third sector (Ghobadian and Seng Woo, 1996). One of the areas from the quality awards that could be utilised is organisational impact and results, which are essential elements in most quality award frameworks (ASQ, 2018). After a practical examination, Al-Tabbaa et al. (2013) claim that the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model is applicable to NPOs and could be used as an assessment tool and framework for improvement planning.

Table 3.6 provides an overall comparison between the coverage of quality tools and capacity-building assessment tools.

Table 3.6: Capacity-building assessment tools and quality management frameworks

Area of Coverage	Capacity-building Assessment Tools					Quality Management Tools			
	A Simple Capacity Assessment Tool	McKinsey Capacity Assessment Grid	Organisational Capacity Assessment	Participatory Capacity Assessment	SVP Organisational Capacity Assessment	TQM	EFQM	PQASSO	MBNQA
Governance	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Management practices	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Human resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial resources	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Service delivery	✓								
External relations and partnering	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Strategy		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Organisational culture		✓							
Planning			✓		✓			✓	
Learning and innovation			✓	✓					✓
Leadership			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Information technology					✓				
Legal affairs					✓				
Communication					✓				
Customer focus						✓	✓	✓	✓
Supplier management						✓			
Work processes						✓	✓		
Resource management							✓	✓	
Training and development								✓	
Evaluation					✓		✓	✓	✓
Results								✓	✓

Source: Constructed by the author.

From Table 3.6, the following points can be observed. First, many areas use different terms within the tools with great similarities in the content, such as ‘communication’ and ‘networking’ or ‘management practices’ and ‘work processes’. Second, the absence of an area from a tool does not necessarily mean it does not consider that area, as it might be embedded in other areas; however, mentioning an area might reflect a focus on and the importance of that area. Third, human resources, financial management, strategy, management practices, governance and networking are common areas in most tools for capacity-building and quality management. Fourth, quality management tools tend to focus on customers

and work processes. Fifth, there is less focus on organisational culture in all tools, although it is partially covered by some tools. Finally, it can be concluded that quality management tools and excellence awards could be used to build organisational capacities and having an overall view of different tools and methodologies can result in a more comprehensive implementation.

3.11.3 NPOs' capacity-building and organisational development

Joffres et al. (2004) describe organisational development as an intervention to enhance individuals, organisations and communities via a planned change to increase organisational effectiveness. After reviewing more than 15 definitions of organisational development, Mostenska et al. (2019) identified five common characteristics: based on behaviour change, this may require changing the organisational culture, applying long-term changes, linked to organisational strategies, and aimed at enhancing organisational effectiveness.

Organisational development interacts with and resembles organisational capacity-building in many ways (Parisi, 2009). James (2002) views the term 'organisational development' as equivalent to capacity-building, and James and Hailey (2008) consider organisational development to be an approach to organisational capacity-building. Elmer and Kilpatrick (2006) and Kwamboka (2018) alternatively consider capacity-building as an enabler of organisational development practices. For example, Kondalkar (2009) argues that to have sustainable organisational development, an NPO must build its internal learning capacities. Also, both organisational development and capacity-building are considered organisational changes (Joffres et al., 2004), both methodologies approach changes systematically (Trujillo et al., 2014) and both terminologies are common in the non-profit context (French, 1976; De Vita et al., 2001).

By comparing capacity-building and organisational development characteristics, the following observations are made. First, organisational effectiveness is a shared goal, but capacity-building covers a wider scope than organisational development. Second, there is a cross relationship between organisational development and capacity-building, as organisational development can be utilised to build NPOs' capacities and capacity-building can be an enabler for organisational development. Third, capacity-building is needed to allow an NPO to implement organisational development internally. Fourth, as many capacity-building assessment tools lack implicit capacities, Joffres et al. (2004) argue that implicit capacities can be addressed effectively by applying organisational development principles and concepts, as there is more focus on the 'soft' part of the organisation, such as the organisational culture and individual behaviours. Finally, capacity-building adds the sustainability concept to achieve long-term development.

3.11.4 NPOs' capacity-building and strategic planning: Balanced scorecard

One well-known strategic planning tool is the balanced scorecard (BSC) (Silk, 1998; Norreklit, 2000; Niven, 2002). In its framework, it describes organisational capacities as human resources, infrastructure, technologies and cultures (Kaplan and Norton, 1996), and organisational capacities are considered to be enablers of operational effectiveness (Olve et al., 1999). Although the BSC was developed for the business sector, Kaplan and Norton (2001) adapted the framework for use in NPOs. Similar to capacity-building, Chaklader and Roy (2010) argue that the BSC methodology results in sustainable development in NPOs. Regardless of the strategic planning tool adopted, capacity-building is either a strategic planning goal or enables strategic implementation.

3.12 Summary and conclusion

To boost third-sector efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact, donors are required to invest in building NPOs' capacities. NPOs' capacity-building is an ongoing process of developing individuals and organisations with the required competencies to perform effectively and sustainably and achieve the organisational goals at the individual, organisational and institutional levels. Capacity-building is a complex process that is (1) interlinked with many organisational components and (2) multidimensional (individual, organisational and institutional capacities; internal and external stakeholders; technical, functional and strategic; imbedded and explicit capacities). To deal with this complexity, capacity-building should be treated as a change management programme. For a successful change, the driving forces, enabling environment and critical success factors should be strengthened and the resistance factors resolved. Finally, as the private sector is more advanced in creating management tools, many of its tools have been examined within the third-sector context and their interactions with capacity-building have been studied; as a result, many researchers and practitioners have found that these tools are useful for building NPOs' capacity after adaptation according to the NPO context.

In the previous three chapters, the study has been introduced by presenting an overview of NPO origins, definitions and characteristics. Also, the researched country was examined to offer a deeper understanding of the study. Then, NPOs' origins in Saudi Arabia were discussed and related research work was reviewed. More specifically, NPOs' capacity-building activities and papers in Saudi Arabia were presented to identify research gaps which will be defined as research areas. In this chapter, topics relating to the research objectives and questions have been explored and are summarised in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Linking the research objectives and questions with the topics discussed

Research objectives	Research questions	Relevant research topics
To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding capacity-building (origins and definitions). - Capacity-building types, goals, capacities. - Capacity-building approach, implementation and process. - Organisational capacity-building. - Capacity-building studies. - Capacity-building market. - Capacity-building evaluation and impact. - Interaction with management tools
To explore NPOs' challenges and opportunities regarding capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	What are the difficulties and potential improvements for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity-building. - Organisational change. - Culture. - Critical success factors. - Challenges. - Lewin's theory
To assess and understand donors' position vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	What are donors' views and practices regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity-building stakeholders. - Donors' positions.

Source: Constructed by the author.

Most of the research questions presented are not discussed specifically in the current literature. Even though there is a little research work on NPOs in Saudi Arabia, most of the written work discussing NPO work relates to extremism. Moreover, research work on NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia has only been touched on by a few researchers. No research work was found on NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in Saudi Arabia. This research will contribute to fill the gap in NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia by looking into current views and practices. Another

gap discovered about donors' position on NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia generally and more specifically in small cities.

Moreover, the literature review revealed a scarcity of research about NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia, especially in relation to NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in Saudi Arabia. Thus, the preceding analysis of existent literature provides a series of insights into the state of research in this field and a basis for analysing further the NPOs' capacity-building practices in Saudi Arabia. In the next chapter, the methodologies to address the defined gaps will be determined. The research methods adopted will be utilised to explore new research areas to contribute to Saudi third-sector research work.

Finally, as several theories and frameworks been discussed during this chapter, Lewin's theory, excellence and quality frameworks will be utilised in framing the collected data. Furthermore, in the discussion chapter these theories and frameworks will be reviewed based on the research findings.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Previous chapters provide a knowledge base and context for the research where some gaps in the related knowledge area were defined. This chapter will discuss the research methodology to address these gaps and plan for the practical part of the research. Gupta and Awasthy (2015) describe research as a process to gain insights into and knowledge of the researched topic. Over the years, research outcomes have formulated science (V. Dhar, 2013). In the social studies context, Guèye (2011) argues that the social field should be recognised as a science, regardless of the arguments concerning its difficulties in recognising the truth or facts. One main difference between social science and other fields is the philosophical basis used to explore reality; thus, most social science research adopts its methodological approaches, which are built on specific ontological and epistemological stances (Gupta and Awasthy, 2015). Thus, many scholars argue about social science's position regarding reality and the ability to define it in the social field (Christian et al., 2018). To determine the research methodology, the philosophical position of the study and the field need to be declared and discussed (Duberley et al., 2012; Suresh, 2015; Atkinson, 2017). More specifically, the ontological and epistemological views of the researcher towards the field and the research should be defined (Atkinson, 2017).

This chapter discusses the ontology and epistemology of the research to provide a basis for the research methodology. Then, the research methodology is explained, and the selected method is discussed in further detail. Finally, the processes of data collection and analysis, research ethics and quality are described.

4.2 Research ontology

The term 'ontology' is a combination of two Greek words that refer to knowledge of being (Duberley et al., 2012). It is a philosophical term referring to the existence of things and the reality of existence (Lindlof and Taylor, 2010; Gupta and Awasthy, 2015; Williams, 2016; Atkinson, 2017). It concerns questioning the existence of objects and the absolute truth of knowledge (Foé, 2011). As many scientists argue about the ability to define reality in the social sciences, Gupta and Awasthy (2015) maintain that in the social field, there are strong connections and obvious observations that can establish the reality, and they describe this reality as emerging like the emerging nature of social life in communities.

One implication of ontology is the positioning of the reality view between positivism and anti-positivism (Atkinson, 2017). Positivism in research is consideration of the reality based on proof and scientific

verification (Crossan, 2003; Blaikie, 2007). This concept was mainly developed and is used in the natural sciences (Roscoe, 1995). It refuses pure human judgement of the truth (Foé, 2011). Accordingly, not many researchers in the social sciences consider positivism to be an ontological stance for their work (Hammersley, 1993). Instead, they adopt realism as an opposite ontological position in which the reality can be acknowledged without the necessity for concrete scientific verification; it is the view of social reality as individual facts from our perceptions of truth, which clearly contrasts with positivism (Carlsson, 2003; Blaikie, 2007; Duberley et al., 2012; Williams, 2016). A third view was developed that claims that reality is created and emerges in people's minds; this ontological position is called idealism (Blaikie, 2007; Uddin and Hamiduzzaman, 2009). The second implication of an ontological view is related to knowing things by their appearance or underlying appearance, which was described by Kant as phenomena and noumena (Scruton, 2001).

Although there are contrasting ontological views between realists and positivists, Williams (2016) argues that as realism is commonly a stance for social research, it has started to be considered as an acknowledged position for natural science research. Conversely, Foé (2011) argues that it is almost impossible to prove absolute truth in social studies. Finally, objectivity and subjectivity can be ontological positions, with the former seeing social phenomena as existing in isolation, and subjectivity seeing these phenomena through many different factors and connections (Duberley et al., 2012).

Based on the previous discussion and the nature of the research topic, which is closely linked to organisational and human factors, the realism and subjectivity stance is adopted in this study.

4.3 Research epistemology

The word 'epistemology' derives from two Greek words that mean knowledge of knowledge (Duberley et al., 2012). Epistemology is concerned with ways of developing knowledge (Williams, 2016) and assessing truth (Becker, 1996; Gupta and Awasthy, 2015; Atkinson, 2017). It is about the criteria by which knowledge is determined (Williams, 2016), mainly science criteria and procedures for assessing and accepting knowledge (Guèye, 2011). Duberley et al. (2012) argue that ontological assumptions are more complex than epistemological ones. Ontological assumptions shape the epistemological approach (Williams, 2016). Thus, epistemology debates are mostly linked with ontological views. Most epistemological assumptions have been generated from two contrasting lines of thought: rationalism and empiricism (Williams, 2016). As a result of the clear differences between the ontological views in the social sciences and the natural sciences, epistemological reflections on the social sciences generate different research methodologies (Islam, 2019).

One epistemological implication when adopting positivism ontology is that knowledge is approached by isolating the objective from the surrounding environment (Duberley et al., 2012), which might be challenging in social studies. In other words, this can be described as objectivity in looking at the social world. These types of research are conducted in a structured and systematic process to arrive at the reality (Gupta and Awasthy, 2015). However, the practical social field is too complicated to be seen objectively or isolated from surrounding factors (Montuschi, 2004). When a positivism position is adopted, epistemology will eliminate the human factor in the knowledge-development process (Duberley et al., 2012). Therefore, positivism is more common in natural science research than in social science research (Aliyu et al., 2014). Guèye (2011) argues that unlike the natural sciences, social sciences cannot be isolated from the surrounding environment and effects.

In a different epistemological view, Interpretivism is to accept human interpretation as a source of knowledge (Outhwaite, 1975). According to this view, the researcher is not disconnected from research objects (Gupta and Awasthy, 2015). In fact, the researcher is encouraged to be close to the research subject to gain a deeper understanding (Guèye, 2011). It is clear this epistemology is more closely aligned with social science research (Duberley et al., 2012).

Based on the previous briefing on common epistemologies, anti-positivism is selected for this study, as the knowledge gathered from organisational research depends heavily on a human understanding and view.

4.4 Methodology

The research methodology is the set of methods and procedures that the researcher implements to achieve the research objectives (Yomere and Agbonifoh, 1999; Ehiedu, 2014). It can also be defined as a researcher's problem-solving strategy (Buckley et al., 1976). It is about the researcher's choice of methods used to conduct the research (Crotty, 1998). These choices are determined by the nature of the research problem (Jamshed, 2014) and the researcher's philosophical views on science and knowledge (Gupta and Awasthy, 2015). It is not based only on its technical characteristics; it comes from a deeper understanding of what the reality is, how we describe it, how we know it is the reality and the historical background of the emerging knowledge (Ouédraogo and Cardoso, 2011).

Common research methodologies include qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods (Corbetta, 2011). There are many differences between these methods, which derive from their various epistemological stances (Tuli, 2010). Quantitative methods are mainly based on a positivism epistemological position (Wyly, 2009), whereas qualitative methods are based on interpretivism

epistemology (Williams, 2000). In his comparison of research methods, Corbetta (2011) describes quantitative methods as structured, following sequenced phases and dealing with hard objective data, whereas qualitative methods are open and interactive, dealing with 'soft' and rich data. Regarding the sampling size of the research, quantitative methods usually require larger numbers than qualitative methods (Mayoux, 2006). Unlike quantitative methods, one main advantage of qualitative methods is a holistic view of the researched topic (Mayoux, 2006). It can also be seen as a disadvantage, as there is a risk of losing the focus on the targeted topic (Choy, 2014). Based on these differences, Mayoux (2006) argues that quantitative research methods are more suitable for the natural sciences while qualitative methods are a better fit with the social sciences. A combined view can be achieved by mixing methods and gaining the advantages of the two methodologies (Sandelowski, 2000). More specifically, Maxwell (2010) argues that quantitative methods can be utilised when analysing qualitative data, and qualitative techniques can be utilised when analysing quantitative data.

Quantitative methods are used in empirical studies that deal with statistics (Punch, 1998). They include a systematic research process that generates quantitative data based on scientific proof (Neuendorf, 2002). Mixed methods refers to the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study (Palinkas et al., 2011; Irawan, 2019; Kusumaningtyas et al., 2019). Most human resource and organisational studies are conducted via qualitative methods so as to be able to read and understand the complexity and interlinked nature of human-related subjects (Cassell et al., 2017). Qualitative methodologies should be selected when the research topic is linked to human understandings and perceptions (Islam, 2019). More specifically, qualitative methodologies are more suited to organisational research (Cassell et al., 2017). Thus, this study uses a qualitative methodology, which is described in detail in the following sections.

4.5 Qualitative research approach

Qualitative research obtains a deeper understanding of the complexity of human-based phenomena by describing different relationships in research and developing an understanding of a specific area of knowledge (Gupta and Awasthy, 2015). Over time, qualitative methods in research emerged as a result of a movement that critiqued traditional research methods (i.e., quantitative) (Benozzo, 2018; Schwandt, 2000). Although qualitative methods began as a form of resistance against mainstream methodologies, today, they are mainstream and offer many significant advantages (Cassell et al., 2017).

Moreover, qualitative methods describe people's views on the researched topic (Islam, 2019). They offer different processes to gain a deeper understanding of human problems through their expression (Creswell, 2008). In other words, they are a way of studying humans and understanding them (Bryman,

1988), based on interpreting human-related situations (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). Strauss and Corbin (1990) more simply describe qualitative methods as any research methodology that does not use a quantitative approach. In qualitative research, the researcher's involvement is required to observe and record changes in human-related phenomena (Patton, 2005).

Qualitative methods include various tools such as: interviews, observation, ethnography, focus groups and case studies (Symon and Cassell, 2012). Of these, interviews and focus groups are the most common methods in the social science field (Atkinson, 2017). To gain more insights into organisational studies, researchers are advised to utilise mixed qualitative methods (Gephart Jr, 2017). In a critical view of having several qualitative methods, Cassell and Symon (2004) argue that qualitative methodologies can lose their unity. However, Camic et al. (2003) consider this variety of methods an advantage, as it can provide rich knowledge of researched topics (Cassell et al., 2017).

It is obvious that qualitative methods contradict the positivism stance (Cassell et al., 2017). Although positivism is a common stance for quantitative methodologies, it can be used in qualitative methods by restricting these methods through quantitative measures (Gephart Jr, 2017). Applying positivism to qualitative research eliminates human interpretation and replaces it with scientific procedures to arrive at knowledge (McGregor and Murnane, 2010). Ontologically, the existence of an objective is assumed to be a reality, which promotes the development of research protocols and standards (Cassell et al., 2017). This combination expands positivism research, increasing qualitative research quality and merging quantitative techniques with qualitative methods (Cassell et al., 2017). However, although combining these methods can generate rich results, it is important to note that these methods can contrast with one another and become an obstacle to research implementation (Pritchard, 2012).

In this study, a combination of qualitative methods been used to enrich the data collected. First, interviews with NPO managers were conducted. Secondly, focus group discussions were conducted with donors and GMO managers. Thirdly, a questionnaire was distributed to NPO managers and employees to gain wider views on the topic. Finally, policy documents of GMOs were collected to study donors' interests and priorities in NPOs' capacity-building.

4.6 Research design

The research design is the detailed plan of the research steps and activities, including the data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2008). It describes how the research data are gathered and analysed (Parahoo, 2014). In the forthcoming sections, the selected qualitative methods are explained within various stages, starting from gathering data through to data analysis techniques.

4.6.1 Research Aim, objectives, questions and interview questions

In order to link the research objectives with the selected methodology, this section will list the interview questions by linking them to the research questions, objectives and aim. The aim of this study is to explore current NPOs' capacity-building practices within small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia and to examine related challenges and opportunities. To achieve this aim, several objectives and questions were developed. Table 4.1 lists the research objectives, questions and method, the targeted audience and detailed questions in the interviews.

Table 4.1: Research objectives, questions, interviews questions, methods and audience

Research Objective	Research Question	Interview question	Research method	Audience
To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	What do we mean by NPOs' capacity-building?	Group discussion and interview	NPO managers, Donors
		What are your organisation's practices in capacity-building?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
		What are the differences between capacity-building in large and small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
		What are the priorities in building NPOs' capacities in small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
		What are capacity-building programmes' impact on NPOs' work in small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
		What methodologies are adopted to build NPOs' capacities in small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
To explore NPOs' challenges and opportunities regarding capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	What are the difficulties and potential improvements for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	What are the challenges in building NPOs' capacities in small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
		What are the suggested enhancements in building NPOs' capacities in small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors
		What are the missing opportunities in building NPOs' capacities in small cities?	Group discussion and interview	NPO managers, Donors

Research Objective	Research Question	Interview question	Research method	Audience
To assess and understand donors' positions towards NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	What are donors' views and practices regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	What is NPOs' view of government, donors and GMOs' support for NPOs' capacity-building?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers
		What are donors' and GMOs' views of their support for NPOs' capacity-building?	Group discussion, interview questionnaire and document analysis	NPO managers, Donors
		How are government, donors and GMOs supporting capacity-building in small cities?	Group discussion, interview and questionnaire	NPO managers, Donors

Source: Constructed by the author.

As shown in the table, each research question approached a different audience with different sub-questions to gain rich outcomes from the various research methods.

4.6.2 Interviews

King (2004) claims that interview is the most frequently used qualitative method in social science studies. It is suitable to investigate topics that have an interlinked and complex nature, such as those in organisational studies (Shank, 2006). Interviews aim to explore participant's views on the researched topic (Wilson, 2012). Corbetta (2011) lists the following characteristics of interviews: guided by the interviewer, the interviewees are selected, the questions are directed by the research goals and not standardised. The lack of standardised interviews can be seen as a strength or weakness (Fowler Jr and Mangione, 1990).

Similar to the research methodology, the epistemology of the researcher will determine the interview type (King, 2004). Adding to this, Willis (2006) argues that two main factors determine the interview type: the research resources and the research nature. Interviews can be structured with specific questions and within a certain scope, open without structure, or semi-structured with a fixed scope and prepared questions that can be extended during interviews (Corbetta, 2011; Willis, 2006; Atkinson, 2017). In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer asks certain questions to direct the interview conversation according to the research objectives (Corbetta, 2011). Thus, the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee should be close enough to make the conversation easy and gain the confidence of the participant, unlike a structured interview in which a distance between the researcher and the participants should be maintained (King, 2004). According to the nature of this study, semi-structured interviews are adopted to meet the specific research objectives but with the flexibility to cover interlinked components of the topic.

As the topic of the thesis is dealing with the human and the organisational complexity, the interview method utilised in this research as one of the main instruments to get deeper understanding of the researched topics. Semi structured interviews gave the researcher the ability for further questions and clarifications during the interviews.

Good preparation for an interview is a critical success factor in the study (Willis, 2006). King (2004) lists interview activities as starting with defining the questions, creating an interview guide, selecting the target sample, gaining access to the participants and conducting the interviews. It is also important to select the right place and time to conduct the interviews (Willis, 2006). In this research, three pilot interviews were conducted to prepare for the interviews and overcome any expected or unexpected obstacles.

Some difficulties were expected in conducting this study's interviews, specifically obstacles related to the Covid-19 pandemic which limited the interviews to being conducted online as the best available alternative to direct face-to-face interviews. Morgan and Symon (2004) argue that an online interview is an accepted unique method that has both advantages and disadvantages. One main disadvantage is the difficulty in establishing a relationship with the interviewee (Kvale, 1996). However, recently, with the increasing use of advanced video-call platforms, the acceptance of these platforms has also increased, and they are considered to have nearly the same function as physical interviews (Atkinson, 2017). The second issue is the expected difficulty in recruiting and finding sufficient interviewees. One common technique to recruit interviewees is the use of personal referrals from initial interviewees, which is referred to as a snowball technique (Willis, 2006). Finally, one common difficulty in non-structured and semi-structured interviews is that it is time-consuming to conduct them and analyse their results, as well as to translate the transcripts when necessary (King, 2004). This difficulty can be overcome by utilising the many available support programmes offering voice typing and data analysis. In this project, several electronic applications were utilised, such as Zoom for online meetings, select survey for an online survey and NVIVO for data analysis.

4.6.3 Focus groups

A focus group discussion is a form of interview with a small group to foster a deep and multidimensional discussion (Stewart et al., 2009). In most cases, the focus group method is used with other methods (Lloyd-Evans, 2006). This method is popular in community-related research, as it engages the community and offers a feeling of participation and involvement in community issues (Waterton and Wynne, 1999). From another angle, as the focus group method generates a large number of viewpoints, it can be difficult to analyse and interlink the vast volume of information elicited (Lloyd-Evans, 2006).

Recently, a range of analysis software has become available to assist the researcher to organise themes and significant relations in big data.

The first and critical step is candidate selection, as a good group combination will produce the most value from a discussion (Valdez and Kaplan, 1998). The second important step is preparing the questions, timing, facility and guidelines (Davies, 2010). During the discussion, the facilitator should maintain a power balance effect among the participants (Lloyd-Evans, 2006). Finally, during the data analysis, the groups and individuals' behaviour should be considered (Lloyd-Evans, 2006).

In this study, two focus groups were conducted with five participants in each one. There was balanced and rich participation from the participants as most of them had several years' experience of NPOs.

4.6.4 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument to gather data via several questions, it is usually self-administered and distributed to large number of participants (Rowley, 2014; Slattery et al., 2011). It is a commonly used tool in social and human research (Bird, 2009), given its ease of use, cost-effectiveness and widespread ability (McGuirk and O'Neill, 2005).

Questionnaire designing tools support quantitative and qualitative research as they provide a platform for open- and closed-ended questions (Carter and Fortune, 2004). Unlike quantitative research, it is not common to use a questionnaire in qualitative research (Nizar et al., 2019). The usage of a questionnaire in the qualitative research can generate new dimensions in the results, such as confirming and prioritising information gathered from other qualitative methods such as interviews (Carter and Fortune, 2004; Adamson et al., 2004). Indeed, combining a questionnaire with other qualitative methods will generate deeper results (Meho, 2006).

The developments in telecommunications and electronic applications have shifted research tools to a new era of data-gathering strategies (Meho, 2006; James, 2007). Online questionnaires have become accepted by several scholars and research organisations as a reliable tool to gather research data (Fritz and Vandermause, 2018). It facilitates access to the targeted audience at minimum cost, time and effort (Meho, L.I., 2006; Fritz and Vandermause, 2018).

The main difference between an online questionnaire and structured interviews is the absence of the interviewer in the questionnaire, which might affect the answers' quality, thus an online questionnaire should be self-explanatory and written in easy, direct and understandable language (De Leeuw, E., 2008).

Fritz and Vandermause (2018) argue that the main disadvantage of an online questionnaire is the lack of assurance of the quality and accuracy of the answers. Another obvious issue with online tools in research is the exclusion of any participants without Internet access (Reja et al., 2003).

Questionnaire design is based on several factors, such as: research objective, nature of the required answers and the research knowledge stage (Peterson, 2000). Different aspects should be considered in the design phase as questionnaire outcomes rely heavily on the participants' understanding, willingness and openness during their answering process (Adams and Cox, 2008). During the questionnaire designing, the researcher should write meaningful questions which will ease the answering process for the participants and will increase their willingness to participate (Rowley, 2014). From another angle, questionnaire design should minimise the expected bias and errors in participants' answers (Choi and Pak, 2005). As questionnaires reach different audiences, clear and easy to answer questions are required (Slattery et al., 2011).

Questionnaire questions can be presented in many formats but generally they are classified as open and closed end questions (Peterson, 2000). Closed end questions are easier to analyse and make comparisons but they do not observe the participants feelings or characteristics in depth (Foddy, 1993; Peterson, 2000). As open-ended questions usually produce qualitative data to be analysed in the research (Carter and Fortune, 2004), more focus will be put on open-ended questions.

Unlike close ended questions, open ended questions have no limitations or indirect effects on the participants' answers (Reja et al., 2003). Open ended questions are easier to prepare and harder to answer and analyse (Peterson, 2000). They are increasing the research data depth and quality as the participants have the opportunity to explain their answers in more detail (O'Cathain and Thomas, 2004; Peterson, 2000). Open question answers usually describe the participants' feelings, experiences and understanding (Foddy, 1993). The main disadvantage of open-ended questions is the vagueness of the answers required, especially if they are not written in clear direct language (Peterson, 2000). One of the technical issues in preparing a questionnaire is the positioning of open-ended questions, which is important, as Johnson et al. (1974) found that placing open-ended questions at the end of a questionnaire will affect the quality of the answers as many participants answer the first easy closed-ended questions but neglect open-ended questions by putting in less effort.

Enhancing the sampling strategy will increase questionnaire outcomes' quality (Carter and Fortune, 2004; Slattery et al., 2011) as it is affected by the research nature and targeted audience (Rowley, 2014).

The most common strategy in questionnaire sampling is probability sampling where the questionnaire distribution is implemented randomly to assure an equal opportunity for every participant (Dewaele, 2018). Even though the researcher may implement randomisation in the distribution, Rooney and Evans (2018) argue that bias in sampling may occur for several reasons, such as Internet inaccessibility and individual willingness differences (Rooney and Evans, 2018).

In this research a questionnaire was used to reach out to a wider sample of NPO managers and employees. It was designed to elicit qualitative data by writing the majority of the questions in an open-ended format. Quantitative survey outcomes were linked and compared with the interview questions to validate the analysis outcomes.

4.6.5 Document analysis

Qualitative methodologies have been developed and expanded to serve different objectives related to research work (Bohnsack, 2009). One of these methodologies is document analysis methodology. It is a well acknowledged qualitative methodology in social science research (Bowen, 2009; Viswambharan and Priya, 2016). Document analysis may be utilised as a sole and main research method, or it can be mixed with other methodologies (Owen, 2014). It is a systematic process of selecting and analysing documents on the researched topic (Bowen, 2009). With the improvements in online resources' availability and reliability, accessibility to researchable sources has become easier and more cost-effective (Tight, 2019).

The main advantages of document observation methodology is the reasonable cost, ease and accuracy (Ahmed, 2010; Cardno, 2018). However, the main disadvantages are usually caused by a weak sampling strategy and neglecting quality measurements in document selection (Bowen, 2009). To assure the quality of document analysis methodology, a quality procedure should be defined for the sampling and analysis stages (Ahmed, 2010). Generally, to avoid bias in this methodology a transparent, logic and fair sampling process is required (Bowen, 2009).

In this research all the selected documents were recently updated, taken from GMOs' official websites, and these documents were confirmed with each GMO via email or phone calls.

4.6.6 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an arguable topic in the research field (Macbeth, 2001). Symon and Cassell (2012) describe reflexivity as awareness of the researcher's influence on the research process. It is linked to researcher perceptions and experience, which is unique for each individual researcher (Symon and

Cassell, 2012). Watt (2007) argue that reflexivity is essentially existence in qualitative research. More specifically, Symon and Cassell (2012) argue that reflexivity is widely used in organisational research.

Shaw (2010) argues that qualitative research benefits and demands reflexivity. Even though reflexivity affects all the research phases, there is more effect in the data analysis and interpretation stages (Symon and Cassell, 2012). As there is no way to ignore reflexivity during research, it is better to deal with it and direct it in a positive direction (Shaw, 2010). On the other hand, Tomkins and Eatough (2010) highlight the risk of shifting the focus in research quality assurance from the research subject to the researcher or the research process.

From another angle, the researcher's views of reality and knowledge could be biased by the researcher's attitude towards knowledge (Guèye, 2011). This case is called 'axiology' which is about the researcher's views and values that mostly affect reality judgements in research (Atkinson, 2017), although the researcher should make efforts to avoid these effects (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). In other words, the researcher's objectivity, which describes the ability to discuss the research subject without the influence of the researcher's preferences, should be maintained (Williams, 2016).

In this research, the researcher's background and experience had a positive influence on different stages of the research. First, the researcher worked for 20 years in different roles, such as IT manager, quality manager, charity manager, strategic planner, quality assessor and chair of many NPO boards. This experience gave the researcher familiarity and the ability to listen, understand and explore NPO practices, challenges and needs. Secondly, the researcher lived and worked in Saudi Arabia for more than 34 years which gave him a deeper understanding of the people, language and culture. Thirdly, the researcher did his master's degree at Manchester University in organisation development, and many related topics were explored such as human resources, organisation development, organisational behaviour, organisational quality management and development needs. Fourthly, the researcher can be considered as both an insider based on his experience in the third sector and an outsider based on the fact that he is not officially linked to any of the participants. This accumulated experience was utilised in the different research stages, starting from the theoretical part, conducting interviews and ending with analysis and interpretation of the interviews' outcomes.

4.6.7 Sampling

The data sample is shaped by the accessibility and availability of data (Szostak et al., 2018), the research needs and the selection strategy (Saunders, 2012). It is also determined by the population of the targeted group in the research scope (Ekanem and Ekpenyong, 2019). Regarding the sample range, Kvale and

Brinkmann (2009) advise having 5–25 participants for qualitative research (interviews), while Bertaux (1981) advises having at least 15 participants. Saunders (2012) suggests conducting interviews until the saturation condition is reached, at which point the researcher ceases to identify new themes from the interviews.

There are many types of sampling, including random, self-selection or volunteer, and directed (i.e. purposive sampling) (Tuckett, 2004). Purposive sampling is usually used in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994) to meet research-specific goals (Saunders, 2012). In probability-based research, there are statistical rules that determine the sample, whereas in non-probability-based research, selection depends on different factors such as availability and readiness (Uprichard, 2013).

In this study, a random sampling technique was used to obtain a non-biased group for interviews. As per the research scope, 28% of NPOs are in the central region of Saudi Arabia. After excluding NPOs in large cities, the targeted audience was around 130 NPOs. More specifically, the research sample consists of four different resources, as follows: first, 25 managers via one-to-one online interviews. Secondly, ten managers representing ten different active GMOs via two focus-group sessions. The selected sample was among the main leading GMOs in the central region of Saudi Arabia. Thirdly, 52 NPOs' managers and employees via an online qualitative questionnaire. Finally, 12 GMOs' policy documents were gathered from their official online websites. As the targeted scope was around 130 NPOs and data representing 77 NPOs in small cities, the coverage percentage is 59% of the targeted audience. The last conducted interviews reached the saturation stage as there were no new themes or trends.

4.6.8 Data collection

Research data were gathered from four resources. First, data were collected from individual interviews, a process which started by approaching NPOs' managers in the central region of Saudi Arabia randomly through their websites' contact information. A total of 104 NPOs were contacted randomly, of which 47 responded and 25 agreed to an interview. Then, an interview information document was sent to them. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, arrangements for online meetings were emailed or texted to replace physical visits to NPOs. Meetings started by explaining the interview procedure and answering any questions they might have. Verbal permission to start audio-recording was the trigger to commence the interview. By the end of the interview, the procedure for any amendments was explained, followed by words of thanks for their kindness and participation.

Secondly, data were also collected from focus groups, with each group consisting of five GMO representatives. A similar procedure to that for individual interviews was used to approach representatives randomly. Of 35 GMOs approached, ten responded and agreed to participate in focus-group meetings. There were some difficulties with scheduling as each participant had different time preferences. By the end of the meeting, the procedure for any amendments was explained, followed by words of thanks for their kindness and participation.

Thirdly, data were collected via a survey. A database of NPOs contacts in the central region of Saudi Arabia was constructed from online sources to allow distributing the questionnaire. The targeted number of 50 was almost achieved after sending out more than 500 requests. All incomplete surveys were excluded. Finally, grant policy documents were gathered from GMOs' websites.

All collected data were saved on secure University drives. Each data transcript was anonymised as soon as each interview transcript was accomplished. The collected data were translated from Arabic into English by the researcher.

Given the Covid-19 situation, the data collection process was affected and converted from direct interviews to online interviews. This change in the data collection method had the following implications and limitations: first, the research sample excluded any participants without Internet access. This was not a major issue as almost all the targeted NPOs had Internet access in their offices. There were, however, variations in the quality level of Internet connections, which sometimes affected meeting quality during interviews. Secondly, online tools are not as good as direct interviews, especially during social initiation prior to interviews to ease the flow of the discussion during them. Thirdly, even though online interviews are cost-effective and flexible in their timing, they do have their own difficulties, such as: the cost of international initiation calls, differences in time zones and working days, and instability of Internet or mobile connections. Finally, the lack of physical visits did not give the researcher the opportunity to add his own observations of the NPOs visited to the data analysis. These difficulties were dealt with by initial communication with the targeted interviewees, having social talk with them prior to the interviews, and explaining the interview topic, questions and procedure.

4.6.9 Data analysis

Understanding the interviewees correctly is the starting point for the analysis of collected data (Williams, 2016). Data analysis can be quantitative and focus on themes and term frequencies (Atkinson, 2017), or it can be qualitative and used to discover hidden meanings and links in the content (Roberts, 1997). Both methods may be required to gain deep insights from the content (Atkinson, 2017). Data

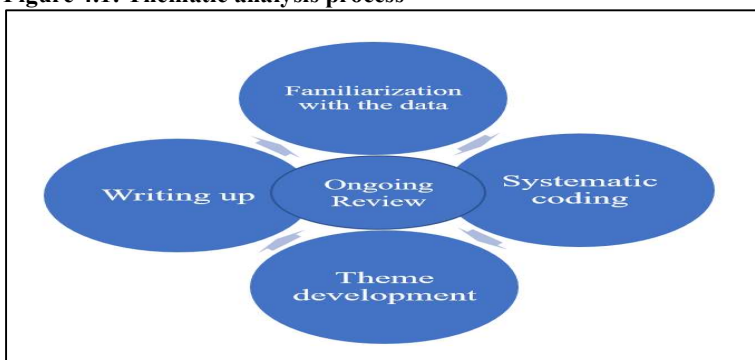
analysis usually refers to existing theories. As an example, one common theory used in understanding social phenomena is functionalism, in which society develops a set of actions used to fulfil its required functions (Williams, 2016).

The analysis must also be conducted based on certain rules and standards; for example, the repetition of themes and terms should be considered only if those reoccurrences are significant (Krippendorff, 2012).

Many difficulties and issues with qualitative content face the researcher in the organisational field. First, interview content in organisational research is complex and it is difficult to determine the relationships between themes (Williams, 2016). This complexity arises from the interlinked nature of human and organisational life aspects (Eidelson, 1997). The second issue is the language and accuracy of translations when the research language is different from the interviewees' language (Williams, 2016). As the analysis of language may not be accurate if it occurs after translation, Al-Amer et al. (2015) suggest conducting the analysis in the original language. A third issue that needs to be considered is falsification, which is a possibility that can be minimised by increasing the number of interviews and cross-checking the results by using mixed methods (Williams, 2016). Finally, a debatable topic in data analysis is the generalisation of a set of actions to conclude a behavioural direction in society (Payne and Williams, 2005). Williams (2016) argues that to claim a cause-and-effect relationship during the analysis, the level of assurance of the relationship should be described and justified.

In this research, the data were analysed thematically. Thematic analysis can be defined as searching for patterns in qualitative research data (Clarke and Braun, 2014). It concerns delving deeper to gain a better understanding of themes and their relationship based on the research objectives (Joffe, 2012; Clarke and Braun, 2014). Thematic analysis is widely used in qualitative research in different fields (Vaismoradi et al., 2013) and it is based on collected data which will be the main source of shaping the research outcomes (Douglas, 2003). Clarke and Braun (2014) describe the process of the thematic analysis as shown in the following Figure 4.1.

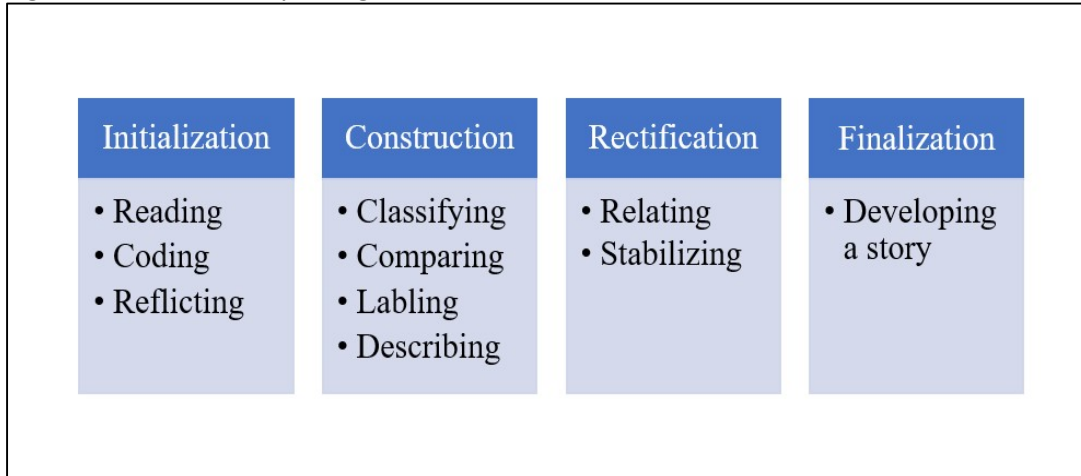
Figure 4.1: Thematic analysis process



Source: (Clarke and Braun, 2014)

Similarly, with some differences, Vaismoradi et al. (2016) describe thematic analysis as shown in the following stages in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Thematic analysis stages



Source: (Vaismoradi et al., 2016)

Methodologists recommend the following practices to ensure the quality of the analysis. First, the coding and themes should be developed under the shadow of the research objectives and questions (Clarke and Braun, 2014). Secondly, thematic analysis is a process requiring time for deep reading, understanding, reflection, repetition and many thinking processes (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). Thirdly, it can be implemented based on defined themes or based on an ongoing development process, i.e. ‘grounded theory’ (Alhojailan, 2012). The grounded theory approach is usually adopted in thematic analysis when the research area is new and the research results will be strongly affected by the researcher’s understanding (Heydarian, 2016). There should be a clear justification to adopt a grounded theory approach in the analysis phase which is linked to the nature of the research (Hodkinson, 2016).

In this project, familiarisation with the data was achieved by reading each interview transcript at least five times, with many notes and comments taken while reading. Familiarisation was also built during the transcript and translation process. The coding stage was done and reviewed twice for each interview by using specialised software called ‘NVIVO’. Accordingly, themes were built, comparisons conducted and stories concluded. Finally, the writing process was completed after combining the outcomes from surveys and documents.

4.7 Research ethics

The initial interest in research ethics came from past experiences and mistakes during studies that led research organisations and governments to set rules and standards to avoid ethical issues (Brydon, 2006). These rules are shaped by the moral values of the researcher and the research environment (Williams,

2016). A consideration of ethics shifts the researcher's view of the subjects from that of research objects to participants or partners (Brydon, 2006). Participants are expected to engage through an agreement called informed consent (Bulmer, 2001). Informed consent aims to ensure the research participants' awareness of the research goals and outcomes (Brydon, 2006).

In this research, guidelines and policies from the University of Manchester were followed. More specifically, the following policies control the research ethics and procedures:

1. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
2. The UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).
3. University of Manchester Research Data Management Policy.
4. University of Manchester Data Protection Policy.
5. University of Manchester Records Management Policy.
6. University of Manchester Information Security Policy.
7. University of Manchester Records Retention Schedule.

Ethical approval was granted by the University of Manchester for this research based on the following measurements. 1) Participation is totally voluntarily without any incentives or pressure. 2) Each participant receives sufficient information about the research, data management and privacy-related procedures before the interview. 3) Following an induction step, each participant is asked to sign a consent form before their participation and they have the right to withdraw before, during and after the interview (before anonymising the data). 4) After their interview, each participant has the right to see their interview outcomes and to amend any part of the interview or delete it. 5) To open all possible channels for any questions, comments or complaints, participants have the contact details of the main researcher, the supervisor and the University Data Protection Officer.

Ethics related to the research data are covered by the following caution and considerations. First, no sensitive or personal data may be gathered during interviews or in the online questionnaire. Secondly, email addresses and names are anonymised as soon as possible by replacing the participants' names with ID numbers. Thirdly, all data are in an electronic format and saved in secure storage provided and maintained by the University of Manchester. For the interviews, audio recordings were generated and saved directly to university storage drives. And for the questionnaire, this was conducted using an approved tool from the University of Manchester (Select Survey.net) which address all security and privacy requirements. Finally, all research data are processed on the University's secure storage drives and not saved in any other devices.

4.8 Reliability and validity

From the beginning of the quality research era, there was a debate on the quality of research from many angles, starting with the coherence of research objectives and ending with the accuracy of the research methodology and outcomes (Leung, 2015). This debate resulted in many thoughts and tools to test the quality of the qualitative research process and results (Morse et al., 2002). This interest recognised the importance of the quality of qualitative research and enhanced research outcomes (Rolfe, 2006). As this interest focused on tools and outcomes, quality in qualitative research also comes from the quality of the researcher's work in collecting data, interpretation and analysis (Mays and Pope, 2000; Patton, 1999). Tracy (2010) assesses the quality of qualitative research based on eight areas: research topic, written content, researcher commitment, quality, affect factors, contribution, ethics and objective oriented.

Qualitative research quality is the result of a careful systematic process and continuous revision during the research journey (Stenbacka, 2001). There are no standard methods to assure the quality of qualitative research (Leung, 2015; Rolfe, 2006).

Stenbacka (2001) argues that the traditional meaning of reliability and validity in research are not applicable to qualitative research. Golafshani (2003) and Mays and Pope (2000) argue that in order to ensure reliability and validity in qualitative research, they should be redefined to fit the nature of qualitative research, as many methodologists argue that the research interest in reliability and validity started in quantitative research and was then utilised in qualitative research work to maintain the quality level of research (Seale, 1999). For instance, one of the quality tools that is used in quantitative research is triangulation which is defined in qualitative research as the usage of different research methods, data or analysis tools (Golafshani, 2003). Contrasting with this view, Rolfe (2006) argues that distinguishing in this way does not lead to a better understanding of reliability and validity in qualitative research and so quality tools should not be re-used in qualitative research. Supporting this argument, Healy and Perry (2000) refer to differences in ontological and epistemological stances between quantitative and qualitative research.

In qualitative research, Leung (2015) defines "Validity" as the appropriateness of tools, data and methods, while he defines "Reliability" as reoccurrence of the process and data. Researchers consider validity and reliability to ensure the quality of research (Golafshani, 2003). One quality issues is the ability to generalise the research findings, which requires ensuring the quality of the research sample, process and tools (Stenbacka, 2001).

In this research the following measures and actions were implemented to ensure the quality of the research. 1) The research aim, objectives and questions were developed and reviewed in different research stages to ensure the alignment of the research questions with the research methods and direction. 2) Ethics procedures and standards were followed during all research stages. 3) During the data collection stage, all incomplete interviewes and surveys were excluded. 4) Several conditions were added to the online survey to avoid duplication and a shortage of answeres. 5) Clarification notes and letters were communicated to all participants of the research. 6) Comparing interview outcomes with the survey and document outcomes.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the philosophic principles of the research methodology were discussed. As the research topic focuses on the organisational and human aspects of NPOs, a realism ontology position was selected with an anti-positivism stance. As qualitative methods align with the selected philosophical position and, specifically, with this study's objectives, a mix of qualitative methods was selected (i.e. interviews, focus groups and a questionnaire). Considering the current circumstances of Covid-19, an online platform was utilised to conduct these methods. Before gathering data, all ethical considerations were addressed by following Manchester University ethics guidelines and Saudi Arabia official research guides. The data collected were analysed using a thematic analysis approach. Finally, quality measures were taken to assure the quality of the research steps and outcomes.

Chapter 5: Current Understanding, Practices, Priorities and Impact of Capacity-building in Non-profit Organisations

5.1 Introduction

In this research, data were collected from four sources as follows: 1) Twenty-five interviews with NPO managers and senior staff, 2) Ten GMOs managers via two group discussions, 3) Fifty-two NPO employees participated by answering an online questionnaire, and 4) Twelve GMOs' policy documents. These data were analysed and processed to build thematic stories based on the research questions. In this and two further chapters, findings related to each research objective will be presented in separate chapters on multiple themes aiming to address each research question from various data sources.

5.2 Context and background of the research sample

The research sample was affected by the fact that most small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia have similar NPO types working in four main categories as follows:

- 1) General NPOs mainly deal with needy people: The common name of these NPOs is Albir associations, which were established in Riyadh at the end of 1954. Initially, the Albir association in Riyadh served all small cities and villages in the Riyadh district. Now, almost every small city has its own Albir association. By the end of 2020, there were almost 400 Albir associations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They provide services to needy people, such as food, housing, loans and medical support. Each association is managed by an elected board that usually consists of businesspeople and wealthy citizens in the city who participate financially and manage the association. Albir associations are officially registered and governed by the Ministry of Social Affairs (Albir, 2021).
- 2) NPOs that specialise in teaching the Quran: These were established in 1966 in Riyadh to organise and spread teaching, memorising and recitation of the Quran. Since then, branches have been opened in the kingdom's cities and villages. Today there are more than 200 branches and tens of central institutes to qualify and train teachers. As most of these branches operate from mosques to teach the Quran, they work under the umbrella of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs (Maknoon, 2021). The common name for these NPOs is Tahfeeth.
- 3) NPOs that specialise in orphans' affairs: these began as a department of the Albir association in Riyadh. In 2000 it became a separate organisation (called Ensan) with many branches in small cities and villages. Currently, they are 49 branches in the kingdom. Their primary duty is to look after orphans' needs and support them in different life aspects (Ensan, 2021).

- 4) NPOs that specialise in Islamic education: The common name for these NPOs is Dawah (office). They work under the umbrella of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs. The first Dawah office was established in Riyadh in 1989. Today there are about 400 branches in the kingdom (MOIA, 2021). Like the previous NPOs, currently, most cities have their Dawah office. Their main activity is Islamic education.

The situation is different in the big cities as there is more diversity in NPOs' fields and specialities. This situation was mentioned as an issue by a manager in a GMO:

Many of these cities have only the traditional types of charities, such as Albir or Tahfeeth, but they need someone who broadens their minds with other priorities that may be needed for their society. [Participant 83 – CEO at GMO]

As each of these NPOs operates in a different legal form, it was a concern for some of the participants as they argued that the capacity-building concept, scope and practices are different based on the legal form of the entity. This point was addressed by one of the NPO managers and one of the Donors, as shown below:

The definition will be changed based on the charity type because the term differs a lot in each legal form here; it varies according to the legal form. So, associations are not like other charitable institutions, and their requirements are different. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

I have a question about the type of charitable institutions in your research, are they associations, foundations or non-profit companies, and also their field, because each NPO has its own needs based on its operating model and its speciality, so Dawah offices are different from Albir associations, and their required capacities are different. [Participant 86 – CEO at GMO]

Accordingly, the differences between NPOs should be considered when designing capacity-building programmes for each entity; this does not mean changing the common development areas and required capacities for all the different charities.

Finally, all the group discussion participants were from GMOs in Saudi Arabia. All the interviewed GMO representatives were in senior positions and part of the granting process. Each GMO is officially registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs. Most GMOs have internal policies and governance documents to manage their daily operations accordingly. There are more than 120 registered GMOs in Saudi Arabia (KKF, 2016).

5.3 Research participants' general information

Generic information was gathered during data collection from the participants, such as the number of employees, organisational age and working field. These data were analysed and compared with different participants' answers to make significant observations. In this research, all interviews were with Albir associations, which are more closely related to the research topic. The questionnaire data were more diverse as they were collected from various NPO types.

During the pilot interviews, it was discovered that the interviews would be more productive with employees in high managerial roles in the NPOs as their positions allow them to deal with capacity-building from a holistic view. Thus, most interviewees had a managerial role in their NPO. The following Table 5.1 shows general information for the research sample, which was collected during 25 interviews.

Table 5.1: Participants' general information (interviews)

Total No. of interviews = 25			
Specialisation			
Generic NPO	Quran education	Orphans	Islamic education
25	0	0	0
Organisational age (years)			
More than 20	10–20	Less than 10	
14	7	4	
Interviewee position			
Board member	Manager	Operational	
2	21	2	
Number of employees			
More than 20	10–20	Less than 10	
15	7	3	

Source: Constructed by the author.

These statistics were analysed and linked with various themes, and the following results emerged. First, regarding the number of employees in an NPO, one of the results associated with NPOs that have more than 20 employees is the variety of capacity-building practices, as all NPOs that have more than 20 employees reported many more capacity-building practices than NPOs with fewer employees. On the other hand, NPOs with fewer employees had fewer capacity-building practices in place. This result may explain why employees are among the main enablers of capacity-building activities. Another interesting result is that all NPOs with a small number of employees mentioned financial obstacles in their capacity-building implementation.

Regarding organisational age, almost all organisations had been operating for more than ten years, indicating the importance and need for charity work in these areas. On the other hand, the data do not show a link between organisational age and the number of employees. One of the advantages associated with organisational age is governmental support as the Ministry of Social Affairs offers dedicated capacity-building financial support for new NPOs during the first five years; as one of the NPOs managers stated:

The Ministry supports NPOs in the first five years of employment, in the first five years, you have the right to apply for employment support. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

NPOs in their early years had to utilise this support to build their capacities, sustainability, and independence from external support.

From the second result source, the following Table 5.2 shows general information for the research sample, which was collected from 52 questionnaire participants.

Table 5.2: Participants' general information (questionnaire)

Total No. of questionnaires = 52			
Specialisation			
Generic NPO	Quran education	Orphans	Islamic education
25	11	7	9
Working years in NPOs			
More than 20	10–20	Less than 10	
26	15	11	
Interviewee position			
Board member	Manager	Operational	
15	31	6	
Type of employment			
Full time	Part-time	Volunteer	
25	12	15	

Source: Constructed by the author.

The questionnaire participants' background data show more diversity in NPO specialisation than in the interviews. Also, the data show that most participants had worked for more than five years in NPOs, so their answers reflect the depth of their experience. But also, this gives a sense of the age of half of the participants, as they have more than 25 years of experience. This point was highlighted by one of the GMO managers, as he stated in his response:

If you go and visit many of the NPOs in small cities, you will find a group of old generation brothers doing charity work in the old way; it is hard to develop them or change their way of doing things. Also, it is hard to talk to them about management or quality tools; they will not pay attention. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

The third point to notice is that most interviewees work in leading positions. This gives their answers more credibility as capacity-building is one of their responsibilities. Regarding the employment type, it could be interpreted as most board members are volunteers in their positions, while the managerial and operational positions are either full- or part-time. This point will be highlighted in one of the forthcoming sections as it is linked to capacity-building issues.

Finally, regarding group discussion sessions, each one was attended by four GMO managers and the manager of a non-profit consultation company. All the participants had more than five years of experience in the field. Each GMO's annual grant is more than 50 million riyals, and they have more than ten employees. Consultation firms specialise in building NPOs' capacities; most contracts are based on GMO funds and joint projects. Granting policies of the participant organisations were analysed to evaluate capacity-building priorities and interests.

5.4 The current conceptualisation of capacity-building

The current understanding of the term capacity-building in the charity sector in Saudi Arabia is strongly affected by the translation (Capacity-building). Thus, it varies according to individual experience. Several times, the researcher had to use different expressions to explain the term in Arabic. The term conceptualisation is crucial as it is reflected in all the research questions. The following section will show the current understanding of the term, along with some comparisons.

5.4.1 Overview of the conceptualisation of capacity-building

From the answers to the question "what do we mean by capacity-building in NPOs?", there was no agreement on the meaning of the term "Capacity-building" among the interviewees. Besides the different understandings of the term, some interviewees were not familiar with it as seven of the interviewees had an issue understanding the term and some of them were confused by it. The following examples highlight this issue clearly:

Do you mean to build and develop, or how? [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

I am not sure about the term which might need some explanation from you, can you give me some ideas? [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

Do you mean the services we provide, or what? Oh brother, look, as an employee not familiar with these terms, could you give me some examples? [Participant 60 – NPO admin manager]

Other interviewees answered the question by addressing other topics like training beneficiaries or other unrelated topics. The following answers show this misunderstanding of the term:

Yes, capacity-building is about qualifications for the poor, especially orphan youth who must be trained and qualify. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

I think maybe social affairs or ... what do you mean, brother? [Participant 39 – NPO manager]

It is noticeable that most of these participants were aware of capacity-building's importance and practices, and they knew their current priorities precisely, but they were not familiar with the term, or sometimes they expressed it as a different term.

As another sign of the understanding issue of the term, some interviewees explained the term by listing a few capacities to be built in the NPO; and in their answers about their practices in capacity-building, they answered with a broader meaning for capacity-building. The following table shows some examples of these differences.

Table 5.3: Examples of practices broader than the capacity-building definition

Interviewee number	Capacities mentioned in their understanding of Capacity-building	Capacities mentioned in their practices
8	Financial stability	Endowments, training, internal organisational system and automation
19	Financial stability	Automation, quality management (ISO) and capacity development
26	Financial stability	Training, endowments, investment, automation, procedures and policies
35	Developing NPO policies	Restructuring, endowments, training, automation and quality management (ISO)
39	Social affairs	Endowments, internal organisational system and automation

Source: Constructed by the author.

These differences may illustrate the unfamiliarity with the terminology, or this may be as a result of the first answer as the participants were not fully yet engaged with the subject. It was clear that the concept

of capacity-building exists in many practices, thoughts, planning and priorities, regardless of their familiarity with the term.

By looking into the answers to the concept question from another angle, most participants answered the definition question by listing the capacities required in the NPO. However, some participants defined it without mentioning the capacities in detail; one of the participants referred to all the capacities that are required by the Ministry of Social Affairs:

Of course, the required capacities are the capabilities based on the Ministry's instructions and steps. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

This answer may highlight the formal relationship with the Ministry and the dependency nature of the relationship. Another generic way to define capacity-building is to develop the NPO to be able to deliver its goals, as was nicely worded by one of the participants:

The concept focuses on developing the work of the institution in things that are related to the goal of its existence and in order to be able to develop its services with the first beneficiary so that his social and family life will improve, and they will be active and productive members of their community. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

This was mentioned in the previous example as a capacity-building final objective. Similar to that, another NPO manager linked the NPO's abilities to its primary goal. By looking into this example, it was noticed that beneficiaries were in many interviewees' thoughts when talking about capacity-building in different contexts as it is mentioned in the following example:

The association's capabilities are the capacities that make the NPO able to serve its beneficiaries. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

Highlighting the beneficiary in the capacity-building context as the final objective will make NPOs focus on improving the services offered to satisfy the end-user. Other participants mentioned beneficiaries as the capacity-building subject where beneficiaries' capacities are to be built. The following examples explain this conceptualisation of the term:

Capacity-building is also about building the individual himself and taking him from being a beneficiary to being a person who serves and also provides services to the association,

or a donor who moves to become a better person, someone who donates to the association.
[Participant 77 – NPO manager]

Also, we can say it is about training and qualifications for poor people, especially orphan youth who must be trained and qualified. *[Participant 72 – NPO board member]*

Adding beneficiaries' development to NPOs' capacity-building concept is arguable. However, if the participants understand that capacity-building is only about building beneficiaries, this will ignore large areas of NPO development and be a sign of misunderstanding the concept.

On analysing the capacities in the various definitions, finance and employee development were the capacities most mentioned in the interviewees' answers. In Table 5.4, the capacities mentioned in the answers are displayed, along with their repetition counts, as follows:

Table 5.4: Capacities' repetition frequencies in NPO managers' answers about the concept

Capacity	Repetition
Finance	51
Employees' development	43
Automation	33
Policies and planning	13
Donors' networking	4
Board effectiveness	2
Excellence models	1
Volunteers	2
Process development	1
Unified system	1

Source: Constructed by the author

In the forthcoming sections, some of the mentioned capacities will be described based on the participants' expression of these capacities.

5.4.2 Financial capacity in the conceptualisation of capacity-building

NPOs' Financial capacity was mentioned in different expressions with different examples. The following NPO manager is trying to explain NPOs' financial capacities by giving several examples:

When we talk about capacities, we should talk about financial ability. Does the NPO have the financial capacity? Are there fixed donors or membership contributions? *[Participant 44 – NPO manager]*

Among these different examples of NPOs' financial capacities, it was noticed that the term (investment) is used many times by NPO managers when they refer to financial capacities. The following answers

show some examples of the usage of the term 'investment' in the participants' expressions about the meaning of NPOs' capacity-building:

Capacity-building is about many things, but the most important capacity that should be developed in the NPO is investments ... so Investment development within the organisation is essential. If the NPO does not develop their investments, they will not continue, and they will not survive because we are neither a competitive nor a profitable institution. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

From my point of view, capacity-building is about investments in the NPO. It is an essential capacity, and the primary goal of investment is to enlarge the NPO's income. Accordingly, the NPO can advance and expand; the most important thing is investment. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

Usage of the term investment might result from familiarity with the term when discussing finance, or it might be a way of expressing different meanings in finance capacities, such as financial growth, sustainability or involvement in the business. While different types of investment were mentioned in many answers, endowments were the most frequently reoccurring example. The following NPO manager is using endowment as a financial capacity that lasts longer:

NPOs need to build capabilities in financial matters. And they should be built to last longer, like endowments, so that they are financially sustainable ... to be able to implement their programmes independently without the help of others. [Participant 6 – NPO manager]

In the original transcript, many participants used the word endowment, which is " Waqf " in Arabic. The word "Waqf" means dedicating the usage of an asset as the asset exists. Thus, endowments are known in many NPOs as long-time investments which offer a stable source of income; also, they are known as sustainability enablers for charity work. Thus, sustainability is a term mentioned to express financial sufficiency and capability. The NPO manager below mentioned financial sustainability to add the meaning of stabilising the NPO's work:

Capacity-building is mainly about building NPO capabilities, and the most important is financial sustainability; whether this sustainability is achieved by having endowments or from any specific investment projects, other organisations get it from annual membership

fees, and some get it from different constant resources, this is the most critical capability.
[Participant 77 – NPO manager]

NPO sustainability was mentioned in this example and linked to sufficient financial income. Lastly, it was noticed that financial capacity is occasionally referred to by mentioning building donor relations and networking. The following example articulates this point:

Capacity-building is about building your charity's capability to work, and one of the critical capacities is financial support, which can be achieved by having a donors' database and relationships with donors, whether they are individuals or organisations, this is one of the bases for charitable work. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

Donor networking is considered a financial capacity as it is one of the primary financial sources for most NPOs. Thus, in the previous example, it was referred to as one of the bases of NPO work.

5.4.3 Employees' development in the conceptualisation of capacity-building

Employee development was the second most frequently reoccurring answer and was mentioned in different expressions. Many interviewees included employee development in their definitions and emphasised its importance, claiming that employees are the central pillar of NPO work, as was stated in the following testimony:

Each charity needs to build its internal capacities and enablers, and the first thing is to develop its employees; if they develop their employees, their work will enhance and expand. [Participant 20 – NPO manager]

Considering the differences between private and not-for-profit sectors should be reflected in their employees' required capacities. The following testimony highlights these differences:

Capacity-building means to build your charity from the inside, and the most important thing to be built in the team is human resource capabilities. This is one of the essential things, so there must be training for them and specialised courses tailored for their speciality in work and designed for charity workers. Because a non-profit organisation is fundamentally different from a profitable one. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

This difference in the meaning of capacity-building should be considered in practice by tailoring employee development practices according to the NPO's nature and needs. From another angle,

employee development is often used as another term for employee training, as the following participant stated:

Yes, sure, so capacity-building is about ... And also, it is about developing staff members in terms of training courses. [Participant 60 – NPO admin manager]

Even though training is one of the main tools to develop employees, employee development has a broader meaning, as expressed by a few participants. The following participant expressed the needs of employees:

Capacity-building in a charity need to address employees' different needs, as they need the management to look at them, ensure their salaries are paid and give them job security; job security must be provided and correct, and employees must be given incentives, bonuses, I mean they have to feel that they are guaranteeing their rights and to create for them a welcoming and secure atmosphere. [Participant 57 – NPO manager]

This different and detailed answer might trigger questioning the detailed meaning of employees' development and highlight their needs, which are changing based on the NPO work nature.

Two segments of employee development were explicitly mentioned. First, a few participants mentioned NPO board members' development in their understanding of capacity-building, as in the following participant's testimony:

NPOs must focus on the board of directors and how they as a group will improve and lead the association; for example, do not assign someone with a health sector background and experience to be the investment manager for the association. No, we should appoint an economist to that position. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Secondly, another few answers add another dimension to employee development in NPOs which is volunteer development, which was mentioned in one answer as follows:

Abilities are the capabilities of the employees and volunteers of the charity and from whom all other work stems. If you develop them correctly, you establish all your work correctly. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

Volunteers' development might be part of NPO employees' development as their work and needs are similar to those of contracted employees or might be slightly different as volunteers have specific needs.

5.4.4 Other capacities in the conceptualisation of capacity-building

In many answers about the meaning of capacity-building, automation capacity was mentioned in different ways, such as having an automated system, transferring to paperless management or having physical automation equipment. The following examples show some of these different angles:

Also, capacity-building is about moving from paper to fully automated management through a complete integrated system, from internal human resource practices to an online store for donations. A complete integrated system is required. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

Also technical capabilities, does the NPO have computers, scanners and servers? [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

It was clear that automation's meaning differs based on the participant's interests, experience and perception. This was further explained in participants' answers about their automation practices.

The other capacity mentioned in conceptualising capacity-building was planning for the organisation to have a clear vision and mission, which was mentioned as a capability and establishment base for the NPO. The following response highlights planning capacity as one of the essential capacities required by the NPO:

Regarding capacity development, the first thing that the NPO should focus on is having plans and a vision; if the vision is clear and its goals defined, then they can implement their plans. [Participant 70 – NPO manager]

In this testimony, the participant described planning as the most critical capacity for the NPO, which might mean that other capacities not mentioned could be part of the meaning of capacity-building, but these were not mentioned because they are not essential as the ones mentioned. In the planning phase, one of the participants added creativity as a new dimension to be added. This point was articulated in this statement:

We also have to build creativity in our NPOs so that we can solve many of our issues and enhance our work. [Participant 16 – accountant]

The participant linked the need for creativity with the problems faced by NPOs, which might require new solutions to be developed. Thus, creativity was mentioned as one of the required capacities in the NPO.

5.5 NPOs' current practices in capacity-building

Almost all the interviewed NPOs had made some efforts to build their capacities; their efforts, experience and approaches vary. In the forthcoming section, some of the current NPOs' practices to build their capacities will be highlighted, and related responses will be presented.

5.5.1 Overview of current practices in capacity-building

Each participant mentioned a list of practices in capacity-building for their NPO. Some of these practices were only mentioned when the researcher asked about specific areas, such as: what did your NPO do to build their financial capacities or employee development. For consistency, these sub-questions were repeated to all participants during the interviews. Also, it was noticed that some participants mentioned the same capacities in their understanding of the concept, while many of them added some capacities in the current practices answer, and a few mentioned some capacities in the definition, but their NPO did not implement them yet. Current capacities mentioned by NPO managers are listed as follows in Table 5.5:

Table 5.5: Capacities repetition frequencies in NPO managers' answers about their current practices

Capacity (theme)	Repetition	Practices
Finance	43	Endowments, donor networking, fundraising, investments and charity shops.
Automation	42	Websites, automated internal systems, automated services and online donations
Training	42	Internal training, external training, online training
Excellence models	12	Excellence prizes, quality tools and ministry governance framework
Donor networking	5	Maintaining a donor database
Employees' development	4	Team building and internal rotations
Processes, policies and planning	13	Developing internal systems, policies, processes, planning and organisational structure
Outsourcing	4	Outsourcing capacity-building practices to experts
Volunteers	3	Recruiting and developing volunteers
Buildings	2	Having offices and branches
Related to first beneficiaries	1	Developing beneficiaries
Peer networking	1	Networking with peers

Source: Constructed by the author

It was clear from the answers that the majority of the interviewed NPOs had made efforts to build their financial capacities, develop their employees and automate their work. The second point to notice is that they were mentioning the capacities to be built, such as financial capacity, or the approach and tools for capacity-building, such as endowments and outsourcing. The third point is that all NPOs were actively

involved in building their capacities. Most NPO managers mentioned two to four practices in capacity-building, while a few mentioned more than five. A common feature of NPOs that are active in building their capacities is that they have good income sources, and from the interviews their managers seem to be more focused and driven by precise objectives. From another perspective, more than a third of the participants think they don't have sufficient capacity and that extra capacity-building efforts are required.

5.5.2 Current practices in building financial capacities

Regarding current financial practices, most finance capacities-building practices are about having investments for the NPO. Most of these investments are real estate endowments with a stable annual income. It was obvious that there is a trending practice within NPOs in small cities of focusing on endowments. The following example explains this movement:

To be honest, almost all NPOs now, at least the ones that I visited or talked to in the region, are focusing on establishing endowments, especially Albir associations; by having many endowments, they will be self-sufficient, which means a lot to them as they are going to gain an annual income that covers their operational costs; also, they might cover the cost of running some programmes. It is very important to achieve self-sufficiency. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

This trend was evident from the interviews, as the majority of the interviewed NPOs had or were in the process of building their endowment portfolio. The other common investment practice implemented by many NPOs is charity shops where new and used clothes, furniture and foods are repacked and sold or distributed to the needy. In the following an NPO manager explained their experience of a charity shop:

One of our primary investment projects is our charity warehouse, where people donate their furniture, clothes and food. We reorganise them and distribute part of them to needy people and sell the other part to the public to support our operational costs. [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

This project serves the community by providing recycling solutions which impact positively on the local economy and the environment, offering needy people some of their life essentials, offering affordably priced products to the local community and covering part of the NPO's operating costs.

A different angle on building finance capabilities is to build and manage relationships with donors and maintain different communication channels. The following are examples of some NPOs' efforts to build and maintain their donor relations:

On the other hand, there was a focus on expanding the circle of donors and continuously strengthening the relationship with them. [Participant 29 – NPO manager]

And also, we built what we can call a customer database to be utilised in communicating with them; I mean, now we have more than 2,000 donors with whom we communicate regularly. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

This communication with business owners could be implemented in various forms. One of the most common forms is by inviting them to be NPO board members. Having businessmen on the NPO board puts part of the responsibility to support the NPO on their shoulders. The NPO below in a small village gained most of its income with the support of one of their board members:

Our prominent supporter is one of the leading businessmen in the kingdom, and thankfully he is our chairman. He dedicated 800,000 Saudi Riyals annually for our projects and operational costs. Also, he and the other board members spend part of their annual Zakat on our projects. Also, they covered all the costs for our new offices. [Participant 30 – NPO manager]

This was affected by the loyalty and belonging of these businessmen to their hometown, even though they are currently living in large cities. Another NPO manager mentioned a new prosperous and unusual practice, communicating with their donors by focusing on preparing and managing the wills of businessmen in their city. The following testimony shows this uncommon practice:

This is one of our success stories; most wealthy people donate a third of their wealth after death. So, we communicate with them and suggest charity projects to be included in their wills. We have more than 15 million endowments and investments, only from this approach. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

This practice is linked to donors' beliefs about the rewards after passing from this life and the importance of preparing for that. Not all small cities have many wealthy business owners who will donate some of their wealth in wills to NPOs.

Finally, one of the facts noticed in building financial capacity is the timing factor, as most of NPOs' income comes during Ramadan when most Muslims are used to paying their annual Zakat. This was stated by one of the NPO managers, describing the percentage of their income this month as follows:

During one month of Ramadan, we receive more than 70% of our annual income, and it only comes from Zakat. Thus, many of our endowments' project costs are covered this month. [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

This fact makes this month a golden opportunity that requires planning, preparation and dedication.

5.5.3 Current practices in building automation capacities

Automation in NPOs can be implemented for different purposes and in different technical fields. Many NPO managers were focusing on building their technical capacities. Starting from providing accessible information to all NPO customers by having an informative website about NPO services, news, reports and other related information. The following NPO managers described their efforts by having a comprehensive, informative website:

Now beneficiaries can enter and see what the association offers. [Participant 39 – NPO manager]

Yes, you only need to enter the association's website, to find any information, any list or anything you want to know about the association. You will find principal regulations, related administrative information and anything you want about the association; you can even find permanent committees, annual reports ... the minutes of annual general meetings for the last 19 years, Executive director statements, anything about the association, even projects for the association, what it serves. It is a comprehensive site. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

To make these websites more valuable to beneficiaries, many NPOs have started receiving beneficiaries' applications through the website without requiring personal attendance in the NPO office. The NPO manager below explained the added value of automating the application process:

Every beneficiary, now they can apply from home instead of asking them to come to the association, especially as some of them are so far away; they are from villages, so they can enter our website from home and apply for assistance. Also, to those who want to

provide pictures or evidence, our system is capable of uploading those attachments. Also, now, beneficiaries can enter and see what the association offers. They can see things that are available in our warehouse, furniture or foodstuffs, electrical materials, appliances, whatever suits them. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

A good example of automated services is shopping cards. These cards can be used in local supermarkets instead of the charity distributing food. This participant explained this service:

Even in the food has a supplies programme, the beneficiary does not have to come to us to ask for vouchers or food. They need to go to a particular supermarket and use a card similar to a bank card without embarrassment. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

On top of automating external services, many NPOs have built internal automated systems to process their daily procedures. Tailored and comprehensive systems for charities are developed, as in the following example:

We have a system for names first. It is a unified automated system that has operated for nearly two years now. Our internal procedures are now automated, including our archive, warehouse, finances and human resource practices. What is good about this system is that it was designed for charity work. [Participant 14 – NPO manager]

These internal systems allow NPOs to benefit from data, as will be explained later in the impact section. As these applications are tailored for charity work, one of them is a donor communication system. This NPO shared their experience of this system:

We now have an online store to fundraise for our projects, and from that, we built what we can call a customer database. So, we can communicate with them, I mean, now we have about 2,000 clients with whom we communicate regularly about our needs and achievements. Some are locals from the region, and others are from outside the region. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

These applications should also play a part in building the NPO's financial capabilities as many capacities are strengthened by each other.

5.5.4 Current practices in building employees' capacities

Employee development starts by providing a positive work environment to them. This point has been highlighted by a few NPO managers as one of them stated:

One of the main things I focus on is building and maintaining a positive environment in the association so that our employees will work in a safe and motivating place. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

The internal work environment is linked to identifying and looking after employees' needs, which is an essential part of their development. The following answer broadens the employee development concept:

Besides sending each employee on related courses, we also did several things to gain their loyalty and let them say I love this organisation. Today we are supporting our employees for loans from local banks. Also, we are supporting them in the government housing programme. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

Even though these requirements are essential for NPO employees, they were ignored by most answers. Most of the participants expressed employee development only by mentioning training courses. Also, it was noticed that many NPO managers were referring to training courses provided by a partnership project between the Ministry of Social Affairs, GMOs and a university. One of the participants who attended these courses stated:

Many of my training courses and my colleagues resulted from an initiative between GMOs, one of the leading universities and the Ministry. It offered NPO managers a five-day intensive course, similar to NPO accountants, researchers and volunteer directors. Before the pandemic, there was a monthly course in different areas. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

Another excellent example of a partnership between the private sector and NPOs is a training centre built by one of the large companies in the kingdom. This centre is located in one of the small cities and is dedicated to training employees in the third sector in the region. The NPO manager expressed his experience of the institute as follows:

One of our notable projects is that we opened a training institute for the association; we opened it with the support of one of the large firms. The institute provides accredited training and qualification courses and relies on a large number of experts; we utilise it

to develop our employees and the community as it is the only official institute in our region. By the way, we call it the Capacity-building Institute. We are trying to make this institute a reference to develop the association's capabilities and extend the impact to charities in the region. [Participant 48 – NPO manager]

These initiatives show positive participation from the government and the private sector towards the non-profit sector. And it also shows the importance of government support in coordinating such cooperation.

In training practices, new employees require more training and preparation for the work, which led some NPOs to design specific training sets for new employees, as the following NPO manager highlighted:

Every employee of ours is offered two training sessions annually according to their speciality. As for new employees, there is a list of generic training courses to prepare them for multitasking roles. So yes, we have a plan, every employee has no less than two specialised courses each year, whether he is a social researcher, accountant or something else. [Participant 42 – NPO manager]

This training will assure the readiness of the employees and their knowledge about NPO daily work. Another type of training that has its own design and advantages is the on-job training and coaching, which was implemented by one of the NPOs, as their manager explained:

We apply a month and a half work rotation so, for example, the employee will work not only in public relations, but also be able to provide services to beneficiaries because you want a team that understands the whole system. Through the work rotation exercise, I built the team at one time, so during intensive times, all my team could be dedicated to one job, like what we just did during the pandemic. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

In the context of employee development, volunteers may be forgotten and not considered. They are free assets to NPOs that must be maintained and looked after. Few NPOs mentioned volunteers' recruitment and development as part of their capacity-building activities. This NPO showed their interest in developing their volunteers as follows:

There was a focus on expanding the circle of volunteers and benefiting from their various experiences, we started by classifying them based on their knowledge, and we matched

them with our needs. So, we focus on expanding this circle, continuously strengthening the relationship with them. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

Interestingly, one NPO was focusing on recruiting teachers as volunteers. Volunteers could be full-time employees who could give the charities some of their time. Their manager shared their experience as follows:

We are not like other NPOs who have issues finding employees. We solved this problem by focusing on recruiting young teachers as volunteers; we got a lot from their participation in our association. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

This is perhaps because many young teachers in small cities are expatriates and not permanent and so usually do not have social or business engagements, so they have more time to offer. Relatively, as there is a national movement towards volunteering, different bodies have their own initiatives to encourage volunteering. Some NPOs began these initiatives by building a volunteering unit, as the following board member testified:

Yesterday, we presented to the Ministry our new project, which is volunteering. I mean to build a volunteering unit according to Saudi national standards for volunteer work supported by one of the leading universities. [Participant 66 – NPO board member]

These initiatives will increase the community's volunteering practices and support building local NPO capacities.

5.5.5 Current practices in building other capacities

The main focus of many NPOs is on finance, employee and technical capacities. Some other areas were mentioned directly or indirectly. One of these is building the organisation's internal system by developing its processes, policies, procedures, plans and structure. The following responses mention these practices:

We built our capabilities based on the Ministry's instructions and guidelines, so we created a strategic plan and set regulations for digital or electronic transformation systems. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

Also, we have the initiative to develop our procedures and process through a contract with an institution specialising in developing charitable work. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

During the past two years, we have built institutional systems and models, which are too important for our work, so now we have job descriptions, a written system for beneficiaries, and policies for employees; we cannot work without them. After we built these essentials, we now have a joint project with the Ministry to build 20 methodologies, such as a methodology for volunteers, a methodology for workers, a methodology for administrative construction, a methodology for the role of beneficiaries and so on. There are twenty methodologies. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

Another essential capacity is physical assets, such as offices, which were only mentioned by two NPOs, as highlighted below:

Yes, in development, of course, the establishment of a new headquarters for the association, it became an evolution because now the offices have changed, and finally we have a private office area for women, we are going to move their soon. [Participant 30 – NPO manager]

A second step is moving our office from an unknown area to the city's central district, close to the primary market. The interface is modern and a new look for the association; it becomes more attractive for donors and volunteers. Many young people working in the market came to us and asked about job opportunities. [Participant 48 – NPO manager]

The low number of repetitions for these essential capacities does not necessarily mean that NPOs are ignoring development in these areas. Also, the mentioned practices might refer to recent practised projects.

Finally, a different angle was approached in some answers by considering community capacities. This understanding leads to a community capacity-building programme as stated in the following testimony:

One of the goals of the association is to move from pastoral to developmental care. One of our goals is to reduce the number of beneficiaries as much as possible. By providing services that help them to rely on themselves and secure their needs, we have a programme called the productive families programme, some of these families have

become stand-alone and self-reliant, this is a primary capability that we have to build in our society. [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

As mentioned in many sections, it is arguable whether to consider community capacity-building as part of NPOs' capacity-building or not. But without doubt, it is part of NPOs' capacity-building to build NPO abilities to motivate beneficiaries to become independent.

5.5.6 Current NPOs' capacity-building approaches

Capacity-building practices are implemented through many different approaches. Generally, about 80 per cent of participants did not use management tools to develop their NPOs capacities. This section lists some common approaches and tools used by NPOs. One of these approaches is the excellence model. The excellence models mentioned in the participants' answers were ISO, the governance framework designed by the government and several excellence awards. By implementing one of these excellence models, many different capacities in the NPO can be built. The following two examples highlight this approach:

We are planning to get ISO certification, but for now we have something that has been implemented in the associations, and it is terrific, called the governance model introduced by the Ministry. At the beginning, we had three gap analysis meetings. Our results were good, as 85% of the requirements had already been implemented. Then we formed a team to address the gaps, and they have just finished that, so now we are ready for ISO. [Participant 24 – NPO manager]

A consultation firm did an initial assessment for us based on an excellence model, I received the results and discussed them with the board, and then I got the green light from them to start filling the gaps. The funny thing is that when we closed all the gaps and were ready to apply for an excellence prize, they rejected our file because the consulting firm that assisted us in our preparation was a prize committee member. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

Quality and excellence models are attractive accomplishments to NPOs which leads many of them to build their capacities in different areas according to the coverage of the adopted framework. These capacities will be assessed at the beginning of the implementation cycle for these models. This step is explained in the testimony below:

We are currently working on developing our institution through the Institutional Excellence Programme, which is an award from the Ministry. They also provided us with a set of training courses to help us qualify in various fields. The programme begins by evaluating our NPO in various areas such as governance, plans and financial sustainability, and then we have to develop our association based on the evaluation results. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

As many of these models require experts to guide NPOs in their implementation, many NPOs utilise external experts to develop their capacities. This point is clearly articulated in the examples below:

Well, of course, we have contracted with a company to build the capacity of the employees and arrange the work system; everything is now fine with us according to the regulations. We have a system, job policies, and a policy for all financial matters. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

All the association's capabilities are developed through partnerships, some with government agencies. [Participant 46 – NPO manager]

One of our initiatives to build our capacities is a partnership with the local university, and one of the GMOs; the university developed a comprehensive development programme for us. [Participant 15 – human resources manager]

Outsourcing some of the non-core functions to experts is a common practice which saves time and transfers knowledge to NPOs. Another noticeable strategy to develop NPO capacity is to develop their networking with other NPOs so as to gain from their experience. The following NPO manager highlighted his experience when he started his new role as CEO of the association, as shown below:

I was appointed CEO six months ago, and the first thing we did was have exchange visits with other successful NPOs. Besides visiting them in their offices, we also visited their websites to look for things that we were lacking, improvement areas and new ideas. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

These visits contribute to building NPOs' capacities by learning good practices in the field.

5.5.7 Comparing NPOs' capacity-building conceptualisation with the current practices

NPOs managers' understanding of capacity-building is linked to their practices and efforts in building their NPO capacities. Table 5.6 shows a comparison between capacities mentioned in conceptualisation and practices questions. In this comparison, it should be noted that the concept question was asked without any detailed clarifications, which was not the case in the practice's questions.

Table 5.6: Capacities repetition frequency in NPO managers' answers for current understanding and practices

Capacity (theme)	Concept	Practices
Finance	51	43
Employee development	43	42
Automation	33	42
Donor networking	4	5
Policies and planning	13	13
board effectiveness	2	0
Excellence models	1	12
Volunteers	2	3
Process development	1	3
Unified system	1	0
Social	1	0
Outsourcing	0	4
Buildings	1	2
Peer networking	0	1
Organisational structure	0	1

Source: Constructed by the author

One obvious observation is that finance capacities existed in NPOs' understanding and practices. It is usually the first capacity mentioned in both questions. Secondly, some capacities were not mentioned much in answer to the concept question, but they were mentioned in their practices. This is because many of these answers were in response to a detailed question about their efforts in capacity-building in a specific area. Another point to notice is that most NPO managers only explained employee development by referring to training courses. Finally, utilising any of the quality or excellence models should include all the embedded capacities in that model.

5.6 Current priorities in building NPOs' capacities

Capacity-building priorities vary from one NPO to another based on each NPO's circumstances. Thus, NPO managers stated various priorities, which sometimes reflected their current focus or, in other cases, their current needs. In the forthcoming sections, capacity-building priorities will be discussed from different perspectives and compared with other research elements.

5.6.1 NPO managers' priorities in capacity-building

With limited resources and time, NPOs leaders must prioritise their efforts in building their NPO capacities. Prioritised capacities indicate the need and/or importance of the mentioned capacities. In Table 5.7, NPO managers highlight different priorities in capacity-building:

Table 5.7: Capacities repetition frequency in NPO managers' answers about their current priorities

Capacity (theme)	Repetition
Finance	11
Employee development	5
Automation	4
Board effectiveness	3
Donor networking	2
Policies and planning	2
volunteers	2
Training	1
Process development	1
Peer networking	1
Unified system	1

Source: Constructed by the author

Similar to the previous questions, financial capacities were mentioned the most as a priority for NPOs which reflects the importance and the need for the financial capacities. But surprisingly, employee development and automation were not repeated as much as in previous questions. This may be because the priority question answers select only the most essential capacities to be built.

Financial capacity is expressed in different ways, such as sufficiency, sustainability and independence. The following is an example from one of the NPO managers expressing the importance of financial sustainability for the NPO:

The most crucial capabilities are sustainability, and whether sustainability can be achieved by having endowments or other financial resources. [Participant 77– NPO manager]

In the previous example, there was emphasis on the word sustainability, which is used in many different contexts. The word used in Arabic is "Estidamah", which means last forever, it has a meaning of continuity. It was noticed that endowment is mentioned as one way to sustain NPO work, which means that there are other ways to achieve sustainability.

Prioritising financial capacity is mentioned with various justifications. One common justification is to prepare the NPO for an unpredicted economic situation, as the following NPO manager stated:

Yes, sure, investments have priority. Especially today, with the economic situation, there are few supporters. This has become something that you have to look at and choose suitable investment projects for your association. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Many answers were affected by the rapid economic and political changes in the world, which have recently been exacerbated by the pandemic. This unpredicted situation led many NPOs to seek stable income resources such as endowments.

From another perspective, finance capacity was prioritised as the key to supporting building other capacities, as highlighted in the following testimony:

From my point of view, investments for the association are the priority for each NPO; it is very important to have sufficient income to operate and build other capacities. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

Using a similar argument, other NPO managers mentioned employee development as a priority because it helps to build other capacities, including financial capacity. The following statement articulates this point:

Employee development is a must. After all, if you have the right and well-trained employees, they can build the NPO's financial capacities because they are the right people in the right place. [Participant 14 – NPO manager].

This kind of conflict between priorities usually appears during the establishment of the NPO. As many NPOs start with a limited budget, it is disputes whether to spend on building human resources or financial capabilities. It seems that an NPO, at the beginning, requires initial financial support to hire a core team for this participant experience with their new NPO:

We have a new association for humanitarian services, it started this year; all our efforts are now to ensure the financial sustainability of the association; fortunately, we just reached an agreement with some donors on fixed monthly donations to cover essential

operational costs, and now we can look for ongoing financial sustainability. [Participant 63– NPO manager]

Employee development was stated as a priority in many NPOs in different ways. Most NPOs referred to employee development by mentioning training courses, such as this NPO manager:

I cannot emphasise it more, as I said at the beginning, employee development gives them the required training, which is tailored for them. [Participant 60– NPO admin manager]

Employee development is mentioned as a means to have qualified employees in different organisational roles. Also, it was noticed that some NPO managers were more specific by mentioning the importance of developing the CEO or board members, as the following NPO managers highlighted:

Well, I can say the association is all about the executive director. Give me an executive director who meets the conditions, then I can guarantee you a successful association. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

We have to develop and train boards of directors; if there is no effective board of directors, the association will not progress. [Participant 44– NPO manager]

This focus on leadership positions shows the importance of having the right leaders, and they are considered one of the critical capacities of NPOs. From a different angle, as part of human resources, some NPO managers mentioned a focus on volunteers as one of the essential capacities of the NPO, as is highlighted in the following response:

I advise any new NPO to find the right employees and also to recruit as many volunteers as they can. Voluntary work of the organisation is one of the most important things. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

In this and many other responses, the phrase "having the right people" is used to express the importance of qualified human resources, which can be developed or achieved by enhancing the recruitment process and increasing salaries to attract qualified people to NPO positions. The third priority mentioned is the institutionalisation of the NPO, including planning and developing policies, processes and organisational

structure. Strategic planning, more specifically, was mentioned in some answers as a priority for the NPO, as highlighted in the following statements:

Well, obviously, the first thing must be to develop a complete and clear strategy, if it is clear we can work on that basis; but if we do not have a plan, then everyone is going to work based on their experience, and then the efforts of the association will be wasted. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

In other words, the first things that have been put in place are regulations so that the association can work accordingly and also set clear goals, a vision and a mission. Of course, other capacities are essential and should be addressed, and this will help, but the most crucial thing in any institution is to set the regulations, vision the mission, which should be clear, and the objectives should also be clear as then the institution can work based on them. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

A clear vision and planning were prioritised as capacities because they guide all the other steps in the NPO. Also, other capacities are built based on the NPO's plans and work areas.

As some NPOs may have already developed in specific areas such as financial capabilities, employee development and institutionalisation, they picked different priorities based on their current practices. Three NPOs who mentioned automation as one of their current capacity-building practices did so as a priority. A common justification for automation was ease of use and movement towards a paperless environment. The following statement expresses this priority with some justifications:

For sure, it is work automation. It makes the job very comfortable and preserves the rights of the beneficiaries and of the association; sometimes, when we are dealing with paperwork, in many cases, we lose data, but with the right system, you can find any information. It is very relaxing. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

It is clear from the above response that the positive, tangible impact of automation was a reason to prioritise this capacity. Generally, prioritising a capacity may be based on NPO needs, current practices or experiencing outcomes. Accordingly, NPOs' priorities vary based on their current situation, maturity and needs.

5.6.2 Comparing NPO managers' priorities with the current practices in capacity-building

Most NPO managers mentioned prioritising capacities in their current practices, which shows a good alignment between their priorities and current efforts. The only capacity absent from practices and only mentioned a few times as a priority was NPO board development. This might show a gap between current practices and needs in this particular area. Generally, finance, employee development and automation capacities were the most mentioned capacities in practice and considered priorities for many participants.

5.7 NPO managers' views of capacity-building impact

Capacity-building practices in NPOs gained more attention with success stories of various practices. The outcomes of these practices justified the support required for capacity-building programmes. In the following section, capacity-building's impact on NPO work will be explored, and the main results and themes will be highlighted.

According to the interviewees' responses, NPO managers' views on capacity-building's impact were generally positive, and many tangible benefits were gained from different capacity-building activities. The following Table 5.8 shows the reoccurring impacted areas mentioned in NPO managers' answers.

Table 5.8: Capacity-building impacted areas according to NPO managers' views

Impacted area (theme)	Repetition	Specific enhanced area
Work enhancements	49	Easy and quick services, accuracy, accessibility and decision-making
Related to first beneficiaries	18	Accessible services, accessibility and independence
Employee development	16	Loyalty, experience and know-how
Work expansion	8	Increasing services and beneficiaries, widening the scope
Donor networking	5	Confidence and communication
Finance	2	Sustainability and independence
Board effectiveness	1	Commitment and involvement
Employment	1	Increase employee numbers

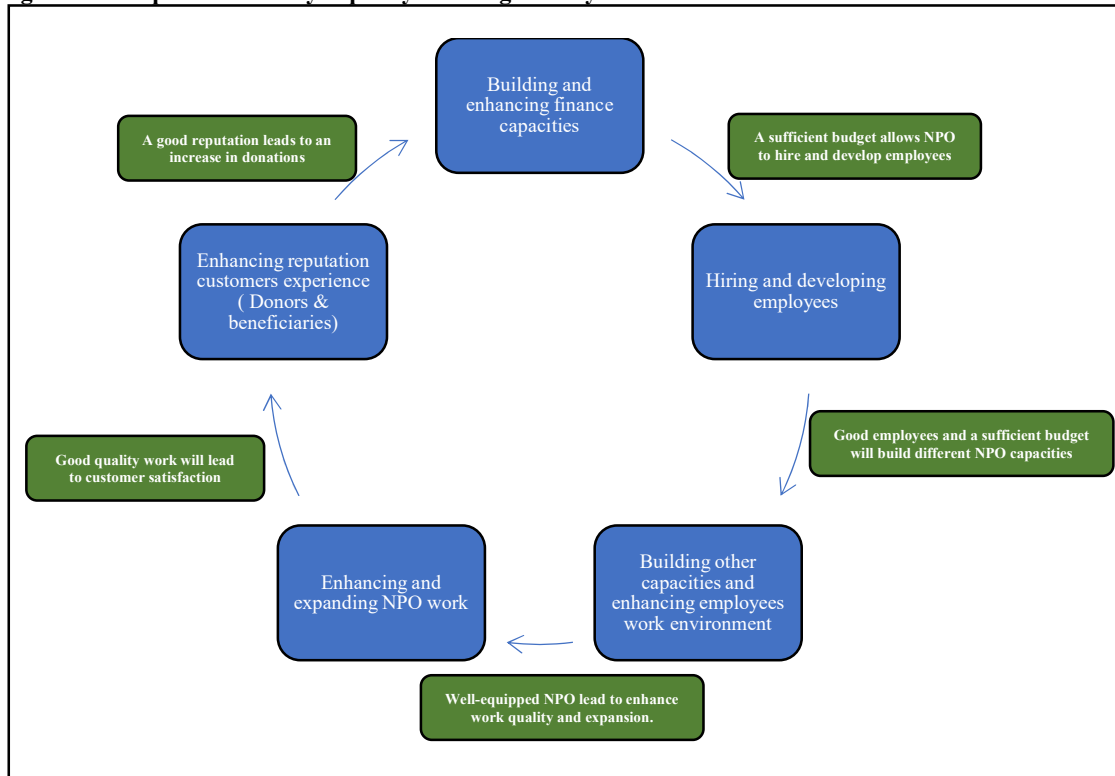
Source: Constructed by the author

One noticed result is that even though finance capacity is the most commonly reoccurring capacity mentioned in NPO managers' understanding, priorities and activities, it was only mentioned twice in answer to the impact question. This might be seen as a result of the improvements required in financial capacity and unfinished tasks. Another explanation is that finance capacity is key for another impacted area, as the following manager mentioned:

Our primary goal was to build our financial capabilities, allowing us to build our other capacities, such as having a new building, hiring employees, and having an electronic system. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

This cause-and-effect relation can be clearly seen in the connections between impacted areas. In the following Figure 5.1, the impacted areas mentioned are explained along with the connections between them:

Figure 5.1: Impacted areas by capacity-building activity



Source: Constructed by the author

Starting with the impact of financial capacity, this was described in different terms, such as independence and sustainability in NPO work. The following example is from one of the NPO managers who was describing the impact of building their NPO financial capacities:

Of course, for us, as we are not a profit institution, we explicitly require the financial stability which we just accomplished, so we are not relying on government support to continue; if we do not receive support from the government, we will not have any problem, and we can maintain our work continuity. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Financial capability is one of the primary keys to building most other capacities. Having the right employees and developing their skills is one of the direct results of sufficient financial resources in the NPO. Many NPOs enhance their human capital by hiring the right employees or developing their skills. The following examples show this impact on NPOs:

Previously we could not have the right employees because of our limited resources, but recently, after we started receiving income from our endowments, we were able to increase the number of employees, and our work increased as well. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

Another positive impact on employees can be clearly seen from the skills and knowledge they gained, which help them to excel in their daily work. Two NPO managers described the positive impact of training courses on their employees:

There are many and apparent effects of these training courses, our employees gain experience from these courses, as most of our employees have no previous experience of charitable work. [Participant 1 – NPO manager]

I have a good example: we had a new graduate social researcher without any experience in the field, and he could not do his work at all because he lacked the required knowledge. We sent him on a training course, they showed him the methods for dealing with and receiving applications, and after that, you can see the difference in him being able to do his job. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

All these capacity-building activities that targeted employees contributed to building a better work environment and building employees' loyalty, as the following participant mentioned:

These different activities improve the work atmosphere and increase employees' loyalty to the work. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

Employees' loyalty to the organisation is one of the outcomes for the NPO, which has a direct positive impact on the work environment. The following participant clearly articulated this point:

Loyalty, loyalty and loyalty, I see it clearly in the association. You can see it clearly when our employees attend very early and leave very late, because they love their work; they have a passion that is beautiful to see. Jobs in the charity sector are competing with other governmental and business jobs. This is because we focus on them; we do not forget them. We provide our employees with housing services through partnerships with businessmen and banks. We do more than the banks by offering affordable loans to our employees.

They feel that all these advantages are offered to them because they are employees of our association. This is good, excellent, and it affects the work very positively. It gives us loyalty and high-quality work. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

As the NPO has sufficient financial resources and skilled employees, it is able to build its other capacities and enhance the working environment. The following example shows two NPO managers referring to an enhanced workplace:

Yes, sure, now we have what we could call an institutional work environment, our work is organised, everyone knows his tasks, also every programme is implemented according to a plan, and this is not my opinion, it comes from the awards that we received and independent reviewers used to evaluate our organisation. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

We are more productive; after these programmes, the outcomes of the association's employees increased by up to 30%. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

Many of these enhancements were as a direct result of automating NPO services, which led to easy access to services, data accuracy and transparency. The following examples show some of the positive impacts of technology on NPO work:

Instead of asking them to come to the association, especially as some of them live in villages far from our office, or they are disabled, instead of coming to us so they can go on our website at home. They can submit their applications with the required evidence and pictures, then a responsible employee can process their request efficiently, so our system is comprehensive. Even in the food support programme, the beneficiaries don't need to come to us to get their food, we give them cards similar to bank cards, and they can pay with them in the supermarket to preserve their dignity. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

And the online system specifically helps us with the accuracy and correctness of data. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

It is automation that makes everyone's work easier and preserves the rights of the beneficiaries and of the association; sometimes, when dealing with paperwork, many mistakes can happen, or papers can be lost, which is not the case with automated work. Frankly, it is very relaxing. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

Another interesting effect of the automation initiatives is the accuracy and speed of the decision-making process. The following example shows one of the NPO managers mentioning a reoccurring example where data availability assists the board in their decisions:

One of the primary outcomes is a database that can help us understand our issues in numbers, and the access to that is very easy and quick. Previously, if I asked a responsible employee for the number of divorced women among our beneficiaries, they would take two to three days to go through all the records and come up with the result. But now it needs only a few clicks on the system. In another recent example, during the board meeting yesterday, the board wanted to know the cost of a specific service in order to allocate a sufficient budget for it, which was not prepared before the meeting. They called me during the meeting, and I gave them that information during the call within seconds.
[Participant 35 – NPO manager]

An enhanced work environment, skilful team and sufficient budget are raising the quality of the NPO's work and expanding their outreach. This NPO manager mentioned the impact of capacity-building activities on NPO work quality:

We can see the impact of training on our employees' work quality, many enhancements in their work and this is after they have been trained – but not all of them to be honest – I can tell that most of our employees after training start to have more sense of responsibility in organising their time and work and know more about their work.
[Participant 57 – NPO manager]

Another direct impact for a well-equipped NPO with more income is being able to expand their work. One NPO manager linked capacity-building activities with their work expansion as follows:

Yes, of course, we gained great benefits; for example, previously, we used to distribute food packs to the needy once a year (only at Ramadan), and now, as we have more resources, we are distributing food packs six times per annum, and we could not do that without our new endowments. [Participant 13 – NPO manager]

An NPO with high-quality and expanded work will gain excellent customer satisfaction. As their main customers are end-users and donors, the following examples show some NPO managers talking about the impact of their capacity-building activities on their customers:

The internal development of our organisation will enhance our services, and then our beneficiaries will be more satisfied, which is what we are working towards. [Participant 12 – NPO manager]

Beneficiaries have felt the enhancement in our work, and this is what matters to us. All we need is their satisfaction, and we get it by enhancing our work. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

This good reputation will strengthen the impact cycle as it will cause incremental improvements in donors' contributions and support. This will put the NPO on the right track to have a sustainable model and an ongoing improvement framework. The NPO manager below supported this point with the following statement:

We can see the impact in many things like enhancements to the organisation's work, the accuracy of work, the quality of implementation, we can see it, there is no doubt. Another important point is that these enhancements give confidence to our donors, they became more committed and supportive. [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

This cause-and-effect cycle is conditioned by ongoing efforts to build different capacities in the NPO. Also, it shows the interlinked relationship and the dependencies among the capacities. Moreover, it shows the importance of financial and human capital capacities as they are the main trigger and base for many capacity-building programmes. A second example of cause-and-effect relations relates to the NPO board. If the board supports capacity-building activities in the NPO, then the impact of this support is shown in better work and reputation. This impact is reflected in board satisfaction, which again results in gaining more support and commitment from the board. One NPO manager mentioned this impact as a result of their capacity-building activities:

Also, there was a clear positive impact on our board of directors. I mean, when we organised our work and gained ISO certification, they changed and became more engaged, ambitious and optimistic. [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

By reviewing current practices and linking them to the mentioned impact, it was clear that most of the impact came from building NPOs' financial capacities, developing the employees and automating internal processes. In fact, various enhancements and impacted areas were due to enhancements to these capacities. The following Table 5.9 shows each capacity linked to impacted areas as per the interviews.

Table 5.9: Capacity-building impacted areas linked to implemented capacities

#	Capacity	Impacted areas
1	Finance	Employment, employee development, capacity-building and work expansion
2	Employee development	Work quality, customers' and donors' satisfaction and employees' loyalty
3	Technology	Data accessibility, transparency, customer experience
4	Processes and policies	Work enhancements and employee development
5	Planning and strategies	Work enhancements and employee development
6	Physical assets	Work enhancements

Source: Constructed by the author

This table and the previous diagram show the generally positive and interlinked impact of capacity-building on the different sides of NPOs. This impact should be managed to remain in a continuous effective lifecycle as described in the previous diagram.

The negative impact of the absence of capacity-building was mentioned during the interviews. It was noticed that many of the negative impacts were the opposite of positive points. The following participant describes the impact of the absence of capacity-building in their NPO:

Many things we suffer from are because we do not build our internal capacities, we don't have employees' loyalty, we have internal conflicts, we don't have enough financial resources, and we are suffering from a low level of productivity. All of these are because we did not invest in building ourselves. [Participant 62 – NPO manager]

Other NPO managers and employees mentioned other disadvantages associated with the absence of capacity-building programmes, such as lack of donors' trust, lack of ministry support and lack of expansion ability. These negative and positive impacts show the differences that capacity-building can make.

5.8 Summary

This chapter addresses the first research question by exploring the current understanding of NPOs' capacity-building, practices, priorities and impact in small cities in Saudi Arabia. The following Table 5.10 summarises the main findings of this chapter.

Table 5.10: Main findings for the first research question

1 st research question		
What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?		
Topic	Subtopic	Summarised findings
General observations	General findings related to NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPOs in small cities are usually one of four traditional types. The capacity-building requirement might change according to the legal shape of the NPO and their specialisation area. All NPOs with a high number of employees conducted more capacity-building activities. NPOs with few employees conducted fewer capacity-building activities. All NPOs with fewer employees reported financial difficulties. Most of the NPOs in small cities have been operating for more than ten years. The majority of participants had more than 25 years of experience.
	Current understanding of capacity-building from NPO managers in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity-building concepts are affected by the translation and experience of individuals. There is no unique understanding of capacity-building. Many NPO managers are not familiar with the term 'capacity-building'. In many cases, NPO managers' practices for capacity-building are more comprehensive than their understanding of the term capacity-building. The most frequently reoccurring capacities in NPO managers' conceptualising answers are finance, employee development and automation. Planning capacity and developing NPO board were only mentioned by a few NPO managers in their understanding of NPOs' capacity-building.
Current practices	General observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPOs are generally active in building their capacities. The most frequently reoccurring capacities in NPO managers' practices answers are finance, employee development and automation. Finance was frequently mentioned in NPO managers' practices and understanding. Automation capacity was not mentioned much in understanding answers, while it was practised much more.
	Finance practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most frequently reoccurring practice is endowments. Other finance practices are charity shops, donor networking, fundraising and board members' participation.
	Employee development practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most frequently reoccurring practice is training courses. Other employee development practices are team-building, internal rotation and managing volunteers.
	Automation practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most frequently reoccurring practice is moving the internal system from paperwork to an automated system. Other automation practices are automated services and online fundraising.
	Other practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other mentioned practices are having a physical asset and building internal systems through developing plans, processes, policies and organisational structure.
	Tools and approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most frequently mentioned tools are excellence models, ISO and the ministry governance model. By adopting these models and tools, many different capacities can be built based on a model framework.

Topic	Subtopic	Summarised findings
Current priorities	NPO managers' priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main capacity-building priorities for NPO managers are finance and employee development. • In the context of prioritising employee development, there was a focus on leaders' hiring and development. • There was a focus on sustainability in the context of prioritising finance capacities. • There is an argument for prioritising the finance capacity for employee development as this can be seen as an enabler for other capacities. • NPO managers had different priorities based on their current situation. • Generally, there were similarities between current priorities and practices.
Impact capacity-building activities of	NPO managers' perspectives of impacted areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main impacted areas are work enhancement, expansion and employee development. • Finance stability was not mentioned in impact answers as much as in concept, practices and priorities answers. • Capacity-building has a snowball effect as any enhancements in a specific area are a cause for enhancements in other areas. • The first noticed impact cycle is as follows: developing financial capacities → employee development → enhancing the work environment → enhancing work quality → increasing customer satisfaction → gaining donors' satisfaction → developing financial capacities. • The second noticed impact cycle is as follows: NPO board supports capacity-building practices → enhancing the work environment → enhancing work quality → increasing customer satisfaction → increasing NPO board support. • The development of or weaknesses in specific capacities impact directly on specific work areas or capacities in the NPO. • Negative impacts caused by ignoring NPOs' capacity-building were reported.

Source: Constructed by the author

The results of the second and third research questions will be presented in the following chapters according to themes developed from the participants' answers.

Chapter 6: Difficulties and Potential Improvements in Building Non-profit Organisations' Capacities

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the second research question will be addressed by presenting the main difficulties and suggested improvements regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia. This chapter is linked to the previous chapter, as the first research question shaped the parameters for this chapter. The scope defined by capacity-building conceptualisation and the practices revealed difficulties and suggested improvements. Current difficulties and improvements will be presented in sub-themes; then, this chapter's results will be compared with previous findings to seek a deeper understanding of the scene.

6.2 NPO managers' views of current capacity-building difficulties

Capacity-building efforts are not always implemented as planned without any obstacles; this is the case for many NPOs operating with limited resources. The front line who are dealing with these difficulties are NPO managers and executives. The following Table 6.1 shows the main difficulties mentioned during the interviews with NPO managers:

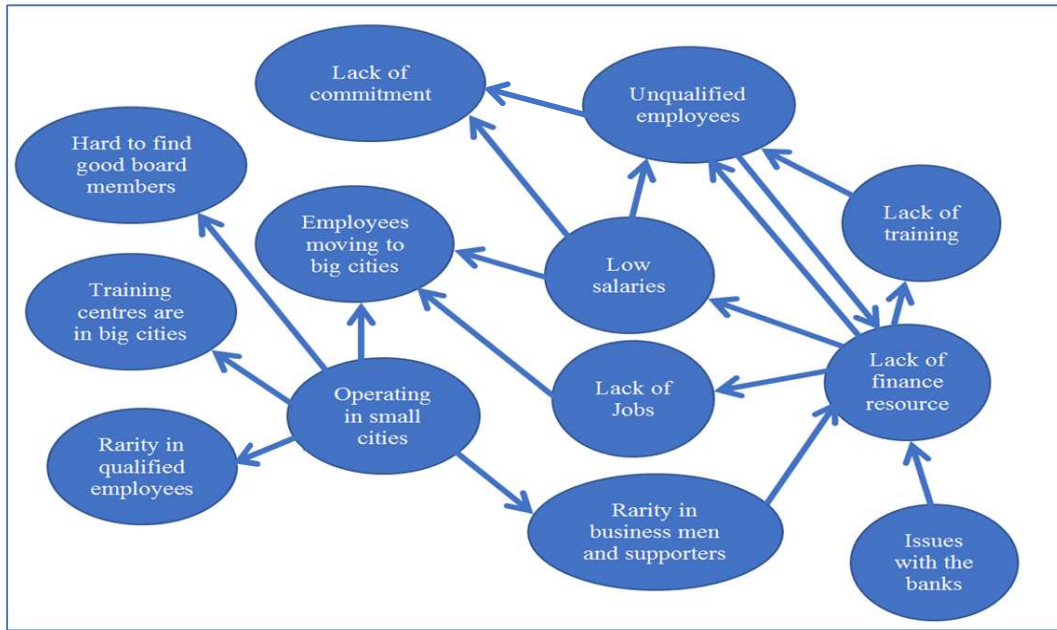
Table 6.1: Summary of NPO managers' difficulties in building their organisational capacities

Difficulty category (Theme)	Repetition	Mentioned difficulties
Employee development	14	Lack of experience, lack of commitment and high staff/volunteer turnover
Finance	12	Lack of financial resources and difficulties with banks
Employment	7	Low salaries, lack of jobs and hard to find qualified employees
Geographic location	6	Lack of training centres, qualified employees and investment
Board of directors	4	Not qualified, too many, lack of commitment and support
Outsourcing	2	Too expensive consultation services
Admin issues	2	Bureaucracy

Source: Constructed by the author

As it is clear from the above table, human resource issues are the main issue facing the charity sector in small cities in Saudi Arabia. Many human resource difficulties stem directly from shortcomings in NPO financial resources, such as low salaries or lack of jobs. Many reported challenges are interlinked and have a cause-and-effect relationship. The following Figure 6.1 explains the interlinked relations in NPOs' capacity-building challenges.

Figure 6.1: Cause-and-effect relationship in capacity-building difficulties



Source: Constructed by the author

It is clear from the above figure that most issues stem from a lack of financial resources and being situated in small cities. Some of these difficulties may be for one or more reasons, which could be causing issues directly or indirectly and be a result of challenges. Another complex situation is the circular cause-and-effect scenario, such as the difficulties in employing qualified fundraisers because of the lack of financial resources; also, this may be due to the absence of a qualified fundraiser. In the forthcoming sections, these complex relations will be explained in detail, and some related testimonies will be highlighted.

6.2.1 Financial difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

Many interviewees mentioned financial difficulties in building their internal capacities. One of these directly affected capacities is the ability to hire highly qualified employees. The NPO manager cited below linked the lack of financial resources to the difficulties of hiring qualified employees, as explained in his testimony:

Finance is vital in building our human capacities; we cannot attract excellent and qualified people to work for us without a good salary; in the end it is about the financial aspect, which we don't have covered. [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

NPOs require sufficient financial resources to be able to hire qualified professionals for different jobs. Also, a lack of financial resources will affect other capacity-building programmes. Two NPO managers explained the impact of financial difficulties on programme implementation as follows:

To be honest, the most prominent difficulties are financial, I mean financial liquidity. Our projects and development require a lot of spending and planning. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

The main difficulties are financial; lack of finance causes the programme to be interrupted or an extension to its implementation period, and being busy making attempts to provide support and follow-up with donors. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

This issue seems to have become more severe recently due to many economic difficulties. One NPO manager expressed his experience of the recent decrease in their income as follows:

In the last two years, we have been facing a decrease in donors and donations. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

While this decrease may be due to political and economic reasons, there are other causes of financial difficulties. One of these is the complexity of getting loans for NPO projects. The following testimony articulates this point:

It is a finance and administrative issue; we saw many investment opportunities requiring having loans from the banks, as did many other NPOs, but we could not take them on because of many obstacles with the banks and our own board. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Loans are not the only issue with the banks; in fact, general difficulties and issues were reported, which might cause delays in NPO work. This issue mainly affects new NPOs when they are attempting to open a new bank account. The NPO manager below explained this issue by mentioning their recent experience:

We have a severe issue with opening new bank accounts; for us, we can manage our current accounts, but you can imagine the difficulty for new NPOs; for one that I know it took them six months to open a bank account; it is difficult. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

Financial difficulties affect NPOs' ability to build other capacities. Also, the causes of these difficulties vary from internal reasons such as a lack of qualified fundraisers to external factors such as a lack of banks' cooperation.

6.2.2 Employment difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

The most frequently mentioned difficulty in employment was related to employee stability in the NPO. High turnover causes instability and frustrations for the NPO management. This issue is highlighted in the following testimonies:

One of our biggest problems is the instability of our employees; they are in and out. After we spent time and effort preparing someone for the job, he left us; then we had to do the preparation again for the replacement. It is a nightmare for us. [Participant 30 – NPO manager]

Our main issue with Saudi employees is that they leave when they find a better opportunity. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

As in many small cities, the new generation is always looking for better job opportunities in big cities, especially after their graduation from universities located in the big cities. This point is clearly articulated in the following testimony:

In small cities like ours, university graduates don't dream of working with us for a long time. They are looking for better jobs in the big cities. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

Large cities have become more attractive for the new generation since all the headquarters of government agencies and large businesses are in large cities. This fact has created many jobs with high salaries. The low salaries of NPO jobs do not attract the new generation and cannot compete with jobs in the big cities. These NPO managers confirmed this issue in their statements:

Also, the salaries are not attractive in this sector, as many employees consider working with us as a temporary stage until they find a better job elsewhere. [Participant 63 – NPO manager]

The lack of good salaries and the gap between us and the other jobs is enormous.
[Participant 48 – NPO manager]

Not only does the lack of competitive jobs make employment harder, the lack of jobs due to NPOs' limited budgets is another cause of employment difficulties. This NPO manager explains this difficulty:

We have a severe issue with recruitment: jobs are already limited, and salaries are low.
[Participant 14 – NPO manager]

Employment issues lead many NPOs to look for stable and cheaper solutions, which includes hiring non-Saudis as they demand lower salaries and don't find it easy to change their workplace. One NPO manager explained the practice of hiring non-Saudis as follows:

We are working towards full Saudisation. Currently, we have 18 Saudis and four non-Saudis because sometimes, here in their small cities, it is hard to find Saudis for some technical positions. *[Participant 75 – NPO board member]*

Implementing this approach of hiring non-Saudis in many NPOs is contradictory; it has been considered a problem. The following testimonies mention the low level of Saudisation as an issue in employment:

One of the issues is that 90% of the accountants and financial managers in NPOs in Saudi Arabia are not Saudis; these are critical positions which must be filled by Saudis.
[Participant 48 – NPO manager]

Most charitable institutions have nearly 70% to 80% of their employees, who are non-Saudis. They rely on foreigners, especially in financial jobs, some administrative work and warehouse work. *[Participant 45 – NPO manager]*

The issue of having non-Saudis is again linked to low salaries, as the following NPO manager stated:

If we could increase our employees' salaries, we would have more Saudi employees.
[Participant 14 – NPO manager]

Salaries are again a central issue in employment for NPOs in small cities. In other words, the lack of financial resources is the root cause of NPOs' employment difficulties.

6.2.3 Location-related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

The Riyadh district is the largest district in Saudi Arabia, consisting of one central city, "Riyadh" (the capital of Saudi Arabia) and dozens of small cities and villages. Most of the services, business and ministry headquarters are based in Riyadh. Being far from Riyadh is considered one of the main difficulties for NPOs in small cities. The following examples highlight this point and the accompanying consequences:

The first difficulty is being far from the city; our location is a long way from Riyadh city, and we miss many development opportunities for that reason. [Participant 63 – NPO manager]

Well, the distance from Riyadh is the worst; the most challenging thing about it is that all the courses, training centres and training institutions are in Riyadh; none of them are close to us. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

Most big companies are based in Riyadh, and if they have social programmes, they prefer to implement them there, so it is easier for them. [Participant 53 – NPO board member]

The disadvantages highlighted of being far from large cities are due to missing development opportunities, including training courses and consultations. Also, another participant added that this separation does not give them reasonable access to many social programmes or funds provided by many companies in the large cities.

Difficulties in running training courses and developing NPO employees were among the main consequences mentioned of being far from the big cities due to the absence of similar services in small cities. This NPO manager explained the difficulties facing many NPO employees if they want to attend training courses in large cities:

If any of us wants to go on a training course, we have to travel to Riyadh, and there will be a lot of costs associated, such as transportation and living, it is too expensive for us. [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

The financial aspect is mentioned here and this issue is also related to the inability to cover the travel costs for training trips.

Another difficulty linked to this NPO's geographic location is the challenge of finding qualified board members compared with the large cities. This NPO manager highlighted this point:

In small cities, it is difficult to find many businessmen familiar with professional work and to organise NPO work. Each year we face difficulties in gathering them together at the annual general meeting, while the situation in large cities is much better. [Participant 59 – NPO manager]

Some NPOs overcome this difficulty by communicating with some businessmen and candidates who came from the local region, but moved to large cities. These efforts resulted in having many businessmen actively involved in their hometown's development.

Another point related to geographic location is the nature of scattered rural areas. Many small cities consist of tens of small villages scattered over a wide area. This NPO manager explained the difficulties associated with their location:

One of our main problems is that we are in a small city that covers a wide area; we have 400 families scattered across a vast area in our records. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

To cover a broad area, NPOs require more manpower, resources and capacities, such as social researchers, vehicles and time, all of which is reflected in increased NPO expenses.

Lastly, another point noticed in many interviews is that because of the rare investment opportunities in small cities, many NPOs seek investments and endowments in the main cities, as is the following examples:

We should invest in Riyadh as all the investment opportunities are there. [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

To have better endowment options, we situated our endowment in Riyadh. [Participant 13 – NPO manager]

We are in a small city with a small number of people; when you have a small number of people, the donations will not be that much; most of our donations come from outside the villages [Participant 49 – NPO manager]

These examples show how the issue of being in a small city, far from the large cities, and with a low population will result in financial shortages. This issue leads many NPOs to look for fundraising opportunities in the big cities. Being far from those raises obstacles and difficulties for NPOs seeking to build their capacities. These difficulties may be decreased by developing small cities' capabilities and decentralising many services from the main cities to small ones.

6.2.4 Employees' development difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

The many difficulties that NPOs face in small cities affect their employee development programmes. Some of these difficulties were mentioned in the previous section, such as difficulties in finding training courses in small cities and in travelling to and attending courses in large cities. Another difficulty related to the nature of training is the suitability of training for NPO workers. This NPO manager expressed this point by commenting on the academic language used in training courses:

They use academic language during training, which makes administrative terms complicated in courses, especially when the instructors are not familiar with NPO work, it is too academic. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

To overcome this difficulty, more tailored training is required for NPOs. Also, training course providers should become more familiar with the sector's language and simplify knowledge delivery to the targeted audience.

One of the difficulties mentioned previously is the instability of employees. This obstacle causes another difficulty which is the need to train new employees frequently. One NPO manager explained their situation as follows:

One of the main issues is that we frequently have to train new employees; our social researcher, after we trained him, he left to go to Riyadh and so now we have to find a new one and train him. It is frustrating. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

This issue becomes more frustrating with its rapid reoccurrence and it shows the importance of stabilising the employment process.

While the previous difficulties are more closely related to the sector, the next two difficulties are related to NPOs. Some NPOs don't know their exact training needs or don't have development plans for their employees. The following two examples highlight this point:

The most serious difficulty is identifying training needs. Are these courses suitable for our employees or what suits them? I mean the fulfilment of our needs, some of these centres provide appropriate courses, but many of the available courses do not match actual needs. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

One of our issues is that our association does not have a training plan for our employees. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

Identifying training needs is essential to support employees' development plans. Also, it helps in utilising available resources more effectively to build NPO capacities. In the absence of proper development planning, training course selection can become a matter of conflict between NPO needs and employee interests. The following example explains this issue:

There is an issue in the selection of training courses as we need to develop our employees in specific areas related to our work needs, but they have their own preferences, and they take courses that are not related to our work. [Participant 14 – NPO manager]

Developing training plans for employees could solve part of the issue, but developing these plans in consultation with employees will convince them of the importance of these training courses for them and their organisation. This understanding will get employees' commitment and interest in their development.

Issues related to employees are always an obstacle that can hamper all the efforts in capacity-building. The following two examples show how a lack of commitment from employees towards development programmes can affect capacity-building in NPOs:

The biggest obstacle is due to the individual's lack of seriousness, which may be due to the low income that he gets, and this is the most severe difficulty that we face. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

We had many training courses, but we didn't have the time to attend because we were so busy with our daily work. [Participant 30 – NPO manager]

Another issue is that when our management doesn't understand the importance of developing our work, they think we are doing well and there is no need for any improvements. [Participant 73 – NPO manager]

Employees' motivation for their development should be understood and tackled by looking into the root causes. It is indeed a very complex and challenging issue to deal with. This issue is more significant when the lack of commitment comes from the management, as mentioned in one of the previous responses.

6.2.5 Board-member related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities.

During the interviews, many executives in NPOs had issues with their board of directors. The board usually plays a significant role in strategic NPO decisions and supports the NPO financially. NPO boards were mentioned several times in a negative context. One of the difficulties mentioned in a previous section is forming a satisfactory board as the selection pool is limited in small cities.

Having limited options for board members will result in a lack of skilful board members, as these NPO managers commented:

We need to focus on choosing board members; it is about selection quality; also, we need to reduce their number. Currently, we have 19 board members; this is a large number; we only need five to seven, no more than that. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

The association is always about the board of directors; most elected members are not fit for the role. We must focus on the board of directors and their specialities; for example, we should not take one from the health sector and make them, for example, investment manager for the association. No, we have to bring in an economic expert who can bring investment and marketing know-how to the NPO. To be honest, I can say that about 70% of NPOs have this issue. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

It is vital to have the right people on the board for it to operate effectively and efficiently. Some executives complain about the incompetence of their boards and explain the negative impact on NPO work. A number of NPO managers made related statements:

One of our issues with the board is that they take a very long time to implement procedures, three months to change a policy, why does it take so long? The second thing you sometimes have to spend some time on is convincing some board members about certain operational details; yes, he may hold a bachelor's degree, but his thinking may not be developmental; all his worries concern operational details. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

First, various obstacles come from the board of directors; this is the first thing, if there is no effective board of directors, nothing will fix all the other issues. It is all about the board members. Some members don't attend meetings and only come to object and interfere with our work. [Participant 44 – NPO manager]

When the board faces some difficulties, especially financial difficulties, some of them resign and pass the issue to new members without solving it. [Participant 48 – NPO manager]

Our big problem is the board; for the last two years, they have not paid their monthly contributions. This may be because they don't receive any incentives. They don't attend meetings. And now the current period of the board has finished, so we extended it. We are not able to form a new board. No one wants to be part of it anymore. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

Many executives complain about their boards, they are described as incompetent, not participating financially, taking a long time to process decisions, interfering in operational matters, not aligning with the executives, not attending meetings and not resolving issues. These examples show the seriousness of the problem and the general negative mode in many NPOs due to their board, which might lead to losing confidence in them.

Previous examples have clearly shown the importance of alignment, acceptance, respect and agreement between executives and board members. The lack of this vital relationship will result in many unnecessary conflicts. Consequently, many NPO programmes will be affected negatively. The following testimony highlights this issue:

Some charities complain about the incompatibility between the board and the executive management. In many meetings, executive management always complains about difficulties from the board of directors. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

Board selection, development and teaming up with executives should be any NPO's priorities. This will guarantee a smooth operation for NPO programmes, including capacity-building programmes.

6.2.6 Ministry-related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

The Ministry of Social Affairs governs NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The ministry's primary role is to support NPOs and build their capacities. In the next chapter, the ministry's efforts in building NPOs' capacities will be explored, while in this section, the focus will be on some of the difficulties mentioned by NPO managers.

NPOs receive specific requirements from the ministry to be followed. Some of these requirements clash with capacity-building requirements. This NPO manager highlights these points:

Because sometimes, the ministry asks us for something that contradicts other requirements; for example, there is a contradiction between the requirements and conditions for grants. I mean, when they say they want an employee for financial resources, and we want a particular employee for human resources, and we want an exceptional employee for public relations, and we want a particular employee for that. But the ministry obliges us to ensure those administrative expenses do not exceed 15% of the total budget in order to qualify for ministerial grants; certainly, when I fill all the

previous jobs, I will have significant administrative expenses that exceed 15%; this is one of the problems we face. Also, recently, they stopped us using the old finance system, but the new system isn't ready and the deadline for the finance report is soon, what can we do? [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

The difficulties mentioned highlight the question mark over the current communication between NPOs and policymakers. This discussion should consider NPOs' involvement in reviewing policies and their feedback from current services and policies.

One role expected of the ministry is to be a facilitator for capacity-building infrastructure for the third sector. As part of this role, the ministry should support training courses in the small cities as they cannot be run in small cities without specific licences from the ministry. This NPO manager highlighted this point in his response:

The ministry has restricted us; if you want to set up training courses, you must have a licence, many institutions want to help, but it is not worth it for them to conduct their training here. [Participant 63 – NPO manager]

The previous issue is closely related to another government agency which might require more cooperation from government agencies and more consideration for small cities.

6.2.7 Donor-related difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

Many NPOs depend on donors' support to build their capacities. Donors may be solo or GMOs. In this section, some donor-related difficulties will be presented as part of capacity-building difficulties, while donors' participation and views on NPOs' capacity-building will be explored in more detail in the forthcoming chapter.

Some NPOs complain about the absence of capacity-building on GMOs' agendas, as they have their own projects and priorities, or only support aid programmes. The following testimonies illustrate this issue:

One of our issues with donors or GMOs is that they ask for specific types of programmes while our needs and requirements do not fit with their interests; even their support for development and training is not that much. [Participant 14 – NPO manager]

...from our experience and reading of GMO policies, approximately 90% of them support programmes that are directed at beneficiaries, while their support for charities development programmes is not enough [Participant 1 – senior employee]

They support us annually with a fixed amount of money and for local projects such as family winter support. Since we are desperate for any support for our salaries, so as to be able to pay current salaries and hire new employees, I cannot because their support is restricted and limited. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

The previous examples show some misalignment between donors' interests and NPOs' needs, and it demonstrates the low focus on donor capacity-building programmes. This mismatch of priorities might begin in the GMO programme design phase. One NPO manager claimed that these programmes are designed for ideal and large NPOs and do not serve NPO needs in small cities. The following response articulates his point clearly:

Many consultants working in GMOs are academics who designed these grant programmes for big charities and well-established charities working in ideal circumstances; but what about small NPOs? [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

The programme-design process is vital to address all NPOs' needs, and the absence of the required communication during the design stage might lead to the situation described.

A second common difficulty is the grant application process, which is often described as complex, complicated and requiring a lot of documentation. This point is clearly highlighted in the following responses:

And often, you find it challenging to fulfil their requirements; a lot of complicated paperwork is required. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

But there are other GMOs; frankly, they have some complicated requests that you cannot fulfil in any way. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

The problem with this process is that it consumes the resources of NPOs which leads some of them to think of dedicating an employee to the task and training them on applying and following up with GMOs. This NPO manager explains their experience of these grants:

There is a difficulty in applying to GMOs, so we need a dedicated employee who is trained to apply for grants and complete many documents and then follow up on the application, and also follow up with them during implementation; it is exhausting and needs, as I mentioned, a dedicated employee. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

More than a third of the participants in this research mentioned difficulties and complications with the grant process. Furthermore, some NPOs seek support from consulting firms to develop part of these grant applications. This NPO manager gave an example of their situation when they were asked to provide a feasibility study for their proposal:

Many times, GMOs and the ministry ask us for paperwork such as a feasibility study, which we could not do due to lack of knowledge and experience, and when we go to the consulting firms, they are costly. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

Spending on costly consultation services to develop a proposal that might be rejected increases the pressure on NPOs' limited resources.

From a different angle, some participants claim that there are issues due to the biased granting process which is based on personal networking. These NPO managers claim that the grant process is affected by connections with some GMO employees, which might lead to unfair grant distribution. These NPO managers expressed their views on this issue:

Unfortunately, if you want to get support from many GMOs, you must know someone inside the organisation, especially for NPO development projects. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

Then, to be frank with you, many of these GMOs' work based on groups, tribes and friendships. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

From the previous comments, there is some frustration caused by the unfair distribution of grants, which might diminish the trust between NPOs and donors.

6.2.8 Other difficulties in building NPOs' capacities

Many other obstacles also affect NPOs' capacity-building efforts. One of these is technology-related issues, either difficulties during implementation or resistance from employees to using the new system. The following two examples highlight this issue:

Having a new system was not easy; it took a full year. We have been working for an entire year during which time we have become exhausted. The implementer made some mistakes, so we had to travel to Riyadh many times. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

There were difficulties at the start of the new system when we had to enter a large amount of data to move from a paper-based system to an electronic one. [Participant 21 – NPO manager]

This issue is widespread and expected with any new system implementation, especially if the movement is from a paper-based system to an electronic one. Also, it was noticed that part of their difficulty was because of the distant location of the development company in the capital.

As IT system development is outsourced in many NPOs due to limited resources, their executives are expected to outsource other professional services to consulting firms. Two NPO managers mentioned their experience of consulting firms as follows:

Experience is difficult to get, and consultation and professional firms are expensive. So, we cannot get different experience due to the high cost. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

Many times, donors and ministries ask us for some paperwork such as a feasibility study which we cannot do due to lack of knowledge and experience. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

The main difficulty mentioned in dealing with consulting firms is their high cost for NPOs. All the previous issues and difficulties with employment and individual development caused a lack of NPO expertise which resulted in some management weaknesses, such as a lack of organisational structure and internal systems; the following testimonies highlight the damage caused by the absence of internal management systems:

First, as I told you, the associations lack a clear organisational structure that applies to all departments in the NPO. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

As for charitable societies, they lack a unified system. Because most associations in the kingdom have their own interpretation. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

These difficulties require central efforts from donors and the ministry to help NPOs build their internal systems; this support is crucial for NPOs when they are fulfilling ministry and GMO application requirements.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, most difficulties are linked and cause each other. To avoid one of these issues, one NPO board member emphasised comprehensive solutions when building NPOs' capacities, as he stated in his response:

It is a problem when we develop one part of the organisation and ignore other related parts; it will not work at all. [Participant 43 – NPO board member]

In the previous testimony, the participant warns about partial development because interlinked issues require comprehensive solutions. This interlinking nature can be seen when a lack of financial resources leads to a lack of qualified employees and an inability to outsource some consultation services, which results in weakness in building NPOs' internal systems.

6.3 NPO managers' views on potential capacity-building improvements

After presenting current practices and difficulties in building NPOs' capacities in small cities in Saudi Arabia, the following question concerns the enhancements required to fill these gaps and tackle the difficulties with current practices. Suggested improvements will be presented in this section, supported by various testimonies.

Enhancements and improvements start from analysing the issues to find solutions. One NPO manager emphasised the importance of improving current practices in new and creative ways by getting expert input, as he described in this statement:

One of the main enhancements in our work is that we need to be creative and think outside the box. For example, in the Alahsa region, they established an expert group to develop new ideas for NPOs' issues. [Participant 48 – NPO manager]

These experts could help NPOs improve their current practices in capacity-building via new initiatives or transferring good practices from the private sector to the third sector. The following Table 6.2 summarises the main themes of the improvements suggested by NPO managers in their answers about suggested enhancements to current capacity-building practices.

Table 6.2: Summary of improvements suggested by NPO managers

Category	Reoccurring	Main suggested improvements
Finance	9	Investment, donor networking, endowments and fundraising
Board effectiveness	5	Board selection and training
Shared services	5	Provide central standard services to NPOs
Employee development	5	Developing employees by enhancing and increasing training
Automation	3	Automating internal processes
Policies and planning	3	Developing plans, policies and an organisational structure
Volunteers	1	Retaining and recruiting volunteers
Outsourcing	1	Outsourcing some professional services
Peer networking	1	Exchanging experiences with other NPOs

Source: Constructed by the author

Generally, it was noticed from the individuals' answers that the improvements mentioned mostly relate to current difficulties, and often it is the same for their current priorities. Financial resources enhancements and employees' development were mentioned most, along with repeated improvements, as both themes were repeated in other questions' answers, such as in difficulties and priorities. New improvement areas were shared services, board improvements and the development of a unified system. As each NPO has its own needs and circumstances, these participants suggested focusing on ongoing assessment to guide NPOs in their development programmes:

Frequently we need to assess our capacities and fill gaps when needed. [Participant 27 – NPO manager]

The needs are different for each NPO because the needs in each city are different, so we need to start by analysing our local community needs. [Participant 61 – NPO manager]

In these testimonies, two points are highlighted: first, the importance of periodic reviews to have updated assessments of NPO capacities; secondly, recognising the differences between NPOs as each NPO has its own issues and gaps. Looking at the nature of the suggested improvements, they can be categorised into internal and external enhancements. These improvements will be highlighted in the two forthcoming sections, and related statements from the interviews will be presented.

6.3.1 Internal improvements in building NPOs' capacities

As financial resources are described in many answers as one of the essential capacities, many NPO managers suggested improvements to fundraising and networking with donors. This point is clearly articulated in the following statements:

First, we need to boost our financial resources to be able to have more employees; if we have enough resources, we can hire fundraisers to collect more funds for our projects, so yes, we have to start by enhancing our fundraising ability. [Participant 14 – NPO manager]

We must improve ourselves to retain our supporters, so we preserve the support and volunteers to hand; even if they are few, we will build on them. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

Besides these suggested improvements, many improvements were mentioned previously by other NPOs in their practices, such as investments and endowments.

Secondly, human resource management-related enhancements are suggested, such as improving training to make it more tailored to the NPO sector, increasing training, focusing on employee development and enhancing human resource practices. These enhancements are mentioned in the following testimonies:

Well, we should enhance our human resources, our employees should be full-time, this is the first thing, also training courses. The courses run by the Ministry of Labour are excellent. We have to ensure that our employees participate in them. [Participant 44 – NPO manager]

As I said, we should enhance our training and staff development. We must have job structure, good salaried jobs, a safe job environment and clear employee contracts. [Participant 60 – NPO admin manager]

First, training courses should be simplified, more practical and tailored to our work. There is no benefit from academic training. Secondly, I emphasise the importance of all employees taking more relevant training courses fr according to their job requirements. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

It is clear that suggested enhancements of human resources relate more to training courses with some improvement to different human resource management practices. The following testimonies touch on a different meaning of human resource development:

One significant enhancement that we need to do is building what we can call succession plans, so we have to prepare the young generation to take over. [Participant 22 – NPO manager]

Succession plans prepare the new generation to take over the leadership from current managers. In other words, preparing new generations is important to sustain NPOs' work. Similarly, another participant emphasised sustainability by focusing on local people, as he explained in his response:

Our focus should be on our local people, the ones who when you develop and invest in them will stay in the city; they will not leave because all their family and interests are here. [Participant 68 – NPO manager]

The third internal improvement, which many NPO managers mentioned as a difficulty in the previous section, is enhancing NPOs' boards of directors. Suggested enhancements concern the selection process, the number of board members and their development. The following responses highlight these points:

We should enhance our boards of directors; if there is no effective board of directors, no amount of money cannot give you that. [Participant 44 – NPO manager]

We should focus on choosing the board, I mean, the quality of members selected for the board and reducing their number. There is no need to have 19 directors; this is a big mistake; just five, or a maximum of seven, so you can work with them. [Participant 55 – NPO manager]

Considering that NPO managers mentioned these improvements, this shows the need for alignment between the executive team and the organisation's leaders.

6.3.2 External improvements to building NPOs' capacities

Considering NPOs' limited resources, many NPO managers suggested a shared services model, which either requires cooperation between similar NPOs or may need external implementers such as the ministry or GMOs. The idea is to reduce the cost and increase services quality by centralising some

professional standard services such as human resources, accounting, fundraising or media. These NPO managers explain this idea as follows:

For us, as a small charity, we cannot afford professional human resource experts, so if this service could be centralised and provided to several charities at a reasonable price, and also implemented as a unified standard system through an automated solution, if there was a new charity, they could utilise the system with all its policies and procedures according to good practices, they could start by benefiting from the experience of others. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

There is a suggestion that if we could allocate specialised people, for example those who specialise in finance, and they could provide financial services to all NPOs in the area, in that way we would have a strong department and offer good services. [Participant 14 – NPO manager]

Similar to this idea, it was also suggested to have a unified and automated system for all the Albir associations. This system was proposed to include policies, procedures and regulations as per ministry standards. The suggestion below explains this idea:

They must establish a unified system for all the Albir associations, overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs, where they include all the controls and requirements, and specify beneficiary funding criteria, so that we know who is in and who is excluded, with conditions specified for support and support mechanisms, you need this. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Implementing such a system would help to standardise processes according to the government's rules. Also, it would be a great starting point for all new NPOs to build on good previous experiences, as highlighted in the following testimony:

Because we notice that established associations have recently had problems with regulations, and the ministry provides you with only broad guidelines, detailed requirements are not given to you. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

As cost and quality drive the previously suggested improvements, a different trigger is required for the following suggested enhancement. In rural areas, many beneficiaries send the same aid applications to

more than one NPO, such as for loans, food aid, medical support etc.; on top of that, some of them may already receive some government support. Without access to a single database to assess applications, NPOs will not be able to solve the double support issue. Thus, many NPO managers suggest having a shared database for NPOs and local government agencies. This NPO manager explains the idea as follows:

I mean, we suffer greatly from the duplication of some work. In our area, it is expected that some people will apply to more than one charity for support or a loan, and we don't have one database for all the charities to check applications before processing them.
[Participant 77 – NPO manager]

This enhancement will lead to fairer aid distribution and better resource management in government social agencies and NPOs. The previous centralised suggested improvements require communication between NPOs in the same area. This communication will facilitate organising shared projects and helping NPOs exchange their experience. Two NPO managers suggested peer communication to enhance NPOs' capacity-building experience, as they mentioned in these statements:

Each NPO needs to communicate with similar associations that have succeeded in developing their organisation, benefiting from their experience and learning from the steps they went through due to the similarity in circumstances. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

Joint projects between NPOs will benefit them by exchanging their experiences and enhancing their communication. [Participant 64 – NPO manager]

Exterior improvements require NPO managers to take the initiative and start joint work to implement such ideas. Also, it might require leadership from an organiser body such as GMOs or governmental offices.

6.4 Overview comparisons

From the results presented previously, it is noticed that there is a general alignment and consistency in NPO managers' conceptualisation of capacity-building with their current practices, priorities, difficulties and suggested improvements. This can be read as follows: first, NPO managers' understanding of capacity-building sets boundaries for current practices. Secondly, current priorities and suggested improvements are initiated from current difficulties and needs. These alignments and repetitions led

some participants to wonder if some of the questions were repeated as they thought they had already answered them.

6.5 Summary

This chapter addresses the second research question by exploring current difficulties and potential improvements in NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in Saudi Arabia. The following Table 6.3 summarises the main findings in this chapter.

Table 6.3: The main findings for the second research question

2 nd research question		
What are the difficulties and potential improvements for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?		
Topic	Subtopic	Summarised findings
NPO managers' view of difficulties in capacity-building	General findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most difficulties are human resources-related. • Difficulties are interlinked and cause each other. • The majority of difficulties' root cause is lack of finance and geographic location. • There is repetition and alignment between reported difficulties, priorities and practices.
	Financial difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial difficulties are reflected in weak human resources. • Financial difficulties disrupt other capacity-building activities. • Financial difficulties have been reported to be more challenging in the last three years. • Financial difficulties are linked to the economic situation. • Some NPOs reported a lack of bank cooperation. • New NPOs reported difficulties in opening bank accounts.
	Employment difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most NPOs suffer from employee instability. • Better careers in large cities cause difficulties in NPOs' employment process. • Low salaries in NPOs explain the high turnover rate. • NPOs suffer from a lack of jobs due to limited financial resources. • Non-Saudis are more stable than Saudis in NPO jobs. • Having non-Saudis in NPOs is considered an issue. • Non-Saudi employees accept lower salaries for NPO jobs.
	Location-related difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being far from the large cities is considered the main difficulty. • Training courses are not generally available in small cities. • It is harder to find qualified board members in small cities. • NPOs in small cities have to cover large areas. • Small cities have fewer investment opportunities for NPOs. • Many NPOs in small cities allocate their investments in large cities.
	Employee development difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPOs' employees do not benefit from the academic language used in training courses. • High staff turnover requires preparing new employees frequently. • Many NPO employees do not commit to their development. • Many NPOs don't have a clear development plan for their employees.
	Board-related difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many NPO executives have negative views of their board of directors. • Many board members are not fit for their positions. • There is no alignment between many NPO managers and their board members. • Capacity-building programmes are disrupted due to board-of-directors issues.

Topic	Subtopic	Summarised findings
NPO managers' view of difficulties in capacity-building	Ministry-related difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry's requirements contradict capacity-building activities. • The Ministry does not facilitate training courses in small cities.
	Donor-related difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many donors and GMOs reported not supporting NPOs' capacity-building programmes. • Many NPOs reported difficulties with GMO applications and requirements. • Some NPO managers claim there are unfair practices in GMOs' grant decisions.
	Other difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New automated systems in NPOs face implementation issues. • High prices and location are difficulties in outsourcing services for NPOs
NPO managers' suggested improvements to capacity-building	General findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPOs issues require experts to produce creative solutions. • Many suggested improvements are current priorities in NPOs. • Many suggested improvements are as a result of current difficulties. • Most suggested improvements are related to finance and employee development. • Suggested enhancements align with reported difficulties.
	Internal improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments, endowments, fundraising, and donor networking are suggested enhancements for NPOs' financial stability. • Customising and increasing the number of training courses and focusing on employee development are suggested enhancements for employees' development. • It is suggested that NPO boards enhance their selection process, development and reduce board member numbers.
	External improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared services to NPOs could reduce costs and improve service quality. • A unified system could standardise and automate NPOs' work. • NPOs must share data on beneficiaries' support received to avoid duplication. • Peer communication between NPOs facilitates exchanging good practices.

Source: Constructed by the author

In the next chapter, the third research question's results will be presented and followed by comparisons between NPO managers' and donors' views.

Chapter 7: Donors' Position vis-à-vis Non-profit Organisations' Capacity-building.

7.1 Introduction

As NPOs' capacity-building practices are supported or implemented by donors and government agencies, the third research question looks into donors' understanding, practices, priorities and difficulties and suggested improvements. It also investigates NPOs' views on donors' and government's support in building their capacities. In this chapter, NPO and GMO managers' answers will be combined to highlight this research angle. At the end of this chapter, NPO managers' views and positioning in capacity-building will be compared with donors' views.

7.2 Donors' current views of NPOs' capacity-building

Generally, most of the interviewed GMO representatives implemented or supported NPOs' capacity-building programmes, while a few GMOs didn't have any dedicated support for them. This support came from capacity-building value in the eyes of many GMO managers, as they emphasised the importance of supporting capacity-building programmes. The following two responses articulate this point clearly:

In general, everyone, without exception, needs capacity-building; I mean, they need to build their capacities, whether institutional or developmental. In general, many of them don't have a clear strategy; the compass is missing. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

I hope to raise awareness, among those in charge of charitable institutions, of the importance of internal investment in their institutions; it will be reflected in their work and outcomes. [Participant 87 – Consultant]

This appreciation of NPOs' capacity-building led many GMOs to include capacity-building programmes in their granting agenda, as will be described in more detail in the GMOs granting policies section.

From the NPOs' angle, many realised the importance of capacity-building programmes, which resulted in significant numbers of related grant requests being submitted to GMOs. The following testimonies show this demand from NPOs:

We have 13 granting categories; one of them is developing NPOs, for which we have high demand. It is one of the fastest closing categories; now, we have many requests that we

cannot support because our budget in this category has been allocated. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

The demand for capacity-building programmes is high; we have many unhappy NPOs because we could not support them; they have to understand that we don't have unlimited funds. Also, they have to meet our criteria to receive support. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

This high demand for support for capacity-building programmes reflects the need for these programmes and awareness of capacity-building importance in the third sector. But this is not the case for all NPOs in small cities as it varies depending on different factors. This GMO manager explained these differences in his statement:

Of course, you know the Riyadh region has different educational levels and also different social levels, there are regions that have high and advanced understanding and practising of capacity-building, and there are other cities that are so simple in their services and practices, they are very ordinary and not aware of the idea of developing and improving themselves. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

In the above response, it is noticed that NPO levels are linked to city development level. Also, it indicates the importance of NPOs' engagement with their capacity-building programmes, which starts from awareness of their capacity-building needs.

7.3 Donors' understanding of capacity-building

Part of understanding donors' positions vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building is based on their conceptualisation of the term. According to the interviews, most GMO managers are familiar with the capacity-building concept. Due to the absence of a unique definition for capacity-building, GMO managers gave different answers about their understanding of capacity-building. The following Table 7.1 summarises the outcomes of GMOs' answers on their understanding of capacity-building:

Table 7.1: Donors' understanding of capacity-building

#	Category	Frequency	Capacities mentioned
1	Institutional	8	Strategic planning, organisational structure, internal policies and process
2	Employees' development	6	Training, leadership and hiring
3	Quality models	5	PQASSO, Mackenzie, Balanced Scorecard, excellence awards and internally developed model
4	Financial	2	Endowments, donor networking
5	Others	4	Providing services, knowledge management

Source: Constructed by the author

As is clear from the table, most GMO managers mentioned institutional capacities in their understanding of capacity-building. Secondly, employees' development was mentioned often in the interviews by highlighting the importance of having the right people. From another angle, many interviewees defined capacity-building based on well-known management frameworks. These frameworks consist of various capacities and capabilities to be built in the NPO. A final point to notice is the low frequency of mentioning financial capacities, which might reflect the low priority for this capacity in GMOs, or it was missed as it was generally included in the frameworks mentioned.

Some participants introduced NPOs' capacities by categorising them, which also indicated different views of capacity-building. The following examples show some of these categorisations:

Based on the Balanced Scorecard, we can categorise them into three main categories: human capital capacities, institutional capacities and knowledge capacities. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

We have two types of capabilities; we have institutional capabilities, such as qualifying their members, their strategic plan, their direction and increasing their volunteer numbers; all of these are included in the institutional building of the entity; there is another aspect of capacity-building, which is building their capabilities to provide the services for which they were established, such as studying the needs of society, as well as the needs of people and their services, and the method of delivering these services. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

The most frequently repeated category in many capacity-building categories is institutional capacities. The meaning of institutional capacities varies according to the GMO expression. Generally, categorising the required capacities highlights donors' conceptualisation of capacity-building, which also shows their focuses and priorities.

Many GMO managers adopted management framework categorisation for capacities. The following responses highlight some examples of how these frameworks conceptualise capacity-building in the third sector:

We look at the required capacity based on the 7S methodology, from Mackenzie, so it is about systems, structure, staff, strategy, style, skills and shared values. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

We define these capabilities according to a quality system designed for charities in the UK called PQASSO, which we translated into Arabic for use by local Saudi charities. The model requires NPOs to comply with minimum requirements in 12 main areas. NPOs can add areas according to their specific work. The 12 areas are finance, resources, human resources, governance, strategy, planning, development, leadership, communication, evaluation, partnership and results ... Of course, in each area, there is a set of detailed capabilities that must be built into the institution. [Participant 87 – Consultant]

Besides the well-known frameworks, some GMOs have developed and designed their own. This GMO manager referred to their framework as a guide for NPOs' capacity building:

Well, you can go onto our website and download our capacity-building guide; it consists of capacity-building programmes that we support; also, there is another document for our criteria to accept NPOs' applications. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

Some of the well-known frameworks resulted from third sector accumulative experience, which gives them more credibility and acceptance by NPOs.

One of the most frequently mentioned capacities in conceptualisation answers from GMO managers was building NPO institutionalisation capacities. As many interviewees mentioned, their explanations for institutional capacities vary slightly. The following example highlights the meaning of institutional capabilities:

On the other hand, there must also be institutional capabilities or what we call organisational capital. Here we talk about the work environment, regulations, systems,

procedures, policies and job descriptions, all of these are considered as organisational capital. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

Other participants added some capacities such as strategic planning, operational planning and organisational structure. All of these capacities build the internal capacities of the NPO to operate effectively. Also, it was noticed that some interviewees used other expressions for this capacity, such as organisational development and internal development.

The second most frequently mentioned capacity was focusing on building the human capital of the NPO, which includes all the human resource processes inside the organisation. The following responses articulate this point clearly:

And the third thing is the existence of effective employees to implement the required job in the right way, also the existence of effective executive management to lead the NPO. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

Regarding employee development, we developed training courses for each job in the NPO based on the nature of the job, we want them to excel in their particular work. [Participant 78 – GMO manager]

It was noticed that training was the most mentioned example in developing employees' capacities. Human capabilities are occasionally used as a synonym for capacity-building, as one of the GMO managers, in his answer about the meaning of capacity-building in NPOs, listed some required capacities or values in NPO workers such as communication, openness to work with others, guided by vision, being organised and believing in NPO causes.

It was noticed that in GMO managers' answers for their understanding of capacity-building, financial capacity was not mentioned as much as it was by NPO managers. Even though it did not get the attention of many of them, some GMO managers emphasised the importance of financial capacity in their definitions of capacity-building; the following example highlights this point:

The aspect of financial sustainability is also one of the essential elements to ensure that institutional work will continue, and they will be continue building their internal capabilities. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

The previous response highlights the outcomes expected from building financial capacities, such as sustainability for NPO work and getting the resources needed to build other capacities in the NPO.

Interestingly, one participant mentioned an uncommon capacity, which is building a knowledge base for the NPO and transforming the organisation into a learning organisation. This concept is discussed and explained in the following response:

Knowledge capital means that we talk about technical infrastructure, about documenting knowledge, learning from our mistakes and not repeating them, benefiting from experiences and documenting them, and documenting existing experiences so that I don't have issues on that day when people leave the institution if we have a learning organisation. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

From the previous response, the sustainability and continuity of NPO work is an essential outcome of building knowledge capacity in the organisation. Also, the interviewee highlighted this point in the event of employees leaving the NPO.

Interlinked and comprehensive capacities are an essential description of NPOs' capacities that were mentioned and emphasised. The following GMO manager clarifies this point in his response:

Capacity-building is a combination of interlinked elements that need to work together. For example, you cannot implement a well-written strategy without the right people and sufficient financial resources. So, you have to build all these capacities. It is about comprehensive development for the NPO. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

The characteristics of NPOs' capacity-building mentioned require extensive and simultaneous efforts to build and sustain the required capacities. Finally, some participants added a critical angle to the NPOs' capacities required: those related directly to NPOs' services; one of the participants called these capacities core service capabilities that enable NPOs to implement their services.

The previous analysis was of interviewees' answers on their understanding of NPOs' capacity-building. GMO managers understand that capacity-building shapes their practices and priorities. In part, their conceptualising could be inferred from their granting policies. GMOs' granting policies are analysed and studied in the forthcoming section to gain a deeper understanding.

7.4 Capacity-building in grant-making organisations' policies

To get a deeper understanding of GMOs' perspective of NPOs' capacity-building, granting policies for 12 leading GMOs in Saudi Arabia were reviewed and analysed. More focus was put on the granting areas, policies and conditions to consider GMOs' current understanding, priorities and practices from their recent documented policies.

Almost all GMOs have at least one granting area related to NPOs' capacity-building. Moreover, some GMOs include NPOs' capacity-building as one of their strategic goals and main focus areas. These examples show the existence of NPOs' capacity-building on GMOs agendas. This interest can also be seen from other practices, such as one GMO developed a detailed guide for NPOs' capacity-building and linked granting to their guide practices. Another GMO dedicated 50% of its funds to NPOs' capacity-building. Regarding the small cities, there was no clear focus on them, except that it was mentioned in a few policies that NPOs with fewer funding opportunities will be prioritised. Finally, all the reviewed GMOs had developed a website for NPOs to apply with a detailed explanation of relevant conditions and requirements.

Generally, GMOs work in either a responsive or a proactive approach; in each case, they developed granting areas, priorities, conditions and policies. In the following Table 7.2, a summary of common granting areas is presented:

Table 7.2: Main relevant granting areas mentioned in GMO policies

Granting area	Frequency	comments
Financial capacity	7	Including endowments, fundraising and sustainability
Generic NPOs' capacity-building	6	All other areas can be included here
New NPOs	6	For specific causes such as youth club NPOs
Human resources capacity	4	
Third sector capacity-building	3	One GMO supports third-sector research centres
Institutional capacities	2	

Source: Constructed by the author

This table is further evidence of GMOs' interest in NPOs' capacity-building. Approximately, half of the reviewed GMOs' documents expressed capacity-building areas in generic form, while other GMOs specified their capacity-building interest in a specific capacity area such as finance or human resource capacities. This variety also shows the wide range of support for different NPOs' capacities. One noticed granting area was the development of new NPOs, as some GMOs have an interest in establishing a specific type of NPO. There are many other specific capacity-building areas mentioned in several GMOs'

granting policies, such as expanding NPO branches into new areas, technical capacities, operational and running costs, and volunteer development.

NPOs were asked about generic policies and conditions in their applications. One commonly mentioned policy is that GMOs are not implementers of capacity-building programmes. This common policy differed in one GMO as they offer consultation services in institutional capacity-building. A second common policy is that GMOs do not give grants to implementation partners; they only accept requests from NPOs.

As assessing NPOs' proposals is a critical step in the granting process, many GMOs publish their assessment criteria, which define well-written proposals. NPOs are asked about many different conditions in their applications. Besides official registration, bank account details and other official requirements, there are other generic conditions. One of the most common conditions is assurance of the internal capabilities of the NPO to implement the requested project. Also, NPOs' commitment is usually measured by their previous experiences with GMOs.

Finally, it was noticed that some GMOs mentioned impact assessments in their granting conditions, criteria or policies. Some GMOs asked for impact assessment criteria to be part of proposed projects, while others asked for proof that proposed projects would impact positively on the local community.

7.5 Donors' current practices in building NPOs' capacities.

Current practices and approaches to capacity-building vary depending on GMO policies, experience and priorities. Some donors or GMOs do not have NPOs' capacity-building on their agendas; one GMO manager made this point in his response:

Well, to be honest, we only support programmes that go directly to the beneficiaries, and this is based on the donors' direction. [Participant 79 – GMO manager]

As explained previously, many donors want their donations to be spent exclusively on the beneficiaries. This was the case for only one of the participating donors, while other interviewed donors supported NPOs' capacity-building programmes.

Generally, donors views on NPOs' capacity-building programmes can be categorised into two categories. The first category can be called the responsive approach, where GMOs include capacity-building programmes on their supporting agendas and then receive capacity-building proposals from NPOs. Some of these requests will be supported depending on GMO's internal assessment criteria. These programmes

are usually designed, proposed and implemented by the NPO, and the role of GMOs is to fund their grant proposals. One example of this category is explained in the following response:

We open many categories for NPOs to complete their applications; each category has sub-categories and so on; one of the main categories is capacity-building programmes for which there is a comprehensive guide on our website, so you can read it and understand what programmes you can apply for. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

In the previous example, capacity-building programme has a certain level of importance as it was one of their main granting categories. Generally, GMO interests and priorities regarding NPOs' capacity-building can be gleaned from GMO granting guides.

The second granting category is when the donor has a proactive role in building NPOs' capacity-building. Unlike response granting, the GMOs design and supervise proactive programmes. The following two examples articulate this category:

One of our strategic programmes is to build and support ten youth institutes in ten different small cities; we will build these organisations to be role models in their field, so we contracted with specialised bodies to develop and build these ten NPOs. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

Recently, we started our new programme, which we call the vital society, so we selected one of the small cities where we first worked with NPOs by assessing them and identifying their needs to improve them and close the gap; secondly, we are working with the society to identify the new NPOs required such as a marriage counselling NPO or youth NPO, it is based on our assessment of the community and their current needs. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

In these two examples, GMOs work proactively in assessing and designing all capacity-building activities based on their annual agendas. Also, it was noticed in the interviews that some GMOs work with both modes, responsive and proactive.

One reoccurring approach is that some GMOs link their donations to capacity-building requirements from the NPO, such as a strategic plan, a financial reporting system or training requirements. These GMOs linked their annual support for NPOs to some conditions:

One of our granting conditions is that they must work with our planning and financial consultant to improve their accountancy practices and build an internal organisational structure. [Participant 84 – GMO manager]

This approach responds to NPOs' needs and considers GMOs' suggested enhancements to develop NPO capacities. In the previous example, enhancing NPOs' financial systems is considered essential for GMO to receive financial reports on their donations. Generally, this approach will assure donors that their donations are spent effectively. Some other GMOs require NPOs to dedicate part of their support to training, assets or institutional development.

Another point noticed is the differences in capacity-building practices, approaches and design based on donors' assessment of the current situation of the targeted NPO. Often, GMO managers used expressions such as "it depends" and "based on our assessment" in their response to questions on their current practices. This GMO manager explained that their practices depend on assessments of targeted NPOs:

From my experience, each city has its own needs, and we cannot design our training programmes to fit them all. At the beginning of each year, we distribute our capacity-building needs survey to all NPOs; based on their feedback, we design our capacity-building programs customised for each city. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

The first step in our approach is to assess the current situation of the NPOs in 12 areas; based on our assessment, we can design enhancements and priorities. [Participant 87 – consultant]

One assessment outcome is to determine the best-fit approach to implement capacity-building programmes. Previous examples show that the assessment phase customises capacity-building programmes based on NPO needs. During the interviews, several approaches were mentioned, such as coaching, training, partnership and excellence awards. Some of these approaches are mentioned in the following responses:

Many of our projects are initiated by GMOs, that contract with us to implement these capacity-building programmes in different NPOs. [Participant 81 – consultant]

Usually, we prefer long-term relations in coaching, so we start by conducting training courses; we select the participants carefully. By the end of the training, we agree with them on the practical part; for example, if we train them in strategic planning, they have to do it for their NPO after training. The instructor will continue to communicate with them and support them after training. We find this way is much better than regular training. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

We have trained many experts in different regions to be consultants in RABEEZ; we connect them to NPOs to implement Robeez. The role of the consultant is to train the NPO on the framework, assess them on identifying gaps and prepare them for quality mark assessment. [Participant 87 – consultant]

Most previous approaches outsource capacity-building programme implementation, which might indicate the needs and shortage of experts in the third sector.

Some interviewees mentioned their GMO efforts in building and designing a capacity-building framework. These frameworks are utilised in different ways, such as granting guides, quality frameworks and excellence awards. The following responses mention some of these frameworks:

Yes, we started our excellence award, we developed it, but now it has been adopted and managed by at least eight GMOs. Our model is based on international quality awards, and also based on our accumulated experience in the field. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

In our guide, you will find our capacity-building model, it was developed after many workshops, and many consultants were involved in developing the current version. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

These models can be considered NPO improvement vehicles. The encouragement for NPOs to use these frameworks is awards, take quality mark or, in some cases, a prerequisite for getting a grant.

7.6 Donors' priorities in building NPOs' capacities.

GMOs' priorities in NPOs' capacity-building were developed from their observations during their work on receiving grant requests, visiting their projects and assessing NPOs in small cities. However, their

granting strategies do not always reflect GMOs' views of NPOs' capacity-building priorities. One GMO manager gave an example of this situation, as he explained in his response:

Even though NPOs have needed to build their internal capabilities, capacity-building is not currently one of our priorities; as I said, we only support general programmes.
[Participant 78 – GMO manager]

This example indicates a gap between some NPOs' needs and donors' priorities. Other GMOs gave a different answer for NPOs' capacity-building priorities as they link them to targeted NPO assessment results. The following responses articulate this point clearly:

Priorities can be identified by conducting field visits to NPOs and, based on those, priorities are determined. [Participant 79 – GMO manager]

Priorities differ based on the NPO situation; thus, we start our assessment with them to define the priorities. [Participant 81 – consultant]

Based on the previous responses, different priorities are identified depending on each NPO's situation. Nevertheless, some donors identified some of these priorities as a general view of NPOs' current needs in capacity-building. One of priorities the most frequently mentioned was institutional capacities. Capacity-building consultants explained this priority as follows:

One of the most important priorities is what we might call comprehensive institutional capacity, where we develop their internal system, including a strategic plan, operational plan, organisational structure, processes, policies and a performance management system. They have to have institutional capacity and be trained on it until they can implement the whole managerial cycle. [Participant 81 – consultant]

From my perspective, and my experience, NPOs have to have two fundamental pillars, which are a clear vision and a clear strategic plan for the entity. Today many of them are working without a vision. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

It was clear from the responses that among all the institutional capacities, there was more focus on the importance of having a clear vision for the entity, which is usually as a result of strategic planning. It

was called, in the previous example, a pillar to highlight its importance; also, in some responses, the randomness of NPOs' work was linked to the absence of a clear vision.

The second priority was to build NPOs' human resources; they are the implementers of strategy, as one of the GMO managers highlighted. These GMO managers mentioned human resources as a priority in building NPOs' capacities:

Having suitable capacities in the form of NPOs employees is very important to do the work; if you have employees without the required specifications, you will not be able to do anything with them. They have to have the capabilities to do their job, and they have to have the spirit of working in a charity. It is not like any other work; it is a charity. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

I mean, yes, this year and last year, we are focusing on the most important thing, which is building the capacities of executives in non-profit organisations. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

As mentioned, the human resources of NPOs are stated as a priority in capacity-building in small cities, and more focus is put on NPOs leaders. The second highlighted point is that good human resources are key to implementing NPO strategy, improving financial stability and building other capacities.

Thirdly, the financial capabilities of the NPO were mentioned as a current priority to be focused on. Some GMO managers consider it to be the most critical capacity to be built. This GMO manager stated the importance of financial capacity in the NPO:

For me, I see the main priority being financial independence by increasing endowments and expanding relationships with supporters, because you cannot develop anything else without the availability of financial resources. [Participant 84 – GMO manager]

The word independence describes one of the aims of building NPOs' financial capacities. In other responses, sustainability and stability describe other aims of financial capacity. One is to redirect GMO funds away from supporting aid programmes and into building sustainability for these programmes by establishing ongoing financial resources.

The last-mentioned capacity was to develop communication abilities inside and outside the institution. This point is articulated clearly in the following example:

And the third priority is what we can call institutional communication and external relations; this part is crucial because many NPOs do not give it the required attention. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

Internal communication is vital to enhance internal NPO work, while external communication is mentioned in communicating with donors or exchanging experiences with peer organisations.

Defining NPOs' capacity-building priorities was a challenging question as many participants started their answers with the phrase "it depends". Adding to the variety of priorities, some GMO managers emphasise the concept of comprehension as they claim that they cannot define one or two priorities but ignore many other essential capacities. The following two examples highlight this point:

Well, the most critical priority is to build all the capacities; I mean to make comprehensive efforts to build different capacities. You cannot have some of them but not others. You have to have all of them. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

One of the advantages of our model (RABEEZ) is that priorities are defined. Our main priority is to have the minimum requirements for capacities in each area; NPOs are at risk if they do not comply with minimum requirements. [Participant 87 – consultant]

The previous recommendations for comprehensive capacities indicate the interlinked nature of NPOs' capacities. Also, they indicate the efforts and resources that need to be invested in building NPOs' capacities.

Generally, as many GMO managers tried to identify NPOs' capacity-building priorities, the dependence on the current needs of targeted NPOs affected the answers to this question.

7.7 Donors' views on the impact of capacity-building programmes.

Generally, almost all participants reported many examples of a positive impact on NPOs from their capacity-building programmes in small cities. One of the participants stated that the impact of capacity-

building programmes is noticed in NPOs in small cities more than in large ones. The following response articulates this point:

I mean, I noticed that in small cities, the effect is quickly evident, I mean, the impact on beneficiaries is seen to be significant, so the development of NPOs in many small cities has a noticeable impact. And we do have many examples of small development programmes that have had a significant impact on their work. [Participant 83 – consultant]

"Small cities" were highlighted in the last testimony as the impact of capacity-building programs on NPOs could be more significant than in large cities. Also, the impact of capacity-building programs on NPOs in small cities was highlighted as taking place relatively quickly and made possible by introducing relatively small changes.

From another point of view, when the impact question was asked in the focus groups, the point of the existence of proper impact assessment was raised. The following participants highlight the absence of impact assessment practices in many NPOs' capacity-building programmes:

Unfortunately, given the importance of this point, there are no tools for measuring impact, and this is a subject that needs more attention from all of us. [Participant 80 – GMO manager]

Well, this work requires some preparation. So, we have to start from the beginning, from the start of the project design phase. So, if we know the targeted impact of the programme in the early stages, we can maintain and evaluate our progress during implementation. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

Most participants agreed on the absence and importance of a better process for measuring capacity-building programmes. The second point mentioned was the importance of early preparation for impact measurement as it should be part of the programme design.

In the absence of suitable impact measurement, participants agreed to share some of their impressions of the implemented capacity-building programmes. The first highlighted point concerned awareness of the need to build their capacities. This point is articulated in the following response:

We have noticed that the associations acknowledge their development needs and their need for capacity-building, and many associations say: If we only benefit from feedback reports after the visits, knowing our gaps, it is enough for us. We can diagnose our situation and begin to work on it. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

The previous response shows the importance of acknowledging the need to implement capacity-building programmes and how capacity-building programmes raise awareness. A similar point was made about the difficulties, as many GMO managers complained about the lack of awareness of the importance of capacity-building programmes. The second point mentioned in the previous response relates to awareness of their gaps and working on them. The previous example used the excellence award framework to identify gaps in the targeted NPO.

Another common answer to the impact question was about work enhancements in many different areas. The participating consultants reported their experience with some NPOs after working on some management improvement frameworks:

We can see the impact in many things, one of the NPOs improved their internal processes, as they had issues with distributing their food baskets before Ramadan; after we improved their internal process, they distributed all of them two weeks before the start of Ramadan. A testimony from another NPO said that now we know what to work on, and each all of us know our roles and responsibilities. Many NPOs were working without direction, so we developed their strategic plans and internal systems; also, other NPOs used to serve 4,000 families after they fixed their fundraising issues; now, they are serving more than 18,000 families. [Participant 81 – consultant]

The real impact and the most important thing is that NPOs now have and use these tools for continuous improvements, and these improvements are also comprehensive. It must be a continuous effort because capacity-building should be treated as an ongoing improvement programme. [Participant 87 – consultant]

The previous examples show that the enhancements to NPO work are comprehensive, continuous and visionary. Also, it was mentioned that the focus on enhancing internal systems will be reflected in improving NPOs' outcomes.

Some participants linked the impact of capacity-building programmes to excellence awards results as the NPOs they worked with in building their capacities won one of the excellence awards. The following two examples highlight this achievement as an impact of capacity-building programmes:

The most noticeable impact of our interventions in capacity-building is that many of these NPOs have received distinction awards, they link their achievements to our work on building their capacities. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

Many NPOs we worked with got high marks in evaluations for different awards; some of them were surprised as their marks jumped after massive capacity-building programmes. For example, many winners in the last award cycle were our customers, and we helped them build many capacities. [Participant 81 – consultant]

In the previous example, excellence awards tools are considered to be one of the impact assessments tools or evidence of improvements. Some of these interventions were planned and implemented according to the award framework and requirements.

In many answers about impact, enhancements to beneficiaries' received services were reported. In the following example a GMO manager highlights beneficiary-related enhancements as impact evidence:

A positive aspect we can see is in the beneficiaries of the institutions that we have helped; for example, we helped one NPO to focus more on cancer patients in their city. Last month I attended one of their workshops, and they had improved much of their work based on beneficiaries' feedback. [Participant 84 – GMO manager]

Besides the previous examples, other GMOs mentioned previously in their testimonies some of their programmes' outcomes such as new NPOs being developed for youth and kids, significant increases in the numbers of beneficiaries and preparing them to earn an income instead of receiving charity.

Finally, finance capacity-building helped many NPOs to increase their annual income, increasing their outreach and improving their services. These participants give some examples of incremental increases in NPOs' income after improving their financial capabilities:

Some of the enhancements also impacted on NPOs' ability to fundraise, one of these NPOs increased their income threefold in the last three years. For other NPOs, after they improved their work and received an excellence award, the donors' confidence increased; they just received a 19 million Riyals endowment. [Participant 81 – consultant]

I can see that the most positive clear impact was that they were able to bring in more income from individual donors or institutions; frankly, they would not have been able to do it without enhancements to their abilities in reporting, project design, communication, marketing and public fundraising. We built these capabilities improving instead of giving them funding. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

Building fundraising capacity in NPOs can be reflected in the ability to bring in more income to the NPO. GMOs that investing in building fundraising capacities sustain NPO income sources.

Generally, as the required capacities are comprehensive, the reported impact of these enhancements is also comprehensive, including NPOs operating with a clear strategy, enhanced services, better income and happier employees and beneficiaries.

7.8 Donors' views of capacity-building difficulties

Donors reported various difficulties that face them in capacity-building programmes in small cities. One of the first and most common difficulties concerns issues related to human resources, such as a lack of qualified employees, qualified employees moving to large cities for better jobs, most employees being part-timers and an unwelcoming environment for the new generations. These participants list some human resources-related issues:

The most prominent difficulty concerns human resources; they suffer from a lack of qualified employees; this is one of the difficulties observed; most of the NPOs in small cities are old uncles who used to practise charity work in the old way. They don't have young people working with them. It is not because young people don't want to work, no, it is because NPOs are unable to engage with them and utilise them. We met many who were happy to participate, but NPOs are not ready for them yet. Generally, NPOs in small cities don't have enough employees; and if they have enough employees, they are not well qualified. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

For us, the most significant challenges are in the employees, whether they are available or not, and if they are available, there are questions about their quality, willingness to develop and enthusiasm. Many of them are used to a routine and working in a specific way, they do not accept change and resist management development. [Participant 87 – consultant]

The lack of employees is a significant issue for GMOs working on capacity-building, as highlighted in the previous examples. The second point to notice is that in several responses, a lack of employees is expressed with the Arabic word "Kafaat", which means qualified employees, so it is not only about finding enough employees but also fit-for-purpose employees. Thus, many GMO capacity-building programmes focus on building employees' capabilities.

Another employee-related issue is the lack of interest from employees. Many GMO managers in particular mentioned this point. The following testimonies clarify this point:

Our challenge with many of them concerns their interest in capacity-building. Many of them think that they work well in their current situation. They ask why they need to have training; I am an expert in this field. The biggest challenge that we face is that they are not convinced about their need for development. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

The most serious problem that we face is what we can call poor adoption, I mean, sometimes you want to implement a capacity-building programme, but you find they do not fully support it; this is one of the problems. It is because of a lack of active employees or because it is not one of their priorities. They ask for food basket project funding and see any funding for training as a luxury or unnecessary expenditure. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

Many other GMO managers mentioned this issue being one of the obstacles to implementing capacity-building programmes in small cities. To encourage NPOs to adopt these enhancements, some donors provide conditional funds, which require the NPO to be involved in capacity-building programmes to get the requested funding. The following NPO manager described their experience of conditional funding:

As I mentioned, we asked them to participate in our capacity-building programme to get their funding, so we developed their strategy, performance system and financial system with them. But unfortunately, most of them implement these things as a way to get funding, so when we check with them a year later, they have gone back to their old ways and are not doing the new things we trained them on. And to be honest with you, that is frustrating and makes us think about what we have to change. [Participant 84 – GMO manager]

This testimony emphasises the importance of internal commitment from the NPO to build their capacities and improve their work. Also, it might cause GMOs to rethink conditional funding's effectiveness in getting NPOs to commit to capacity-building programmes.

As many donors deal with NPOs in both large and small cities, they differentiate between NPOs based on their location; they mentioned many difficulties and characteristics linked to the nature of small cities, such as their distance from many development opportunities. These GMO managers mentioned some difficulties in their capacity-building that are linked to their geographic location:

It is challenging to find implementers for our capacity-building programmes in small cities. If we contract with someone from Riyadh, they will request extra for their travel expenses; this is if they agree to travel. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

A common difficulty for small cities is that they are far from Riyadh, which causes a rarity of qualified people and low financial resources, especially in poor cities; also, it is difficult to find a supportive board; and it is challenging to develop them and ask them to attend some training courses in Riyadh as it is so far away for them. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

As mentioned in the previous testimonies, some characteristics are generally linked to small cities, especially if they are far from large cities. Despite these limitations, some donors noticed some advantages of capacity-building programmes in small cities. These participants mentioned some of these advantages:

It is easier for us to study and analyse NPOs in small cities as their situation and community are not complicated, while in large cities, it is challenging to define their vision as many factors are involved. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

There is a positive difference in favour of small cities, which is the availability of time and the lower living cost compared to cities. We can see that they are less intense, and more relaxed when we work with them. They are easy-going and can spend all day with you, while in large cities they are so busy, and transportation takes much of their time and energy. [Participant 87 – consultant]

These comments on the differences in building capacities in large and small cities led the researcher to ask participants if these differences changed their way of treating NPOs' funding requests in small cities. Their answers were mixed, showing different positions, as highlighted in these responses:

Well, we do not differentiate between cities, and we don't consider the situation of the NPO's surrounding environment. Our application assessments are based on our criteria which mainly look at the NPO's proposed project. [Participant 79 – GMO manager]

Of course, donors directed us to deal with less fortunate cities needing more consideration and wanting us to give them priority in our funding. And this is fair because NPOs in large cities have more access to donors and development opportunities than do NPOs in small cities. [Participant 78 – GMO manager]

From the previous responses, it is clear that donors are aware of many differences in NPOs' capacity-building between large and small cities. These differences are not necessarily reflected in all GMO priorities and funding criteria.

The third difficulty mentioned was poor finance resources in many small NPOs, which is seen as an obstacle to building their capacities. These responses highlight this issue:

Most NPOs in small cities don't have access to sufficient financial resources. If you compare them with NPOs in the main cities, they have a larger donor base and usually wealthier board members. Not having the required financial resources will prevent the NPO spending on their capacity-building programmes. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

Often, they want to build their capacities, they want to contract with a development company, they want to make many improvements, but they don't have the necessary financial resources. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

The previous responses describe financial resources as a key for many capacity-building programmes. Many different aspects hinder donations to NPOs in small cities. Some of these issues are highlighted in the previous responses, such as a lack of donor outreach and wealthy board members. Another reason mentioned relates to an inability to communicate effectively with donors and GMOs. This point is articulated in the following responses:

One of the main issues is communication; often we travel to them to meet with them to implement their programmes for them; they should be more interested than us, as we are following up with them, but they have issues with communication, even after we support their programmes financially, and often they fail to report their progress with these programmes, and when they send reports, the quality is poor. [Participant 79 – GMO manager]

NPOs, especially in small cities, are not happy because they did not get a grant this year, they did not read our conditions, they did not file their applications correctly, and they came late and so are not happy; we do not have unlimited money to spend, also we state our granting steps, so they have to enhance their communication and preparation. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

Often, I receive calls from donors and GMOs who know that I am working in this area and they ask me why NPOs in this area are not applying for grants; when I talk to NPOs, they say that they are not aware of those grants, they don't know how to apply, or they don't have an interest in their programmes. In my opinion, it is a problem on both sides as they are not working together. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

In the previous responses, communication between NPOs and donors is highlighted from different angles, such as NPOs' ability to follow updates from GMOs, NPOs' ability to report back to their donors and their ability to apply for grants. One participant highlighted that this issue is the responsibility of both NPOs and GMOs. GMOs' responsibility is to communicate with NPOs in order to identify their needs before designing capacity-building programmes.

Many of the previous issues offer a general view of many NPOs in small cities being organisations lacking in human and financial resources, having communication issues with donors and often not interested in capacity-building programmes. Adding to these points, many donors do not prioritise NPOs in small cities with their support. This position might cause many NPOs in small cities to be ignored, while they are in the most need to build their capacities. This GMO manager highlighted this issue:

There is a point that many of us do not recognise, which is because many NPOs in small cities are weak in their abilities, so they don't apply for capacity-building programmes. This will cause capacity-building funding to go to NPOs with better capacities, while those NPOs more in needs do not apply or apply with weak proposals. In many cases, only well-written proposals are accepted. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

In the previous statement, the GMO manager is trying to pay attention to weak NPOs who cannot apply for capacity-building programmes. Also, this testimony shows how the difficulties with NPOs' capacity-building are linked and affect each other; in the previously mentioned scenario, NPOs in small cities don't have sufficient financial resources to recruit qualified human resources to apply for capacity-building programmes to build their capacities.

7.9 Donors' views of capacity-building potential improvements

After discussing GMO managers' current difficulties, the following question was about the enhancements that NPOs' capacity-building programmes in small cities require. Many of these enhancements and suggestions are linked to previously mentioned difficulties.

Human resources issues are one of the most common issues in NPOs in small cities. Thus, many enhancements and suggestions concern human resources, as highlighted in these responses:

There are two main areas of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities that we need to enhance; first, we have to hire good leaders or develop current leaders, either the NPO CEO or board members; we have to improve them and enhance their way of thinking; secondly, we have to invest more in making them more professional in their work by qualifying their employees in project management, finance and so on. [Participant 83 – GMO manager]

If you as donors could do two things, the first thing is to support NPOs in finding and hiring excellent leaders and employees; the second idea is to develop some centralised electronic programs and provide them to NPOs; this is one of the quickest ways to implement good practices in organisations. [Participant 87 – Consultant]

In these two responses, there is a focus on finding, hiring and developing leaders. This focus might reflect the current issues with NPO leaders in small cities. The second point mentioned concerns enhancing NPOs' work by qualifying their employees in their fields. The second testimony added one exciting idea about providing NPOs with standard software solutions to develop their different areas. Similarly, another GMO manager suggested a shared services centre in his testimony:

I have another idea that might enhance part of NPOs' work in small cities in specific areas like finance, fundraising, marketing and so on. So, the idea is to develop a team of experts who can provide these professional services to a group of NPOs. We could call them shared services centres. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

The shared services idea tackles the issue of a rarity in human resources and the issue of limited financial resources. The previously suggested enhancements could be combined in one shared services centre where professionalism, leaders and electronic programs could be offered as one package solution to be shared by various NPOs.

From another angle, to overcome the dependence statements that were repeated in many different contexts, two GMO managers emphasised the importance of starting capacity-building programmes by conducting needs analysis before designing capacity-building programmes; these statements articulate their point clearly:

I think we have to build and analyse their training and development needs; we have to agree this with them and design a capacity-building programme based on a common understanding. [Participant 80 – GMO manager]

We should always start by studying their needs as NPOs and their local community needs. Then we can provide development programmes accordingly. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

This point might be mentioned in response to the different priorities between support offered and received in capacity-building programmes. Also, involving NPOs in the early stages of designing GMO capacity-building programmes will facilitate better communication between them and enhance the buy-in from NPOs towards capacity-building programmes.

Many suggested enhancements touched on capacity-building approaches. Two participants emphasised the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach instead of partial solutions. These testimonies highlight this approach:

But the most important enhancement is to change our way of building their capacities from just building one area. Instead, we should design and support comprehensive improvements because minor improvements will not work. [Participant 82 – GMO manager]

If I have a budget to enhance our capacity-building work, I will use a comprehensive enhancement approach for their institutional capabilities. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

The first statement highlights the interlinked nature of NPOs' capacities as they are dependent on each other. Also, it is noticed in this suggestion that a gradual or partial approach is not favoured. In the second statement, comprehensive enhancements are described as institutional capacities, which might focus more on internal capacities. A second suggested approach is to train NPOs employees via coaching and engage with them after training sessions. These GMO managers mentioned this approach:

We can enhance our training courses in many ways, first by designing them based on their needs, and secondly enhancing the selection criteria for the participants. Third is to use a coaching approach during and after training. [Participant 85 – GMO manager]

Secondly, we can use a coaching approach by bringing them to Riyadh, engaging with them, training them and then following up with them. We had some successful experiences in coaching some NPO leaders. [Participant 80 – GMO manager]

As described, the coaching approach requires more time, resources and commitment from the instructor and participants. This approach is mentioned to enhance training outcomes and make them more practical and tangible.

The difficulties in NPOs using professional tools in small cities are tackled by suggesting using light versions of these tools; these participants made this suggestion in their testimonies:

Also, looking at tools, we have to use lighter versions with small NPOs; it does not make sense to deal with them as they are large firms. [Participant 81 – Consultant]

Thirdly we should be more fixable with our theories and tools; many of them have not hears about them, so we should take things gradually. Not be strict or too deep. [Participant 80 – GMO manager]

The previous statements show the importance of understanding the participants' level and tailoring capacity-building programmes to fit their needs and capabilities. Also, this tackles one of NPOs' difficulties with complicated training delivery or academic language. Generally, this point is linked to enhancing the communication between donors and NPOs, as this GMO manager highlighted:

I think we have to change our culture and be more open with them; I have to tell them about my support for other NPOs and how they can get it. I have to tell them that if they want to get the grants, they must do this and that. And from my experience, most of them appreciate our transparency with them. [Participant 86 – GMO manager]

It is noticed in the previous statement that the communication required is described as transparent. Also, it can be understood that this suggested enhancement is in response to some current issues with communication, which leads to dissatisfaction from NPOs with GMO grants. From another angle, GMOs also require enhancements from NPOs in their reporting and feedback on grants received. One GMO manager suggested the following approach to overcome this issue:

We have to change our way of funding, so instead of giving them all the funding they request, we have to link it to the reporting system. If they develop and improve, we can continue to give support; they must work with us. [Participant 84 – GMO manager]

The latter testimony resembles a conditional granting approach, which requires NPOs to build their capacities to get support. The second point highlighted in this testimony concerns improving the reporting system for supported programmes.

7.10 NPO managers' views of donors' support

Most NPOs participating in this study had experience of dealing with GMOs regarding their capacity-building programmes. Half of them had had a positive experience, while the other half reported negative experiences. In the forthcoming sections, both negative and positive views will be presented. In more detail, out of 77 NPOs, 37 NPOs received support from GMOs for their capacity-building programmes, 26 NPOs complained of capacity-building proposals being rejected, and 31 NPOs reported difficulties during the grant application process.

7.10.1 Negative views of current donors' support

In the previous chapter, some donor-related difficulties were presented, such as the gap between demand and the support offered, difficulties in the grant application process and an unfair basis for distributing grants.

Furthermore, in addition to the previous difficulties, some participants believe that GMOs do not supporting NPOs' capacity-building needs as most of their support is directed towards specific traditional aid projects. These testimonies give examples of this view:

Most GMOs support specific projects such as relief, mosques, rent support and bill support, but they do not support development programmes for NPOs; if they supported them, we would hire more employees. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

Solo donors rarely support our capacity-building programmes; we often cover our operating costs with our endowments; also, GMOs only support specific projects, none of our operating costs. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

From these testimonies, some donors' priorities do not match NPOs' needs in capacity-building programmes. This NPO manager articulated this point in his response:

We are struggling; we only have a few employees, my needs are different from what they offer, my capabilities are different from what they expect, and they have to understand our situation and design more flexible grant programmes. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

Another concern is the differences between individual donors and GMOs towards capacity-building programmes. In one of the previous testimonies, it was mentioned that none of them support capacity-building programmes; while in these testimonies, some NPOs' experiences were different:

Yes, in some GMOs, NPOs' development is one of the areas they award grants for, as well as staff development, but if we want to fundraise for a new endowment, then it is often through solo donors only. [Participant 37 – NPO manager]

Solo supporters usually pay their zakat to specific programmes, while other capacity-building support comes from GMOs. [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

According to the previous NPO managers' views, solo donors prefer general aid programmes or Islamic projects like building mosques; they rarely support NPOs in capacity-building, while some GMOs consider some capacity-building programmes as per their annual granting plans.

Contradicting the previous views, one NPO manager complained about the recent massive shift towards supporting capacity-building programmes by GMOs and forgetting traditional aid support, which will affect the beneficiaries. This NPO manager explained this situation in his response:

Now it is different; almost all GMOs have turned to training, development, human resource development and family development; I mean, now, they rarely support relief programmes. That is good from this side, but on the other hand, it is not fair to poor families. There should be some balance and coordination. [Participant 8 – NPO manager]

Even though this view might be seen as positive in supporting capacity-building programmes, this example again indicates a mismatch between critical needs and the support offered.

Interestingly, with the expansion of GMOs' work in small cities, one NPO manager described their efforts negatively as they are doing NPOs' jobs. The following testimony describes this view:

GMOs are working in isolation from many other NPOs and us; they want to do the work by themselves; they say they are GMOs, but, in fact, they are doing NPOs' jobs. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

The previous testimonies show the general negative position of GMO support for capacity-building. Also, they indicate issues in the communication between GMOs and NPOs as donors' work is described as done in isolation. This NPO manager described the absence of communication between NPOs and GMOs:

To be honest, there is no good communication with GMOs. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

Finally, there was apparent variance in NPO managers' views towards donors and GMOs, which might result from different experiences. To give a balanced view, some positive experiences will be presented in the forthcoming section.

7.10.2 Positive views of current donors' support

There were some negative views of GMOs' position on supporting capacity-building programmes, but there are many good examples and success stories. This suggests differences in GMO policies and priorities. These testimonies touch on these differences:

Some GMOs, I mean, their requirements are doable, so we can fulfil their conditions and make grant applications; we cannot generalise the difficulties; if you meet their requirements, you will get the grant. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Currently, there are more than 100 GMOs, but most NPOs are only aware of a few of them; they are only aware of the older bigger ones. [Participant 48 – NPO manager]

One point noticed in these responses is the existence of positive experiences besides negative ones based on individual experiences, which might explain the different testimonies. The second point highlighted is the importance of knowing GMOs' requirements and knowing more about new GMOs. Interestingly, from some of the interviews, a mix of positive and negative experiences was reported by the same NPO.

Many NPOs had good support from GMOs in building their capacities. The following responses illustrate this point clearly:

Well, almost all GMOs support us, we might have some issues with applications, but most of the time, they are doable; and they support us. [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

Their support is good or excellent for capacity-building and training programmes for employees and their development, and we are keen to maintain and develop this relationship with them. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

Well, we maintain good relations with GMOs to keep their support, so we send them reports about their current donations, explain our situation to them, involve them in our

issues and difficulties, and generally keep them informed. [Participant 26 – NPO manager]

These examples show good communication between GMOs and NPOs. Also, they show a good level of satisfaction with NPOs and alignment with GMOs' agendas.

One GMO manager linked this positive atmosphere to the recent changes in GMO work, as they have started working based on granting goals and criteria. This NPO manager highlighted this point:

Ten years ago, most GMOs were working traditionally by looking into grant requests and assessing them; then, they made grant decisions based on application quality. But since 2017, they have changed, they have more specific goals, and most of their grants serve these goals. To organise the process better, they centralised it through the Ministry. Also, they continued supporting NPOs' development through aid projects as part of project budgets goes to NPOs and employees' development. [Participant 48 – NPO manager]

As GMOs' grant policies direct the grant process in many GMOs, the existence or absence of capacity-building programmes in these policies is critical for NPOs' opportunities to build their capacities.

One of the difficulties mentioned in applying to GMOs was complications in the grant application process. Some GMOs have partially overcome this issue by developing online automated solutions for the submission process. The following experience shows one NPO manager's satisfaction with the enhanced process:

Now it is much easier than before; it is all done through GMOs' websites. Almost every one of them has its online application portal with an easy and transparent process [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

A straightforward and easy process is fundamental in the communications between NPOs and GMOs. The previous answer shows that online and automated solutions are recent a trend for many GMOs.

GMOs' support is offered for various programmes such as employee development, automation and internal processes development. One of the most common development areas is employee development. Many NPOs receive training courses from GMOs for their employees based on their needs. These testimonies exemplify these efforts:

Even though there are some difficulties in their application, they support us through customised training courses for our organisation based on our needs and, also, they invite us to many public courses like the last one in Dammam. [Participant 63 – NPO manager]

Yes, GMOs offer us many training courses, one or two weeks on different courses. [Participant 13 – NPO manager]

Many of these development programmes are mentioned as financial support or training courses facilitated by GMOs. It is noticed in the previous testimony that training courses are designed based on NPO needs.

Any financial support can be considered part of financial capacity; furthermore, some NPOs receive dedicated support for their sustainable financial capacities. This NPO manager explained that their annual operating costs were covered by one of their major donors:

In our case, it is different because our chairman has his own GMO, so he supports us and covers all our operating costs. We do not take anything from the government; last year, he donated 800,000 only for our operating costs. Also, he covered the cost of our new building. [Participant 30 – NPO manager]

In many cases, NPO board members are considered prominent donors to NPOs, while other NPOs rely on small donors or GMOs. As a second example of financial capacity support, this NPO manager received support for their finance software and partial support for one of their endowments:

They supported us and covered our new finance software costs. Also, they participated in some of our endowments. Recently they have improved and become more goal-oriented. [Participant 70 – NPO board member]

Again, a remark on changing from responding to leading support was made in the previous response. Accordingly, NPOs' awareness of GMOs' updated policy will facilitate their grant process.

Many NPOs build their different capacities by preparing for excellence models awards. This NPO was supported by a GMO to enhance their internal systems according to one of the excellence models:

Yes, last year also, we got support from a well-known GMO to help us prepare for a quality prize; after getting the green light from the board, we assessed the situation and had an improvement plan in different areas in the institution. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

From the previous response, it is noticed that some GMOs participate in improving sector capacities by encouraging best practices through excellence model prizes.

Finally, one of the essential related remarks based on the interviews refers to the existence of cooperation and joint efforts from large donors and the Ministry to support NPOs' capacity-building programmes. The following responses highlight this healthy relationship:

Recently, there is a new GMO that specialises in developing NPOs' employees. They partner with the Ministry to identify needs and with one of the universities to get experience and instructors from them. [Participant 37– NPO manager]

GMOs provide many programmes and much support, and some are joint efforts by the Ministry and the GMO. Management and coordination are from the Ministry and the funding is from the GMO. [Participant 19 – NPO manager]

From the previous examples, joint efforts between the Ministry and donors result in productive capacity-building initiatives. As the Ministry is the governance body for GMOs and NPOs, they are in an excellent position to facilitate and organise joint efforts by aligning GMOs' support with NPOs' needs in capacity-building programmes. NPO managers' views about government support will be highlighted in the forthcoming section.

7.11 NPO managers' views of government support

NPOs in small cities usually receive a different type of support from the government as they provide essential services to less fortunate citizens and support the government in their social responsibilities. Most NPO managers are satisfied with the Ministry's support. This support is provided in many areas, including financial, training and governance support. While there were many positive impressions of ministry support, there were a few opposing views. These different views will be presented in the forthcoming sections along with some testimonies from the interviewees.

7.11.1 Positive views of the current government's support

The first support mentioned is linked to the new Saudi vision by increasing the number of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. In 2020 many new NPOs were created; the Ministry's role was facilitation and encouragement. This NPO manager mentioned this support from the Ministry:

According to the new vision, the Ministry facilitated having 1,000 new NPOs in the last year alone; many old NPOs like us helped to establish the new NPOs by sharing our experience with them to help them start from our later stages and show them shortcuts. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

Having all these new NPOs in the third sector will require a lot of capacity-building support. The interviews showed a generally positive position on the Ministry's support for NPOs' capacity-building programmes. The following testimonies offer some examples of this positive relationship:

The Ministry always offered us a different kind of support, especially during the pandemic; they made our lives easy. [Participant 17 – NPO manager]

The Ministry provides all kinds of support, according to the age of the institution and also according to evaluation results in the governance model, so the Ministry does not support any institution or charitable association whose evaluation in governance is below 50, if you get under 50, support will promptly stop. The Ministry also offers courses and grants to support specific programmes. And they give manpower support, such as executive management, social researchers and accountants; they cover up to 50% of their salaries. But it is also according to your score on the governance model. [Participant 77 – NPO manager]

Many different capacities are mentioned in the previous examples, indicating the ministry support's broad scope. Also, it is indicated that this support is conditional on NPOs' compliance level to the governance model, which is designed by the Ministry.

One of the most frequently mentioned forms of support is employees' salaries, allowing NPOs to build their human capital. These NPO managers articulated this point in their responses:

In the first five years, the Ministry covers the main jobs' salaries in the NPOs, and after that, they cover only half of the CEO's and the accountant's salaries, if the NPO satisfies

specific criteria related to the governance model. Also, they support us with other things such as vehicles. [Participant 35 – NPO manager]

New NPOs have the opportunity of financial support from the Ministry towards employees' salaries, especially in the first two years; after that, it depends on governance evaluations. [Participant 59 – NPO manager]

Salary support varies according to factors such as the nature of the supported job, NPO age and NPO score on the governance model. As new NPOs require more support to build their capabilities, the Ministry supports new NPOs by paying part of CEO salaries.

The second type of employee development support mentioned is training courses provided or facilitated by the Ministry. This support was mentioned in the following response:

Recently, there have been enhancements to training courses from the Ministry; for example, there is training on resource development, public relation, and e-marketing, and all of them are customised for us, and we get a good discount on them. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

As mentioned in the previous section, the Ministry facilitates many training courses provided by donors. The Ministry's role is to design and market these courses.

Also, the Ministry, as the governing body, designed a governance framework for NPO's operations. This framework is used as a development tool to develop NPOs in different areas. Many interviewees mentioned the governance framework in their answers. The following responses explain some NPO managers' experiences with the governance framework:

Yes, the Ministry encourages us to develop, and they standardise these improvements with their governance system, so we have to comply fully with the governance model requirements. [Participant 72 – NPO board member]

The Ministry supports us by developing our internal system and applying the governance model. [Participant 11 – NPO manager]

The Ministry is very cooperative and strives to develop, and they have a quality programme called the governance model. [Participant 67 – NPO manager]

The Ministry governance system in the previous statements is described positively as standardisation for the NPO process, and it is also described as a quality programme. These descriptions highlight the nature of the ministry's governance system.

As mentioned in many previous responses, much of the Ministry support is linked to NPOs' compliance with governance requirements. These conditions aim to encourage NPOs to enhance their internal systems according to the governance framework. Another encouragement tool is quality awards developed by the Ministry based on the governance model. This NPO manager referred to the awards and explained their experience during their preparation:

We are currently working on developing our institution through the Institutional Excellence Program, which is an award from the Ministry to support excellence in NPOs. This award is supported by the Governor of Riyadh. They also provided us with a set of training courses to develop and prepare us in various fields. [Participant 1 – senior employee]

As noticed in this testimony, the Ministry runs awareness and training programmes to encourage NPO enhancements according to the awards model. This training addresses different capacities as the governance model covers different NPO capacities.

Similar to the GMOs, the Ministry receiving capacity-building proposals and provides grants for these projects. These NPO managers addressed this point in their responses:

The Ministry supported the association with two projects; one was a management project, and they supported us with 55,000 riyals for an institutional building project last year. [Participant 75 – NPO board member]

The Ministry has many capacity-building programmes where the NPO can apply for and get financial support. Yes, there are some conditions, but it is not difficult. [Participant 4 – NPO manager]

Also, similar to GMOs, this support is based on the ministry agenda and linked to NPO scores in the governance model. According to the governance model requirements, this kind of conditional support will encourage NPOs to excel in many areas.

Finally, the Ministry, as facilitator, played an important role in developing peer networks among NPOs. The following two examples show the ministry's networking role:

One of the ministry services to us is networking; we just had a meeting with many of our peers to discuss our challenges and look for solutions. [Participant 34 – NPO manager]

The Ministry used to look for good practices, spread them to all NPOs and share knowledge with them. [Participant 54 – NPO manager]

According to these experiences, networking is a good tool for sharing knowledge, experiences and resources. Also, it is an excellent platform to discuss current issues and develop related solutions.

7.11.2 Negative views of the current government support

Not all NPOs' experiences were positive in gaining capacity-building support from the Ministry. In the previous chapter, some ministry-related issues were mentioned, such as not facilitating training courses in small cities and some complications in ministry requirements.

In recent years, many significant structural changes have been implemented in the Ministry; these changes might affect the Ministry's ability to support NPOs according to the following response:

The ministry work has been affected recently by the rapid changes in the Ministry, but I can say clearly that the Ministry is helpful and understanding, I mean their work is institutional. [Participant 51 – NPO manager]

The previous response mentions the importance of institutional development within the Ministry, which will stabilise the support provided to NPOs.

Strangely, although many Ministry support practices to NPOs were mentioned previously, few NPO managers mentioned the lack of support from the Ministry for their capacity-building programmes. These NPO managers highlighted this point in their statements:

The Ministry did not provide any training courses. [Participant 14 – NPO manager]

There are no development efforts from the Ministry for us. [Participant 30 – NPO manager]

The ministry support stopped; this is the fourth year without the Ministry's operational support. They support some specific programmes, but they do not support our salaries or rent. [Participant 44 – NPO manager]

These examples show different experiences of NPOs as regards ministry support for their capacity-building programmes. These negative experiences might be due to some difficulties such as lack of communication or operating from small cities far from the Ministry headquarters. Also, it might be due to variance in local ministry offices' performance levels.

7.12 Comparing NPO managers' and donors' views of capacity-building

First, there was a consensus on the importance and need for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities. The differences between GMO and NPO managers' positions came from their familiarity with the capacity-building concept. It was noticed that GMO managers are generally more familiar with the concept and can give a deeper explanation. This familiarity could be noticed in their conceptualisation responses as GMO managers' answers were more detailed and often linked to well-known management frameworks, while NPO managers' answers were generally short and mentioned few capacities.

Regarding current practices and priorities, NPOs are more focused on their organisation's financial sustainability, while GMO practices and priorities generally focus more on building NPOs' institutional capacities. The common focus and priority concern NPOs' employee development; there was agreement on prioritising this point as many GMO and NPO managers reported many issues and difficulties related to human resources. The second point of agreement was suggesting a shared services centre for NPOs to solve some of the human resource and financial difficulties.

Some points focused more on NPOs and were not frequently mentioned by GMO managers, such as automation, board members and endowments. On the other hand, NPO managers did not pay attention to some points often repeated by GMO managers, such as impact assessments, institutional and reporting capacities.

7.13 Summary

This chapter has addressed the third research question by exploring donors' and GMO positions on NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in Saudi Arabia. Also, it has addressed NPOs' views on the support

received for their capacity-building. The following Table 7.3 summarises the main findings of this chapter.

Table 7.3: Main findings for the third research question

3rd research question	
What are donors' views and practices regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	
Topic	Summarised findings
Donors' general view of NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is general awareness of and support from GMOs for NPOs' capacity-building. • GMOs reported their experiences of seeing high demand for NPO capacity-building requests. • Not all GMOs support NPOs' capacity-building. • GMOs do not prioritise NPOs' capacity building in small cities.
Donors' conceptualisation of NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is more focus on institutional and employees' capacities. • Various management frameworks are used to explain NPOs' capacity-building. • Other mentioned capacities are financial, core capabilities and knowledge management.
GMOs' policies review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most policies reviewed mention NPOs' capacity-building. • NPOs' capacity-building is prioritised in many policies, being a main funding category, listed as a goal in strategy and taking a high percentage of the annual budget. • Generic capacity-building is mentioned in many policies as a granting category, while other GMOs are more specific to some capacity-building areas. • The most frequently repeated specific areas are finance and human resource capabilities. • There is a focus by many GMOs on developing new NPOs. • Small cities are mentioned indirectly in only one policy. • Internal capabilities are a common condition to accept a grant request. • Impact assessment is mentioned in many granting policies as a condition or a selection criterion. • Well-written proposals, according to GMO criteria, are the main preference criterion.
Donors' current practices in building NPOs' capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most participating GMOs had experience of supporting NPOs' capacity-building programmes. • The support might be a responsive or proactive initiative. • Many GMOs provide conditional funds to encourage NPOs to build their capacities. • Many GMOs design their capacity-building based on assessment outcomes. • Most capacity-building programmes are implemented by a third party. • The approaches mentioned are coaching, excellence awards, training and partnerships. • Some GMOs have developed their capacities frameworks to assess, design and implement capacity-building programmes.
Donors' priorities in building NPOs' capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMOs priorities in capacity-building depend on each NPO assessment outcome. • Institutional and human resource capacities are mentioned as current priorities. • Other mentioned priorities are finance and communication. • Prioritisation conflicts with the comprehensive capacity-building approach. • Small cities are not prioritised in most GMO work.
Donors' views of NPOs' capacity-building impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity-building programmes' impact is more apparent in small cities. • GMO managers agree on the importance and absence of impact assessments in capacity building programmes. • Positive impact is reported for NPOs' work enhancements, beneficiaries and NPOs' financial income. • Some GMO managers use excellence awards as an impact measurement tool. • Awareness of capacity-building needs is reported as a positive impact of capacity-building programmes.

Topic	Summarised findings
Donors' difficulties in building NPOs' capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resource difficulties are the difficulty most often mentioned. • The human resource issues mentioned are a lack of interest, capabilities and a lack of leaders. • Small city-related issues are a lack of consultants, distance and employees' instability. • Some advantages for small cities are mentioned, such as an easier lifestyle and time availability. • Other mentioned difficulties are a lack of financial resources and communication issues. • Many NPOs in small cities are the most needy but least fortunate in getting capacity-building support.
Donors' suggested improvements to enhance NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More focus on developing and hiring NPOs leaders is suggested. • Shared services centres for NPOs are proposed to solve some financial and human resource issues. • It is suggested that management tools are simplified. • It is suggested that capacity-building programmes are implemented in a comprehensive approach. • Training could be enhanced by adopting a coaching approach.
NPOs' views of donors' support for NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very different views are reported by NPOs for donors' support. • A lack of support for capacity-building programmes and too much capacity-building support are reported. • Lack of communication and excellent communication are reported. • Many NPOs report difficulties with GMO funding applications. • Most GMOs facilitate the application process through online application forms. • There is a positive, proactive approach from GMOs toward NPOs' capacity-building. • Positive cooperation between GMOs and the Ministry resulted in NPOs' capacity-building programmes.
NPOs' views of government support for NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is generally positive feedback on government support for NPOs' capacity-building programmes. • The Ministry facilitates a vast number of new NPOs. • The Ministry supports new NPOs financially. • The support most frequently mentioned support is for training and salaries. • The Ministry has developed a capacity-building framework called the governance framework. • The Ministry's support is linked to NPO's compliance with the governance framework. • The Ministry offers some grants for capacity-building programmes. • Few NPO managers' report a lack of capacity-building support from the Ministry.
General comparison between NPOs' and donors' views on NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is general agreement from almost all participants on the importance of NPOs' capacity-building. • GMO managers show more familiarity with capacity-building than do NPO managers. • NPO managers' focus is on financial capacities, while GMO managers focus is on institutional capabilities. • There is agreement on prioritising human resource capacities. • The shared centre idea is presented by some NPO managers and mentioned in the two discussion groups. • Automation, endowments and NPO boards are mentioned more by NPO managers than GMO managers. • Impact assessments, institutional capacities, management frameworks and reporting are mentioned more by GMO managers than NPO managers.

Source: Constructed by the author

After presenting the findings in these three chapters, the main findings will be analysed, critically discussed and linked to recent literature. The main findings discussion will be presented in the forthcoming chapter.

Chapter 8: Discussion of the Main Findings

8.1 Main findings overview

This chapter will address the research questions by presenting the main findings. First, an overview of the main findings will be introduced. Secondly, a summary of the main findings will be presented by comparing NPOs' and donors' views along with some comments and observations. Finally, these findings will be unpacked and discussed in depth under the shadow of related literature.

After conducting this research and getting closer to the field, generally, it was noticed that there is interest and positive movement in the third sector in Saudi Arabia towards building NPOs' capacities. This movement is aligned with the international movement and focuses on NPOs' capacity-building (Bloomfield et al., 2018). The interest in capacity-building could result from the public's increasing interest in NPOs' services (Reid and Gibb, 2004; Huang et al., 2014). According to various related statements from the interviewees, this interest is encouraged by various initiatives from the government and prominent GMOs.

As NPOs in small cities have their own characteristics (Frank et al., 2018; Potluka and Fanta, 2021), the findings in this research illustrate this angle and its implications for current capacity-building practices in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia. For example, the research reports many difficulties caused by NPOs' geographic location, such as challenges in accessing sufficient financial and human resources in small cities.

The findings cover the main research questions and present different views via various research methods. Starting from the current understanding of capacity-building which is reflected in practices and views, some issues and gaps were founded in conceptualising capacity-building from NPO representatives. Several authors have reported these issues as a common difficulty in conceptualising capacity-building (Craig, 2007; Simmons et al., 2011). Nevertheless, there is general interest in and acknowledgement of the importance of NPOs' capacity-building. This awareness matters because it is the first step in building NPOs' capacities (Gilmer and Hughes, 2013; Subrahmanian, 2013).

Various researchers emphasise the importance and impact of building NPOs' financial capacities (Musiałkowska et al., 2020; Salway, 2020). Even though there was a clear variety in interviewees' views on and practices in building NPOs' capacities, in general, NPOs' financial capabilities are the most

frequently mentioned capacity in NPO managers' conceptualisations, practices, priorities and challenges. The second most frequently mentioned capacity is human-related capacities, which are described in many references as an enabler of NPO work (Aboramadan, 2020; Gilkes, 2021). More specifically, developing leaders in NPOs is one of the most required capacities in small cities. This demand shows the critical role of NPOs leaders in directing and managing NPOs (Andersson and Edenfield, 2015).

Generally, NPO managers prioritise financial and employee development capacities, and many suggested improvements are related to them. Prioritising capacity-building needs in each NPO is challenging for many NPOs (Reid and Gibb, 2004). On the other hand, the research findings do not show donors prioritising NPOs in small cities in their capacity-building support, which in some research is reported as an issue delaying small cities' development (Matengu, 2015).

Even though it was reported in the findings that there was a lack of knowledge among the respondents about impact assessment professional practices, there is a common positive opinion on how NPOs' capacity-building programmes enhance NPOs' work. This positive impact will encourage NPOs to continue building their capacities (Satish, 2022), and on the other side, it will convince donors to increase their donations to capacity-building programmes (James, 2009).

The findings mention three main stakeholders in building NPOs' capacity: first, NPO boards of directors, as they are the main donors, supporters and decision-makers in many NPOs. In many interviews, the board of directors was mentioned in a negative context. Also, it is mentioned as an object for development as its capacities need to be built. Having qualified board members in NPOs enhances their performance (Roshayani et al., 2018). The second stakeholder is donors since, with their support, they enable different capacity-building programmes (Edmunds, 2017). Generally, there is a positive position of donors towards NPOs' capacity-building programmes with a sound contribution from GMOs. Finally, according to most participants, the Saudi government's role in NPOs' capacity-building is generally positive. The government's role in NPOs' capacity-building is critical as they need sufficient financial resources to build their capacities; also, they are the regulators of NPOs' work (Morrar and Sultan, 2020). From the research findings, the Ministry of Social Affairs provides several types of support, such as financial, training and consultancy support.

8.2 Summary of the main findings

In Table 8.1, below, the main findings are presented based on the research objectives and questions. NPOs' views are presented and compared with donors' views. General observations and comments are highlighted to add extra meaning to the main findings.

Table 8.1: Summary of the main findings

Objective	Research question	Themes	NPOs related finding	Donors related finding	Comments and observations
To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	General Overview of the findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Most of the participants have more than 25 years of experience. •NPOs operate with low numbers of employees. •NPOs operate as generic NPOs without specialisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Most GMOs show professionalism and organised work. •Donor interests influence GMO granting policy. •Most GMO managers have more than 20 years of experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •NPOs in small cities are different from NPOs in large ones. •There might be issues in the succession process for current NPO leaders. •NPO work has a long history and there should be awareness of current needs in capacity-building. •Main donors have a significant impact on directing third-sector development.
		Current understanding of NPOs' capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There are issues with understanding the term capacity-building. •Capacity-building is mainly defined as finance and employees' capabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •GMO managers are more familiar with the term capacity-building. •Most GMOs define NPOs' capacities based on management frameworks. •Capacity-building is mostly defined as institutional and employees' capabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There is a gap in conceptualising capacity-building between GMO and NPO managers. •GMO managers' familiarity with the term capacity-building might come from their broad experience, development access and high salaries to recruit qualified managers. •There is no agreement on defining capacity-building, which may indicate the unpopularity of the term. •Comparing the findings with the definitions presented in Chapter 3, there are some aspects missing from participants' conceptualisation. •Capacity-building conceptualisation is enhanced by the usage of well-respected management frameworks. •Capacity-building conceptualisation is affected by awareness, experience and management level.

Objective	Research question	Themes	NPOs related finding	Donors related finding	Comments and observations
To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	Current NPOs' capacity-building practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •NPOs' practices are broader than their understanding. •There is a focus on building financial, personal and automation capacities. •A common practice in building financial capacities is endowments. •A common practice in building employee development is training courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There is general and wide support for NPOs' capacity-building. • There is more focus on building institutional and human resource capacities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Even though there are differences in capacity-building practices between GMOs and NPOs, there is agreement on focusing on employee development. •The focus on endowments contributes to sustaining NPO work. •NPOs practices in developing employees are limited and traditional. •By comparing current capacity-building practices with previous literature, there are some missing practices. •Most practices are not comprehensive in building NPOs capacities, which might be affected by limited conceptualisation and/or limited resources. •The alignment between conceptualisation answers and practices shows the effect of understanding on practices. •Most capacity-building practices are not implemented as a result of a systematic process. •Most capacity-building initiatives do not mention the culture and change management practices.
		Current NPOs' capacity-building Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Many capacity-building practices are outsourced. •The ministry's governance model and excellence models are the most used frameworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Conditional granting is a common practice. •Support can be responsive or proactive. •A third party implements most practices. •Assessment based on frameworks is a common initiation for many practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Outsourcing is a common practice by NPOs and GMOs to build their capacities. •GMOs led in the current capacity-building market. •Utilising frameworks to build NPOs' capacities has many advantages, such as comprehensive and systematic implementation. •A conditional granting approach might highlight adoption and commitment issues. •Most of the frameworks used are customised for the third sector.

Objective	Research question	Themes	NPOs related finding	Donors related finding	Comments and observations
To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	Current NPOs' capacity-building priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Most reported priorities are related to finance and employees' capacities. •There are variations in prioritising capacities based on each NPO's situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Assessment outcomes determine capacity-building priorities. •Human and institutional development is prioritised in many GMOs' granting policies. •Small cities are not prioritised in most donors' granting policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reported priorities align with current practices. •NPO and GMO managers have different priorities in building NPOs' capacities. •An initial assessment is vital in determining capacities' priorities. •Prioritisation might contradict the comprehensive approach. •Capacities' dependencies make capacity prioritisation a challenge. •Most mentioned priorities lead to work enhancements and sustainability.
		Current NPOs' capacity-building impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work enhancements are the most commonly mentioned positive impact. •Positive impact effects always extend to many NPOs areas. •Negative impact reported due to capacity-building absence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There is agreement on the importance and absence of impact assessment practices. •Various positive impacts are reported. •Excellence awards are used to assess capacity-building programmes' impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •NPOs' capacity-building has a generally positive impact. •Various positive impacts are reported according to different experiences. •There is an absence of measurement criteria for capacity-building impact. •Little financial impact is reported while there are many related practices. •The negative impact of capacity-building absence shows the importance of capacity-building programmes. •All positive impacts lead to enhancements in services provided to beneficiaries.

Objective	Research question	Themes	NPOs related finding	Donors related finding	Comments and observations
To explore NPOs' challenges and opportunities regarding capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	What are the difficulties and potential improvements for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	Current NPOs' capacity-building difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most mentioned difficulties are human resource-related difficulties. • Financial difficulties and geographic location are a cause of many capacity-building obstacles. • NPO boards of directors are mentioned as a source of difficulties in many NPOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most mentioned difficulties are human resource-related difficulties. • Lack of capacity-building implementers in small cities is a common difficulty. • NPOs with poor communication capacities get fewer fund opportunities for capacity-building programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the mentioned difficulties are mentioned in priorities. • Human resource-related challenges are a common difficulty. • There is an interlinked nature in the mentioned difficulties. • The root cause of most difficulties is financial shortages and geographic location. • The local culture might be the root cause of many issues. • Most of the mentioned difficulties are considered internal where NPOs control them. • NPOs have no substantial influence on external difficulties. • The supportive role of the NPO board becomes challenging for some NPOs. • Many NPOs do not have the required capabilities to build their capacities.
		Suggested NPOs' capacity-building improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the suggested enhancements are financial and human resource-related. • Suggested improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared services centres to provide better quality services to NPOs. • A unified system with centralised data. • Enhancing communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested improvements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More focus on developing leaders • Shared services centres to provide better quality services to NPOs. • More customisation in capacity-building programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The suggested improvements align with reported difficulties. • GMOs' interests in developing leaders might be a result of their own experience with current weaknesses in leaders. • Most of the suggested improvements are to external responsibilities. • There were no suggested improvements to tackle the location issues. • Many suggested enhancements require communication improvements. • Shared services centres are suggested as a result of limited human and financial resources. • There are more customised development tools for NPOs due to their rejection of complex management tools.

Objective	Research question	Themes	NPOs related finding	Donors related finding	Comments and observations
To assess and understand donors' position towards NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia	What are donors' views and practices regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?	Donors' position on capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many NPOs receive excellent support from GMOs for their capacity-building programmes. • Some NPOs report ignorance of supporting capacity-building programmes. • General difficulties in GMOs' applications are reported. • Individual donors do not often support capacity-building programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity-building programs are supported. • Many GMOs' granting policies prioritise NPOs' capacity-building. • Groups of GMOs develop excellence models to improve NPOs' capacities. • GMOs receive many capacity-building related applications. • Conditional funding is a common practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The differences in NPOs' experience might result from differences in GMOs' policies. • One challenge is to balance grant requirements and application easiness. • Most GMOs support capacity-building programmes. • Conditional support might be a sign of a mismatch between needs and provided support.
		Government position on capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are generally positive views on government support. • A governance framework has been developed to enhance NPOs' capacities. • The government applies conditional support to implement its governance requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is positive cooperation with GMOs and universities in capacity-building programmes. • Shortcomings are reported in facilitating training courses in small cities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry uses its power to encourage NPOs to build their capacities according to their views. • There are similarities with the role of GMOs. • There are some interlinked roles in the ministry: regulator, supporter, evaluator and implementer. • The ministry has the opportunity to organise third-sector work as donors and NPOs are regulated by them. • The ministry could play a role in developing research centres and shared services centres for the third sector.

Source: Constructed by the

8.3 Discussing the main findings

After presenting the main findings linked to the research objectives and questions, these findings will be discussed in detail and linked to recent research work to get a deeper understanding. Some of the literature presented in Chapter Three will be compared with the findings to explore the differences. Generally, the forthcoming sections will address the following research questions:

- What are the current stakeholders' understanding and the current practices, priorities and impact of NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?
- What are the difficulties and potential improvements for NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?
- What are donors' views and practices regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia?

8.3.1 Observations on participants' general information

At the beginning of the interviews, general information was gathered; these data were analysed and linked to the research topic. First, it was found that NPO work in small cities is not new as most participants had more than 25 years of experience, and most NPOs have existed officially for more than ten years. It was found that organisations with more experience are better able to build their capacities (Stitt-Bergh, 2016; Morford et al., 2006). One of the advantages of experience is that current management should be aware of NPO and regional capacity needs and priorities (Sabirov, 2021). From another angle, considering the fact that the majority of the participants are in their fifties or sixties, this raises the need for succession planning and building new managers' capacities (Theus, 2019).

Secondly, it was found that most NPOs operate with less than five employees; also, it was found that NPOs with more than ten employees reported more capacity-building activities. This finding is supported by Onwumere and Okoro (2012), who found that the organisation's ability to build its capacity is better when the NPO has sufficient qualified human resources.

Thirdly, regarding NPOs' field of work, it was found that most small cities have one of four traditional types of NPOs. The similarities in NPOs could open up opportunities for cooperation and sharing experience in capacity-building initiatives among similar NPOs (Chandler and Kennedy, 2015). On the other hand, it was mentioned that different NPOs require different capacities based on their field and

legal form. Imdieke (2003) also highlights this opinion when he discusses issues resulting from applying one capacity-building programme to many different NPOs. With consideration of NPOs' differences, there are common areas and capacities for all NPOs (AbouAssi et al., 2019). PQASSO considers this issue by allowing NPOs to add areas to their framework according to the nature of their core business (NCVO, 2020).

Regarding GMOs, there is excellent engagement and participation from their managers in different capacity-building topics, which gives an impression of their current active role. Chahine et al., (2009) emphasises the role of GMOs in supporting capacity-building programmes. As all the interviewees from GMOs had more than 15 years of experience in the third sector, their work with different NPOs enriches their experience and practical knowledge of capacity-building needs, priorities and practices. Also, many GMO managers have some of their experience in the business sector. Thus, they can transfer their managerial experience and good practices to the third sector (Backer, 2000); in contrast, for some, their understanding of the third sector is limited due to their previous field of work (Lyons, 2007). GMOs, with their ability to network with different NPOs, could be a hub for good capacity-building practices to be shared across the third sector (Sciortino, 2021).

One general observation during the interviews about GMOs is the existence of a sense of professionalism; this was observed in their organisational structure, policies, processes and documents. This professionalism in their work allows them to help their clients with capacity-building programmes (Hwang and Powell, 2009). Another observation, repeated by many interviewees, is the essential role of GMO founders and primary donors in directing granting priorities. Thus, making GMO founders aware of NPOs' capacity-building is vital to including capacity-building programmes within GMO granting policies (Light et al., 2002). Having primary control over the GMO only from the founder goes against the governance practices for GMOs recommended by Bethmann et al. (2014) when they suggest developing a granting policy by authorising GMO boards to decide on granting policies and decisions supported by relevant research work. These changes might require cultural changes as the local culture in Saudi Arabia is described as having a high level of power distancing (Alsanoosy et al., 2020), which might be one explanation for this situation.

8.3.2 Current understanding of NPOs' capacity-building

Various points are observed in the participants' answers about their conceptualisation of NPOs' capacity-building, starting by questioning the need to have a definition of the term (Suleiman et al., 2017). In response to this argument, Li and Guo (2015) link the existence of standardised capacity-building practices to a good capacity-building definition. Moreover, Sobeck and Agius (2007) argue that a good capacity-building definition will result in comprehensive practices. From the interviews, the participants' conceptualisation of capacity-building is reflected in their practices, priorities and views of difficulties and improvements. The consequences of their conceptualisation of practices and views show the importance of enhancing the understanding of the term in the third sector (Wing, 2004).

Similar to these findings, various authors and practitioners state that there is no agreement on a capacity-building definition (Sideroff, 2003; Eboh and Ofondu, 2019; Khan et al., 2020). Moreover, most of the NPO managers interviewed had no familiarity with the term, while this was much less of an issue with GMO managers. This gap might exist for several reasons, such as the financial ability of GMOs to hire managers with high qualifications (Carpenter, 2017), GMO managers access to many advanced training programmes (Carpenter et al., 2015), their vital role in building NPOs' capacity (Bartczak, 2013) and their wide experience of various NPOs with different capacity-building practices (Backer et al., 2006).

Many interviewees expressed discomfort with the terminology as they see it as difficult academic language. This point might highlight the importance of customising the terminology and training courses provided for NPO workers in small cities (Bloice and Burnett, 2016). Another option is to raise NPO workers' knowledge level and develop it in these new concepts (Lewis, 2002). According to Sorgenfrei (2004), another cause of issues with the term might be its translation. This argument might not be applicable in this research as Arabic does cover the meaning of the term so this issue is mainly with familiarity with the practical implications of the term, which can be overcome by looking into related knowledge resources to expand the meaning of the term. One related piece of evidence is that many participants cover a broader scope of capacity-building activities in their practices than in its definition.

It was noticed that most GMO managers referred to a well-known management framework in their definitions. Using frameworks to define capacity-building is challenging as there is no consensus on one capacity-building definition (Potter and Brough, 2004). On the other side, Honadle (2018) argues that using these frameworks gives capacity builders a way to gather good practices and build their experience. Also, it can be a standardised reference for their planning, assessment and evaluation (Schuh and Leviton, 2006; Claussen, 2011). A combined view could be considered by using a management framework to define NPOs' capacity-building with some flexibility in considering specific capacities according to NPOs specialties. One related concern mentioned by Despard (2017) is a tendency to avoid complex frameworks as they are not adopted easily by NPOs.

Regarding the capacities mentioned in definitions, NPO managers focus more on financial and employee development capacities, while GMO managers focus more on employee development and institutional capacities. This difference might come from the different positions of NPOs and GMOs, which shape their conceptualisations and priorities. The common focus was on employee development, as they are enablers of NPO work (Tharya et al., 2021). These differences in conceptualisation could cause issues with either getting capacity-building funds or implementing capacity-building programmes (Wing, 2004).

In the following Table 8.2, a comparison is made between previous research work and participants' answers in conceptualising capacity-building.

Table 8.2: Comparing previous research work with participants' answers in conceptualising capacity-building

Dimension	Previous research work	NPO managers' views	GMO managers' views
Whose capacity?	<p>Organisational capacities: Kaplan, 1999; UNDP, 2009; Andersson et al., 2016; Despard, 2017; NAO, 2020</p> <p>Organisational and individuals' capacities: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Shepherd, 2007; OECD, 2011</p> <p>Organisational, individual and societal capacities: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; UNDP, 2009</p> <p>Individuals' capacities: USAID, 2017</p> <p>Countries World Bank, 1996</p>	Organisational and individuals' capacities	Organisational and individuals' capacities

Dimension	Previous research work	NPO managers' views	GMO managers' views
What does capacity mean?	Ability: Kaplan, 1999; Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Shepherd, 2007; UNDP, 2009; OECD, 2011; Andersson et al., 2016; USAID, 2017; NAO, 2020 People, institutions and practices: World Bank, 1996; Despard, 2017 Internal system: UNDP, 2009	People, institutions and practices:	People, institutions and practices:
What are capacities?	Project management: Kaplan, 1999 Financial management: Kaplan, 1999 Problem-solving: Shepherd, 2007; UNDP, 2009 Internal policies and procedures: UNDP, 2009	Financial and employee development	Institutional and employee development
What are capacities' purposes?	Satisfy stakeholders: NAO, 2020 Satisfy donors: Kaplan, 1999 To operate and perform: all studies To achieve targeted objectives: World Bank, 1996; UNDP, 2009; Andersson et al., 2016; Despard, 2017; NAO, 2020	Sustainability	Sustainability
What are outcomes?	Effectiveness: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003 Efficiency: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003 Sustainability: Chaumba and van Geene, 2003; Shepherd, 2007; UNDP, 2009; USAID, 2017	Work enhancement	Effectiveness
How is capacity-building described?	Process: Morgan, 1993; Lusthaus et al., 1995; CIDA, 1996; James, 2001; AUSAID, 2004; Vernis et al., 2006; UNDP, 2009; UNICEF, 2010; OECD, 2011 Enabler: IFAD, 2013; Andersson et al., 2016 Activities and efforts: Paul, 1995; McGill, 1997; Dayson et al., 2017; NAO, 2020 Intervention: Maconick and Morgan, 1999	Activities and efforts	Activities and efforts
How is capacity-building approached?	Enhancing organisational abilities: Lusthaus et al., 1995; CIDA, 1996; UNDP, 1997; Maconick and Morgan, 1999; AUSAID, 2004; Vernis et al., 2006 Developing individuals: Morgan, 1993; McGill, 1997; Dayson et al., 2017; NAO, 2020 Strengthening and maintaining capabilities: UNDP, 2009; UNICEF, 2010; OECD, 2011; IFAD, 2013 Supporting initial stages of building capacities: UNDP, 2009 Helping to adapt to changes: James, 2001	Developing individuals	Developing individuals, coaching

Dimension	Previous research work	NPO managers' views	GMO managers' views
What is capacity-building's goal?	<p>Enhance performance: AUSAID, 2004; Vernis et al., 2006; UNDP, 2009; IFAD, 2013; Dayson et al., 2017</p> <p>Achieve organisational goals: Paul, 1995; Maconick and Morgan, 1999; UNICEF, 2010; Andersson et al., 2016</p> <p>Sustainability: CIDA, 1996; UNDP, 1997; James, 2002; Cornforth and Mordaunt, 2011</p> <p>Impact on society: Morgan, 1993; NAO, 2020</p>	Sustainability	Sustainability

Source: Constructed by the author

Compared with previous research work, the differences are mainly missing specific capacities such as project management, problem-solving, third sector policies and governance. Most of these capacities are embedded in the management frameworks used by GMOs in their definitions, such as the Mackenzie 7s framework (Gratton, 2018).

From the previous comparisons, it is clear that the current understanding of the concept is missing some dimensions which could make current practices more comprehensive and sustainable. First, describing capacity-building practices as ongoing enhancements. This description necessitates a systematic enhancement cycle, ongoing evaluation and quality improvement (Al-Tabbaa et al., 2013). The second missing point is linking capacity-building practices with clear aims such as sustaining NPOs' work or increasing their outreach. Linking the concept with outcomes and aims will ensure that capacity-building activities drive NPOs towards targeted goals (Bloomfield et al., 2018).

It is noticed that employee development is vital for NPOs and GMOs. Despite this importance, it is ignored in some capacity-building definitions (Fredrick, 2013). Among the different capacities mentioned in capacity-building definitions, individual capacities are an essential element for NPOs (Vnoučková, 2014). Thus, any definition, plan or practice of NPOs capacities should consider employee development (Meenar, 2015) as it is an essential part of NPO capacities (Murey, 2018) and the enabler of many other capacities (Eade, 2007).

Finally, agreeing on a definition is vital for capacity-building implementation and internal and external communication (Claussen, 2011). Furthermore, Cairns et al. (2005b) suggest that NPOs, government

and stakeholders, including donors, should develop a common definition of capacity-building in order to align their efforts and cooperation in building third-sector capacities.

8.3.3 Current practices of NPOs' capacity-building

The findings show that many NPO and GMO representatives utilise various capacity-building practices that align with their conceptualisation of capacity-building. This alignment shows the impact of enhancing the current understanding of the required capacities (Zamfir, 2017).

Even though there are many initiatives and practices in building NPOs' capacities, in most cases, these practices are not according to a systematic process starting from overall assessment, prioritisation and implementation. The absence of any systematic implementation of capacity-building might cause issues such as a lack of comprehensive solutions and ongoing improvements (Krishnaveni and Sujatha, 2013). From another angle, systematic implementation should assure the consideration of change management during implementation (Das and Chandrashekhar, 2007). Despite the importance of considering change management in capacity-building programmes (Jackson, 2009), it was not mentioned during the interviews. This absence might cause resistance during capacity-building and failures in capacity-building initiatives (Heward et al., 2007; Patel et al., 2012).

Based on the interviews conducted, it is noticed that one of the most common practices in building NPOs' financial capacities is endowments which were described by one of the participants as a trending practice in the third sector in Saudi Arabia. One of the main advantages of endowments is the sustainability of NPOs' work (Hasbullah and Ab Rahman, 2021). Endowment success in Islamic countries is linked to some related values in Islam, such as the continuity of rewards (Bakr et al., 2021). From another angle, there are some disadvantages of focusing on endowments such as the time and cost required to manage investments (Rebetak and Bartosova, 2021).

Endowments are not the only practice mentioned in building financial capacities, as some interviewees mentioned charity shops. Even though charity shops have become a primary sustainable source of income for many charities (Horne and Maddrell, 2003; Osterley and Williams, 2019), some authors criticise charity shops as they claim that they are businesses but operate to charity standards (Parsons, 2002). One missing financial practice is online fundraising campaigns, which are essential for broader NPO outreach (Kim et al., 2017). Recently, over 2 billion Saudi Riyals were donated in one year via

online channels (KKF, 2020). These figures are an increasing trend following social media's international growth (Khan and Baarmah, 2017). Another advantage of online funding is that it overcomes geographic location issues as it can reach donors worldwide (Felipe et al., 2017).

The second most frequently mentioned practice is employee development, a vast topic consisting of determining the capacities required in the employees, the approach to build those capacities, and many other human resource-related processes. One of the participating GMOs developed a detailed list of the required personnel capacities in NPOs. During the interviews, there was a focus mainly on training courses, which are used in many cases as a definition for employee development, although they are not the same (Yousafzai et al., 2014; Babaei Nivluei et al., 2022). Rees (2018) emphasises the importance of including human resource development practices in capacity-building programmes. Coelho and Grimoni (2014) argue that ignoring other employee development practices will not develop the employees in their daily practices.

A third trending practice is the automation of NPO services. Automating NPOs' services can be at various levels, starting from beneficiaries' registration to donors and fundraising management (Alshammari et al., 2017). Accordingly, by adopting the good practices embedded in the technology, NPOs can utilise automation to pursue comprehensive enhancements, including in their processes, procedures, structure, planning and evaluation (Brink et al., 2020). On the other hand, automation costs are always debatable in NPOs (Rathi and Given, 2017), especially with their limited resources, which might question the required level of automation (Fuchs et al., 2018).

On the other hand, the majority of GMO managers' practices are focused on building NPOs' institutional capacities, such as planning, organisational structure, policies and processes. GMOs focus on these capacities to empower NPOs' internal capabilities (Cornforth and Mordaunt, 2011). As NPOs focus on employee development, many GMOs in Saudi Arabia implement various activities to build employees' capacities. GMOs are motivated by the fact that their donations will be utilised more effectively if they are implemented by qualified people in their fields (Laallam et al., 2020).

Looking at Table 3.3 and comparing it with the most common practices in building NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in Saudi Arabia, the following practices are not considered in many NPOs: governance, networking and media. Good governance practices are linked to NPOs' performance; as

Bellante et al. (2018) show in their study, NPOs with better governance practices perform much better than other NPOs. Apparently, many related issues reported during the interviews were due to ignorance of building a governance system in many NPOs. Secondly, networking capacity could support NPOs in building their capacities by expanding their outreach (Sun and Asencio, 2019). Also, networking with donors could be improved by developing a relationship with them to enhance their donation experience (Nageswarakurukkal et al., 2020) with peer NPOs by cooperating in projects and sharing experiences (Sobeck, 2008), and with the government by complying with their regulations and gaining their support (Shuang, 2019). Finally, building media capacity in the NPOs is essential to develop networking and fundraising; the importance of this increases with the current dominant social media influence (Appleby, 2016).

8.3.4 Current approaches to NPOs' capacity-building

Various approaches were mentioned by the participants to explain the mechanism for building their capacities. Most of the approaches mentioned in the literature review are implemented by the participants, with some variance and differences. The most frequently mentioned approaches are outsourcing, training, partnership and excellence frameworks, while those mentioned less are coaching, scholarships and networking.

One of the most common approaches used in building NPOs' capacity in small cities is outsourcing some capacity-building practices, such as planning, training, technology-related services and developing feasibility studies. As the need for an outsourcing approach is greater in small cities due to the lack of expertise (Nolden, 2019), some concerns are mentioned by several authors. Firstly, determining the outsourcing scope should not include any NPO core services (Nordigarden et al., 2014). Secondly, it is important to ensure that outsourcing considers employee development and knowledge transfer (Teo and Bhattacharjee, 2014). Thirdly, outsourcing should be implemented systematically, according to good practices, starting from the planning phase until the programme's close (Schniederjans et al., 2006).

The second approach mentioned in utilising excellence and quality models such as ISO, excellence prizes, the ministry governance model and PQASSO. Almost half of the participants use one of these frameworks to build their capacities. One of the advantages of using these frameworks is the embedded experience (Coelho et al., 2011) which gives their capacity-building more comprehensive scope (Rantsi

et al., 2021). Another advantage of some of these frameworks is the attached process, which also considers implementation issues via change management practices (Meyers et al., 2012). One critique of adopting management frameworks to build NPOs capacities is the difficulties in finding a customised framework for each NPO, as each NPO has its own particular needs. The PQASSO framework tries to overcome this issue by standardising common processes and giving the NPO a platform to add to their capacities (NCVO, 2020). Moreover, a common issue in excellence awards is when NPOs focus on awards without gaining outcomes from the framework (Nichols et al., 2013). Some of these issues are covered by designing frameworks customised for the third sector (Myers and Sacks, 2003). One related example in this research concerns some GMOs in Saudi Arabia as they developed excellence prizes and capacity-building guides. A second example is when the Ministry of Social Affairs developed a framework for NPOs called the governance framework to ensure that NPOs comply with their requirements.

A final observation on current approaches is that most of them are not part of comprehensive implementation for all NPO capacities. This might be due to the limited resources in NPOs (Martinez, 2009) or the gradual and continuous nature of capacity-building (Hill-Berry, 2019). On the other hand, Eade (2007) argues that a comprehensive approach is necessary due to the interlinked relations between capacities. This issue could be tackled by having a comprehensive plan for NPOs' capacity-building programmes and gradual implementation according to priorities and available resources.

8.3.5 Current priorities in building NPOs' capacities

Prioritising capacities generates a debate on what to prioritise. It is a challenge for many NPOs to decide on their capacity priorities (Reid and Gibb, 2004; Chandler and Kennedy, 2015). In other words, there might be a question over prioritisation as it goes against a comprehensive approach. The interlinked nature of capacities prompts this argument as each capacity depends on other capacities (Afify, 2011). One example mentioned during the interviews was prioritising financial capacities, which is one of the main enablers of qualified human resources; conversely, qualified human resources are an enabler of NPOs' financial fundraising. Thus, Jarmyr and Friis (2008) argue that capacity-building should be approached via comprehensive implementation to avoid the dependencies between interlinked capacities. Kim and Mollerus (2016) argue that prioritising a group of capacities according to the available budget could be more realistic.

One repeated answer to the priority question was "it depends on the NPO current capacities situation", which requires an initial assessment of current capacities. An assessment step in capacity-building is essential in the planning phase (Hailey et al., 2005). As assessment directs capacity-building programmes, NPOs should enhance their assessment tools and practices (Backer, 2000). Ika and Donnelly (2017) mention some factors that should be considered during assessment, such as culture, local community, politics, and economics which affect capacity-building efforts.

One of the main findings is that there are differences in priorities between donors and NPOs. NPOs prioritise financial capacities while GMOs prioritise institutional capacities. This difference in priorities could result in the rejection of many applications and programmes (Hauger, 2022). Priority differences can be caused by differences in motivation and values for each group (Hossain et al., 2018). Trying to explain these differences, Gibson (2017) argues that ignorance of the participatory approach in building GMO granting strategies is one of the main reasons for priority differences. On the other hand, there are differences in priorities for each NPO as each one has its own particular circumstances. Finally, by comparing prioritised capacities with practices and definitions, there are similarities and repetitions in the mentioned capacities, which also shows the importance of conceptualisation for all related views of NPOs' capacity-building. Also, it is a healthy sign of implementing prioritised capacities (Simmons et al., 2011).

One other observation is that prioritised capacities (financial resources, employee development and institutional capacities) are considered by Cornforth and Mordaunt (2011) to be keys to sustain NPOs' work. Even though there are differences in the priorities of NPOs and GMOs, both parties agree on prioritising employee development. One specific repeated priority is to develop NPOs leaders, who play a crucial role in enhancing NPOs' internal capabilities (Hailey and James, 2004). On the other hand, endowments are prioritised in many answers, reflecting the value and acceptance of endowments in Saudi Arabia (Saad et al., 2016).

From the GMOs' point of view, there is a clear focus on building NPOs' institutional capacities. This focus is similar to that of the UN, international aid organisations and several GMOs which prioritise NPOs' institutional capacities (De Zeeuw, J., 2015). Szczepanska (2020) claims that many GMOs prioritise institutional capacities to close the operational gap between them and grantees. By prioritising

institutional capacities, GMOs should consider the need for employee readiness and development prior to programmes (Cahoon et al., 2014).

Finally, by looking at GMOs' priorities in Saudi Arabia, small cities are not prioritised in NPOs' capacity building programmes. Atkins and Allred (2021) argue that donors and decision-makers should prioritise development in small cities. Ethical issues of equal opportunities between all NPOs could arise if such prioritisation exists (Gullickson et al., 2021). A generic policy to prioritise those most in need of capacities will be fair for all NPOs and benefit NPOs in small cities mentioned as they are in more need (Bretos et al., 2020).

8.3.6 Impact of capacity-building programmes on NPOs

As in many NPOs worldwide, capacity-building programmes show evidence-based results and improvements in NPO work (Minzner et al., 2014). Even though a positive impact from NPOs' capacity-building programmes is reported, some issues are reported in the impact assessment process. This might be due to a lack of awareness of the importance of impact assessments (Hailey and James, 2003). Measuring the impact of capacity-building programmes will benefit NPOs by monitoring and enhancing their outcomes (Gordon and Chadwick, 2007). Besides the benefits of assessing the impact of capacity-building programmes, it is also essential to ensure that impact assessments start early. Biolcheva (2014) argues that the assessment process should start in the planning phase, where measurement can be designed and agreed on.

Regarding the impact assessment approach, George and Kirkpatrick (2007) emphasise the importance of having a systematic process to measure impact. This research shows that many donors used the excellence models to assess NPOs' progress after capacity-building investments. As excellence models are recognisable tools to measure NPOs' maturity level (Al-Tabbaa et al., 2013), they might be acceptable to indicate capacity-building impact. Note that excellence models may have many issues and disadvantages, such as many of them are complicated, time-consuming (Dahlgaard et al., 2013) and prizes are often the primary goal for participation instead of focusing on NPO improvement (Brown, 2014).

As mentioned previously about the interlinked nature of NPOs' capacities and the dependencies between them, the impact of capacity-building programmes has positive impacts that extend in a

snowball motion. An excellent example of this point is the improvements that can be made by enhancing NPOs' financial resources, which may be reflected in employee development, institutional development and many other areas in the NPO (Chadha, 2021). Thus, in many answers, work enhancements give a generic impression of many enhancements in the NPO. Work enhancements are mentioned in many references as one of the main goals of capacity-building (Jain and Dhir, 2021). Another mentioned impact is enhancements for beneficiaries, which many other authors highlight as the ultimate goal of NPOs' capacity-building (Sanyal, 2006). Accordingly, donors and the board of directors will increase their support for capacity-building programmes after seeing the positive impact on NPOs' outcomes (Hailey and James, 2003; Minzner et al., 2014).

Even though building NPOs' financial capacities was reported as the capacity most prioritised in current practices, enhancing the financial situation was not mentioned as an impact of current practices. This might be due to the unsaturated position of NPOs regarding their financial resources, as is the case in most NPOs (Garcia-Rodriguez and Romero-Merino, 2020) or because that financial impact could have mostly resulted in the development of other areas (Li, 2021). Work enhancements, expansion and incremental improvements for beneficiaries are indirect results of financial stability (Dvoryadkina and Prostova, 2020).

Finally, it is essential to mention some of the reported negative impacts of the absence of capacity-building efforts. NPOs will suffer if they neglect capacity-building programmes (Pawar and Cox, 2010; Abdusalyamova and Warren, 2007). Ignorance of building NPOs' capacities will reflect negatively on NPOs in many aspects, such as slowing their growth (Bezuidenhout et al., 2022), less effectiveness in their work (Maleković et al., 2018) and a lack of sustainability (Funmilayo, 2014).

8.3.7 Challenges in NPOs' capacity-building programmes

Based on the data collected from the research interviews, several challenges were reported by NPO representatives and GMO managers. Similar to many organisations in the third sector, financial and human resources are the most challenging areas in capacity-building (Zbuckea et al., 2019). These challenges increase when most of the financial and human resources are consumed in aid projects (Reid and Gibb, 2004; Gilmer and Hughes, 2013). The interviewees did not report some of the challenges mentioned in the third chapter. The absence of these challenges during the interviews does not necessarily mean the absence of them in daily practices.

One missed challenge was a lack of standardisation; from several interviews, there is a trend towards adopting quality and excellence frameworks' standards in the third sector in Saudi Arabia. Using these standards should support capacity-building practices having more structural implementation (Lasrado, 2018). The second missed challenge was cultural and change management issues. Even though it was not mentioned directly, many reported challenges were related to cultural issues, such as the following: few female leaders in NPOs, boards of directors' wide authority over operations, unfair GMO support distribution and difficulties in filling several job roles with Saudi employees. Not naming cultural issues during the interviews could be because many managers are not aware of cultural issues in their organisations (Cense et al., 2018), or they might not label them as "cultural" issues. The effect of Saudi culture on the workforce is vital and should be considered by human resource management practices (Alkahtani et al., 2021). Finally, the absence of government support is mentioned in many articles as a challenge to building third-sector capacity (Le, 2019; Aref, 2011), while in the research case, generally positive governmental support was reported in the interviews. The government's support for building the third sector's capacity stems from their understanding of the importance of the third sector's role in the development process (Matic, 2018). Also, it is shaped by the nature of the state's formulation as Saudi Arabia is described as a rentier state (Baumann, H., 2019).

Some difficulties are internal, such as issues related to NPOs' boards of directors. Based on the frequency of mentioning this issue in the interviews, it seems to be a common issue in NPOs in small cities in Saudi Arabia. The primary role of NPO boards is to be supportive of NPOs (UK Charity commission, 2018), but the opposite situation was reported in that many NPO managers claim that the board is an obstacle due to its negative interference. This situation might be the result of a lack of explicit agreement on roles and responsibilities between boards and operational teams (Watt et al., 2022), a lack of role preparation for board members (Kraai and Mashau, 2020) and a lack of qualified board members (Brown, 2007). Alamri (2014) argues that many board members may seek election to raise their social status, which is very valuable in Saudi culture.

Generally, three characteristics of reported challenges are noticed. First, there is alignment between the challenges mentioned, current practices and priorities, which might raise the question of the occurrence of these challenges with the current focus on tackling them. In other words, it is a sign of an issue

volume without satisfactory solutions, which is a common situation in the third sector (Macmillan, 2013b); while it is considered a positive sign to prioritise areas that need more focus. Secondly, it is noticed that most of the reported issues can be categorised as internal issues within NPOs, with some reported issues being related to external players such as donors and the government. This situation gives NPOs an excellent opportunity to tackle these challenges as they have reasonable control over them (Batti, 2014). Many NPO managers might consider external factors to be the key to internal enhancements, such as external financial support and regulations (Parkinson, S., 2009). Finally, it is noticed that many reported challenges are interlinked, which reflects the nature of the organisation's components (Murphy, 2020).

The root causes of most of the mentioned challenges are a lack of financial resources and being far from many resources in large cities. Financial resources are vital in building NPOs' capacities (Munari and Toschi, 2019). This becomes a challenge as the third sector does not have enough resources to implement its aid projects (Goyal et al., 2015). Moreover, many donors are unwilling to contribute to NPOs' operational costs (Silva and Khan, 2019). In this research, donors reported that there is a general acceptance to support capacity-building programmes, which should be reflected in many successful implementations. The second root cause is being far from the main cities, which usually have primary resources for capacity-building (Soleimanpour et al., 2019). Local government should consider this issue in small cities by improving NPOs' access to capacity-building programmes (Kole, 2007). On a positive note, the excellent Internet connection infrastructure in Saudi Arabia (Saquib, 2020) could to some extent be considered a factor in tackling this issue (Maguire et al., 2019).

Most of the interviewees in this research agree on difficulties in human resources, such as a lack of qualified employees, a high turnover rate, especially among Saudi employees, and several difficulties in training courses. Human resources are the main capacity to be built in the NPO (Hameed and Waheed, 2011; Gilmer and Hughes, 2013). A failure to build employees' capacity will be reflected in the failure of NPO operations (Wahlén, 2014). Also, qualified employees are the main enabler in building other NPOs' capacities (Amuna et al., 2021). A link is noticed between small cities and the difficulties in finding qualified human resources. Rural areas generally suffer from a rarity of qualified employees (Van Hiep, 2021). One related issue is having Saudi nationality employees in NPOs. Al-Mutairi et al. (2020) mentions several reasons for this issue, such as cultural acceptance, low salaries and limited development opportunities.

Some interviewees reported automation-related challenges as many NPOs mentioned automation practices in building their capacities; some challenges were expected, such as resistance (Gotthardt et al., 2020), implementation difficulties (Sifakis, 2015) and mistakes in automation planning (Tyagi et al., 2017). Charities' automation challenges are expected to be greater as they have limited financial and technical resources (Ihm and Kim, 2021). As a result of these challenges, most NPOs outsource their automation programmes (Eck et al., 2004). Outsourcing capacity-building practices is also usually combined with different challenges such as the high cost (Erbakanova, 2020), implementation without transferring knowledge (Deng et al., 2021) and issues with finding competitive contractors in small cities (Girth et al., 2012). Interestingly, outsourcing could be a development opportunity for rural areas as this is implemented in some Indian rural areas (Kawlra, 2013).

8.3.8 Improvements to NPOs' capacity-building programmes

By looking into current reported practices and comparing them with good practices in NPOs' capacity-building, it is concluded that there is room for improvement in current capacity-building practices in NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia. These improvements should be planned as Ueki (2015) suggests, capacity-building improvements should always be systematic and continuous. One of the main questions on improvements in capacity-building relates to accountability and responsibility. In other words, who should lead improvement efforts in NPOs' capacity-building: the government, donors, implementers or NPOs? From the interviews, there is an impression that GMOs and the government lead most initiatives. Humphries et al. (2011) and Li and Guo (2015) argue that these efforts should be a combined responsibility of NPOs, government and donors. Macmillan (2016) argues that one of the main factors in leading in the capacity-building market is depending on the owner of financial resources, either NPOs, management boards, government or donors. In this research, financial resources depend more on GMOs and the government.

Comparing suggested improvements with current challenges, there are five points to be highlighted: First, there is generic alignment with difficulties and priorities. This alignment shows that NPOs are moving in the right direction by focusing on particular enhancements to tackle their weaknesses. Secondly, the results of suggested improvements could be affected by Lewin's theory, where challenges require similar or more efforts to be solved (Burnes and Bargal, 2017). Thus, NPO managers should

understand the extent of their problems in capacity-building before designing suggested solutions. Thirdly, many suggested solutions are generic and traditional, which might require creative solutions and tools. The third sector's challenges require creative solutions, especially with its limited resources (Mali et al., 2022). Fourthly, by comparing suggested improvements with the difficulties mentioned, some challenges are neglected, such as management board issues, a lack of consultation services in small cities and difficulties in hiring qualified employees. Finally, by looking at capacity-building success factors in previous literature, the following improvements were not mentioned by the participants and could be helpful for NPOs in this research:

1. Maintaining accountability from external stakeholders (James, 2002; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; James and Hailey, 2008; Netto et al., 2012; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014).
2. Building third-sector capacities (Howard et al., 2009; ShahulHameedu and Kanchana, 2014).
3. Developing and utilising local consultants (James and Hailey, 2008).
4. Focusing on tackling cultural and change management aspects (James, 2002; Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003; Vernis et al., 2006; James and Hailey, 2008; DFID, 2010).
5. Enhance internal and external communication (James, 2002; Lopes and Theisohn, 2003; Howard et al., 2009; Afaq, 2013).
6. Applying a continuous improvement cycle by focusing on ongoing evaluations (Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003).
7. Empowering NPOs employees in capacity-building programmes by giving them ownership of programmes (Johnson and Ludema, 1997; James, 2002; Vernis et al., 2006; DFID, 2010; Afaq, 2013).

Most of the suggested improvements involve enhancing financial capacities, especially endowments, while most of the suggested improvements regarding employees' development mention training courses, which highlights the absence of creativity and a systematic process in capacity-building planning. Systematic approaches are required for practical and creative improvements (Hsieh, 2018).

One repeated suggestion is to develop a shared services centre to serve NPOs with professional services such as accounting, human resources and supply-chain processes. Shared services centres are designed to reduce costs (Mogoa and Koori, 2021), enhance quality and improve work efficiency (Bantscheff and Britzelmaier, 2019). A similar project was developed in New Zealand, and the general outcomes were cutting costs, enhancing service quality and increasing efficiency (Crump and Peter, 2014).

Shared services centres could be partially implemented, as one of the suggested enhancements concerns developing central unified systems. Central unified systems could assist NPOs in exchanging data and avoiding some duplication issues. One issue that needs to be considered in a unified system is complying with legal requirements for data privacy (Chudasama et al., 2020).

Finally, some suggested improvements relate to current training practices such as simplifying management tools, customising training courses to be more relevant to NPO work and enhancing training engagement by coaching and following up practices. Kraai and Mashau (2020) argue that NPOs' training should consider their nature and specific needs. Some authors take a further step by developing a customised management framework for NPOs (Lindenberg, 2001; Aboramadan, 2018; Sanderse et al., 2020). In contrast, Maier et al. (2016) discuss the idea of NPOs being managed as business organisations and utilising the full range of business management practices. On the other hand, a coaching approach is supported by many authors (Reid and Gibb, 2004; Spencer, 2011). Even though a coaching approach consumes time and effort (Nicol et al., 2019), it develops capacities by relating them to real-life work (Boak and Crabbe, 2018) and ensuring the transfer of knowledge via the right practices (Spencer, 2011).

8.3.9 Donors' current position vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building

On asking the participants about donors' support for capacity-building, the dialogue was more specifically about GMOs as they have recently become the main donors for NPOs' capacity-building programmes. Even though many participants commented positively on the current support for GMOs, some NPOs had the opposite experience and do not get support for their capacity-building programmes. This issue might arise due to a lack of communication (Mackinnon and VanDeCarr, 2009) or a mismatch between NPOs' needs and GMOs' granting policies (Dymnicki et al., 2021). Grant-making organisations and NPOs have a mutual responsibility to enhance their understanding of each other to align the demand with offered support (Kania and Kramer, 2011).

From the interviews and GMOs' policy documents, it is noticed that GMOs in Saudi Arabia lead in NPOs' capacity-building via direct and indirect support. This could be due to two main factors: GMOs are the financial source of capacity-building programmes, while NPOs generally need this support (Faulk and Stewart, 2017). Secondly, as many GMOs have sufficient budgets to hire qualified experts

with high salaries (Slatten et al., 2021), they have the ability to lead capacity-building practices with their knowledge and experience (Hager and Boris, 2012). On the other hand, by comparing individual donors and GMOs, there is a difference as GMOs are usually more objective-oriented (Franko et al., 2022) and work in a proactive approach according to their plans and agendas (Bisesi, M., 2008). GMO support in a proactive approach could be disconnected from current needs if GMO plans do not consider current NPOs needs (Kraeger et al., 2022). A combination of a proactive and a responsive approach could result in balanced efforts in building capacities according to a joint view (Connolly, 2011). Also, it is recommended to have joint assessment efforts prior to designing a capacity-building programme or GMO grant policy development (Lomofsky and Grout-Smith, 2020).

One commonly reported practice is conditional support for NPOs, where the conditions are developed to encourage NPOs to build their capacities in certain areas. One issue in conditional support is the temporary implementation of requirements to get financial support (Zhang et al., 2017). Conditional support should be combined with some awareness efforts to build internal commitment (MacIndoe, 2022). Another issue is when conditional support does not align with current NPO priorities in building their capacities (Dymnicki et al., 2021).

Most reported support is not implemented by GMOs; it is either implemented by the NPO or outsourced to a third party. Outsourcing capacity-building implementation is needed due to a lack of the experience required in the NPO (Wekhwela, 2018). Different points need to be considered when outsourcing capacity-building programmes, such as: first, the service provider should have experience in NPOs (Allen, 2018). Secondly, consider transferring knowledge to the NPO employees (Jadraque, 2020). Thirdly, seek to sustain their work in the NPO after the end of their contract (Lok et al., 2018). Fourthly, maintain the communication and the expected outcome before and during the implementation (Kassem et al., 2021). Fifthly, empower NPOs employees by giving them the programme ownership (Reid and Gibb, 2004). Thus, Walsh and Lannon's (2020) emphasise transferring knowledge and good practices during aid projects' implementation.

Also, it is noticed that GMOs generally focus on building institutional capacities in NPOs, which might be based on their assessments of current needs. NPOs do not necessarily agree with assessment outcomes as their priority is usually to build their financial capacities. This conflict in priorities comes

from the interlinked nature of capacities (Miquelajauregui et al., 2021) and the different positions and views of donors and NPOs (Grant, 2016). The consequences of the dependencies between capacities lead some authors, such as Light et al. (2002), to suggest a comprehensive implementation approach for NPOs' capacities.

Finally, it is noticed that many NPOs complain about the difficulties with grant-making organisations' applications which might deprive them of getting grants to build their capacities. Thus, some donors engage in several activities to build NPOs' abilities in applying, communicating and reporting to GMOs and donors (Huliaras, 2020). As a result, NPOs with this capacity are reported to have better grant access (Akurugoda, 2018). Another reported cultural-related issue is biased support distribution based on networking. This issue is common, especially in tribe-oriented countries (Funkhouser, 2022), and it is more apparent in villages and small cities than large cities (Tsosie et al., 2019).

8.3.10 Government's current position vis-à-vis NPOs' capacity-building

The data collected show the general satisfaction of NPOs with government support for capacity-building programmes. This support is in the form of financial support, training facilitation and governance efforts. Government and NPO coordination depends heavily on the relationship between them (Salamon and Toepler, 2015). After describing government and NPO relation scenarios as independent, complementary or mutual accountability, Young (2000) concluded that this relationship could be a mixture of all forms of relations and thus multi-layered. Ascoli and Ranci (2013) argue that the domination of the shape of the relation depends on each part's financial contribution. The Saudi government's involvement in development has been clear and massive since the discovery of oil (Algaeed, 2022). This support has many drivers, such as the nature of the relationship between the government and the citizens, which Hertog (2004) describes as that of a parental state or rentier state. With the recent huge changes in Saudi internal policies, driven by economic factors (Aljumie, 2020), the government's direct support for the third sector might be affected by these new changes as the Saudi government is moving away from being a rentier state (Ebnmhana, 2018). On a positive note, by looking at the Saudi vision, NPOs' capacity-building exists and is measured by some indicators such as empowering the NPO sector and increasing its financial growth (Vision 2030, 2017). Also, the government's facilitation of new NPOs has been evident in the last five years as the number of new NPO increased by more than 300% (KKF, 2020).

One of the new governance tools developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs is the governance model, which consists of compliance requirements in different areas such as governance, finance and transparency (MLSD, 2019). Many participants reported that the ministry's financial support for NPOs is linked to NPO compliance level scores on the governance model. This approach could encourage NPOs to enhance their internal capacities and become eligible for support (Dragicevic, 2004). However, from another angle, light implementation could manipulate these conditions to tick boxes (Henry, 2008). Some effort is required to convince NPOs of the benefits of building their capacities according to good practices (Aldape et al., 2006). Comparing the ministry governance model with other models shows that the other models are more comprehensive in building NPOs' capacities, while the governance model is more about ensuring that NPOs comply with the ministry's main legal requirements.

Along with all these efforts, there are some reported difficulties with government support for capacity-building. Some of these difficulties are due to missing roles, such as coordination with banks and other government agencies, training facilitation in small cities, capacity-building infrastructure, shared databases for beneficiaries and a research centre. The government is not expected to implement all of these efforts directly, rather its primary role is to facilitate donors, agencies and universities (Dibie and Edoho, 2017). Government coordination with the GMOs could redirect many efforts in the third sector to make them more effective in building and sustaining NPOs and sector capacities (Toepler and Abramson, 2021).

8.4 Summary

This chapter has presented the main findings by comparing NPOs representatives' views with GMO managers' views. Then these main findings were discussed in light of recent research work. In the next chapter, the research's main outcomes and recommendations will be presented. Also, the limitations and suggested future related research will be stated to conclude the research.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This thesis explores current NPOs' capacity-building practices within small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia and examines related challenges and opportunities. The introduction chapter highlighted the topic's significance and presented the thesis' aim, objectives and questions. The second chapter gives an overview of NPOs, Saudi Arabia and the third sector in Saudi Arabia to give the research a preface and link the current meaning of the main research components with their origins.

After these opening chapters, a literature review on the research's main topics was conducted. In this chapter, several topics related to NPOs' capacity-building were reviewed, such as its origins, definitions, types, stakeholders, goals, market, critical success factors, challenges, implementation processes, approaches, impact assessments and interaction with other management practices. By the end of the third chapter, research gaps were identified and the theoretical base was built. The fourth chapter presented the research methodology to answer the how question. This chapter started by presenting a philosophical base for the selected research methodology. Then, the selected methodology was presented in detail, including the research methodology, design, sample, quality, data analysis and research ethics.

The outcomes of research fieldwork were presented in chapters Five, Six and Seven. The research findings are distributed across three chapters based on the research questions. The results were presented after a thematic analysis of the data collected; several quotes from the interviews were cited. Then, the main research findings were discussed in the eighth chapter by referring to the literature review, many recent studies and reports. In the ninth chapter, the thesis will be concluded by presenting the main findings, theoretical and practical implications, research limitations and suggestions for future studies.

9.2 Summary of the main findings

The outcomes of this research fulfil the thesis' aim as the current NPO capacity-building situation within small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia has been explored. The main findings of this research are presented in Table 9.1, below, based on the research objectives.

Table 9.1: Main research findings

Research title: Non-Profit Organisations' capacity-building in small cities: Exploring current practices, challenges and opportunities in central Saudi Arabia	
Research aim: To explore current NPOs' capacity-building practices within small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia and to examine related challenges and opportunities.	
Research objective	Main findings
To explore and assess the current capacity-building practices of NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia have long experience, without specialisation, and operate with low numbers of employees. • There are many issues in the current understanding of capacity-building which affect current practices. • Most current practices focus on financial capacities, employee development and automation. • Most current practices are implemented by external contractors. • Utilising management frameworks and excellence models in capacity-building is a trending practice. • The most prioritised capacities are financial and employee capacities. • A positive impact for capacity-building programmes is reported along with some weaknesses in impact assessment practices.
To explore NPOs' challenges and opportunities regarding capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in human resources are the most frequently mentioned challenge. • Limited financial resources and geographical location are the root cause of most current challenges. • NPOs' boards of directors are considered a problematic source for many NPOs in small cities. • Many NPOs lack what is essential to be able to build their capacities. • Most NPO representatives suggest making more efforts in building financial and employees' capacities. • One reoccurring suggestion is to have shared services centres to provide high-quality services at a reasonable cost to NPOs in small cities.

Research objective	Main findings
To assess and understand donors' position towards NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most GMOs support NPOs' capacity-building programmes. • NPOs report some difficulties in the granting process. • GMOs are more familiar with capacity-building concepts than are NPOs. • Most GMOs focus on building NPOs' institutional capacities. • GMOs do not prioritise NPOs in small cities. • GMOs face issues with NPO readiness and finding capacity builders in small cities. • Many GMOs and the government provide conditional support to encourage NPOs to build their capacities. • There is recognisable participation from the government in building NPOs' capacities. • GMOs utilise several management frameworks in conceptualising and implementing capacity-building programmes.

Source: Constructed by the author

9.3 Research implications and recommendations

This research contributes to third-sector research work in Saudi Arabia. The research's theoretical and practical implications will be highlighted in the forthcoming sections.

9.3.1 Theoretical implications and contributions

Firstly, regarding capacity building in NPOs, this research contributed in assessing the current capacity building definitions, comparing the current capacity building frameworks, assessing the useability of the management and quality frameworks in NPOs capacity building, comparing different frameworks to be used in capacity building impact assessment and adopting the Lewin's theory in NPOs' capacity building programs.

Secondly, after looking at current research work on the third sector of Saudi Arabia, most of it discusses the political aspect, such as the third sector and terrorism, or the third sector's role in expanding ideologies in other countries. This research contributes to the Saudi third sector's effectiveness and sustainability studies by highlighting and exploring NPOs' capacity-building in the third sector in Saudi Arabia. There are few research studies on NPOs' capacity-building in Saudi Arabia; this research contributes by filling some research gaps.

Thirdly, even though there are some studies on the third sector in Saudi Arabia, this research contributes by shining a light on the current status of NPOs in small cities as this research area has not received the required focus. Many research works show the unique characteristics of small cities and urban areas; thus, this research fills a significant research gap and highlights the importance of urban areas development efforts.

Thirdly, by looking into the GMO contribution to build NPOs' capacities in small cities, this research highlights GMOs' significant role in the third sector in Saudi Arabia. Research work on Saudi GMOs does not reflect the importance of their role in enhancing and directing third-sector work. This research shows current NPOs' views on GMOs' contribution and GMOs' views on building NPOs' capacities.

Finally, with the differences in how NPOs conceptualise capacity-building, the findings show the importance of including employee development in capacity-building practices. Considering human resource development practices will ensure the development of employees' capacities during the implementation of any capacity-building programmes. Also, the findings show the importance of considering the differences between NPOs' nature and needs in defining capacity-building targeted capacities.

9.3.2 Practical implications and recommendations

Many of the research findings can enhance NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in Saudi Arabia. To put these findings into practical context, the following Table 9.2 presents the research recommendations by linking each recommendation with a related finding. The general positive atmosphere towards NPOs' capacity-building from NPOs, donors and the government will facilitate the implementation of such suggestions. The research recommendations are divided into three sections based on the main stakeholders.

Table 9.2: Practical implications linked to related findings

Practical implications and recommendations to NPOs	
Findings	Practical implications and recommendations
Issues with the current understanding of NPOs' capacity-building	Conduct awareness programmes to enhance NPOs' understanding of capacity-building
Issues with not prioritising capacity-building within some NPOs	Educate NPOs on the importance of building their capacities
Many good capacity-building practices do not reach out to many NPOs	Spread good capacity-building practices by enhancing peer communication through visits and workshops
Different understanding and prioritising between donors and NPO in capacity-building programmes	Enhance the communication with donors to align capacity-building priorities and efforts
Practical implications and recommendations to NPOs	
Findings	Practical implications and recommendations
Some capacity-building obstacles are caused by government agencies' restrictions	Enhance the communication with government and work together on these issues
Scattered efforts in building NPOs capacities and some missing practices	Enhance capacity-building practices by adopting systematic approaches and related frameworks
Neglecting cultural and change management aspects in capacity-building programmes	Conduct awareness sessions on organisational culture and change management approaches
Many NPO managers have more than 25 years of experience	Develop and implement succession plans for NPOs' leaders
Some NPOs' capacity-building challenges are missing from their priorities	Redefine and review current NPOs' capacity-building priorities by considering current challenges
The effect of geographical location on NPOs' access to capacity-building resources	Utilise online platforms to enhance NPOs' abilities and tackle many current difficulties
The absence or existence of poor impact assessment practices to measure capacity-building programmes	More enhancements and training are required to measure the impact of capacity-building programmes
Human resource issues are the most common challenge in NPOs' capacity-building	Creative solutions are required to tackle human resource challenges in NPOs in small cities

Findings	Practical implications and recommendations
Limited financial resources are the root cause of many challenges in NPOs' capacity-building	Prioritising fundraising capacity in NPOs in small cities will overcome many challenges in capacity-building
Due to a lack of internal expertise, most capacity-building practices are outsourced	Enhance outsourcing practices to ensure sustainable and effective outcomes
Many NPOs considered their boards of directors to be one of their challenges in capacity-building programmes	Build NPOs' board of director capacities and enhance their governance practices to tackle current issues
Some GMOs and donors prefer not to donate to capacity-building programmes	Presenting the impact of capacity-building programmes to donors and include capacity-building in aid programmes
Most capacity-building challenges are linked to either financial difficulties or geographic location	Prioritise solutions for these issues to enhance other capacities
Practical implications and recommendations to donors	
Findings	Practical implications and recommendations
Different understandings of NPOs' capacity-building between GMOs and NPOs	Encourage GMOs and NPOs to develop a shared definition of capacity-building to be adopted in their practices
NPOs with poor proposal writing capacity do not get access to many capacity-building grants	Prioritise proposal writing skills and external communication capacity
NPOs in small cities face difficulties in allocating sufficient financial and human resources	Centralised capacity-building projects should be built by GMOs to serve NPOs effectively
Differences in NPOs' and GMOs' priorities in capacity-building programmes	Enhance the communication with NPOs and incorporate their capacity needs into GMOs' plans
GMOs do not prioritise NPOs in small cities in their granting policies	GMOs should consider NPOs' unique challenges in small cities
Many NPO staff are not capable of being part of some capacity-building programmes	Some NPOs might require preparation prior to capacity-building programmes
Many NPOs complain about difficulties with and are not familiar with management terminology	Customise and simplify capacity-building programmes for NPO employees

Many NPOs reported difficulties in applications to get grants for capacity-building programmes	GMOs to train NPOs on the application process and facilitate a more straightforward process
The founders of GMOs influence many GMO policies	Enhance GMOs founders' awareness of the importance of capacity-building programmes
NPOs with poor capacities have fewer abilities to build their capacities	More attention and proactive initiatives from GMOs should be given to NPOs with fewer abilities
Claims of unfair distribution of support to NPOs	GMOs to adopt a transparent granting process
Practical implications and recommendations to officials	
Findings	Practical implications and recommendations
Lack of qualified capacity-builders in small cities	Facilitate and encourage capacity-builders in small cities
Lack of capacity-building infrastructure in small cities	More attention from the government to enhance third-sector support capabilities in small cities
Gaps in research work about NPOs in small cities	Develop and facilitate third-sector research centres
Some difficulties are reported due to government requirements	Enhance the communication with NPOs to overcome capacity-building issues

Source: Constructed by the author

9.4 Research limitations

Similar to many recent research projects, the Covid-19 pandemic caused disruption to and changes in the research's different phases. In this research, many changes occurred because of Covid-19, such as conducting interviews online instead of in-person meetings. Generally, online meetings supported most of the required tasks to collect data, but they are not as good as direct meetings with NPO representatives. Secondly, the research methodology changed slightly as the observation input from visiting NPOs did not occur.

A second limitation is related to the research sample. Due to limitations on time and resources, this research investigated NPOs in small cities in Saudi Arabia. Large cities and small cities in other regions were outside the research scope. According to the scope of this research, NPO representatives and some GMO managers were interviewed, while some other essential stakeholders were not interviewed, such as beneficiaries, government agencies and individual donors.

Finally, due to some cultural aspects, most NPO managers in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia are male. Thus, female representation in the interviews was low, although many female employees participated in the qualitative questionnaire. Some difficulties in finding female candidates were associated with gender differences between the researcher and the interviewees. Some of the mentioned limitations are developed as suggestions for future studies.

9.5 Suggested future studies

Several related topics were slightly touched on during the research as their significance in the third sector is shown in some research findings; these areas might require further research. First is GMOs' prominent role in developing and directing the third sector in Saudi Arabia generally and specifically in small cities. Researchers and practitioners in the third sector need to understand GMOs in depth by exploring their practices, priorities and approaches. A second related topic is the government's role in the third sector, which will give a different perspective on their responsibilities, policies and efforts in building the third sector in urban areas. Studying the government's position on third-sector development will give more insights into the third sector's place in master development plans for urban areas. Thirdly, as the research scope was limited to NPOs in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia, a comparison study with NPOs in large cities or other regions would give a comprehensive view of capacity-building in the third sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Finally, females' roles, participation and difficulties in NPOs in Saudi Arabia would give a more profound understanding of women's current position in development efforts in Saudi Arabia by considering more cultural factors.

9.6 Closing remarks

Apparently, after conducting this research, there is a positive atmosphere regarding NPOs' capacity-building in small cities in the central region of Saudi Arabia, with room for improvement. Enhancing NPOs' capacity-building will be reflected in the services provided to beneficiaries' and third-sector development. Issues with conceptualising the term need to be addressed collectively by the third sector's main stakeholders, which will enable collective work in building NPOs' capacities. Enhancements to capacity-building conceptualisation will enhance current practices and make them more comprehensive and systematic and include third-sector infrastructure required capacities. Enhancing NPOs' internal and external communication is vital to drive collective capacity-building efforts and align the priorities between NPOs, government agencies and GMOs.

NPOs in the small cities are a vital part of urban area development in Saudi Arabia. Recently, GMOs changed the map of the third sector in Saudi Arabia, which should allow more attention to be paid to enhancing NPOs' capacity-building efforts. Researchers and specialists in the third sector should make more efforts to align GMOs' efforts and capabilities with the third sector's needs. On the other hand, government agencies and GMOs have collective responsibilities to address third-sector challenges in small cities.

Finally, further efforts and research are required to explore the third sector in Saudi Arabia from different perspectives. Donors, universities and government agencies are responsible for supporting and facilitating third-sector research, which will guide the development efforts based on scientific input.

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Appendices

I. Ethical approval



The University of Manchester

Environment, Education and Development School Panel PGR

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Email: PGR.ethics.seed@manchester.ac.uk

Ref: 2020-10185-16950

16/11/2020

Dear Mr Abdullah Albagieh, , Dr Farhad Hossain

Study Title: Non-Profit Organizations' (NPOs') capacity building in small cities: Exploring current practices, challenges and opportunities in central Saudi Arabia

Environment, Education and Development School Panel PGR

I write to thank you for submitting the final version of your documents for your project to the Committee on 11/11/2020 21:47 . I am pleased to confirm a favourable ethical opinion for the above research on the basis described in the application form and supporting documentation as submitted and approved by the Committee.

COVID-19 Important Note

Please ensure you read the information on the [Research Ethics website](#) in relation to data collection in the COVID environment as well as the [guidance issued by the University](#) in relation to face-to-face (in person) data collection both on and off campus.

[A word document version](#) of this guidance is also available.

II. Research privacy notice



UoM Simplified Research Privacy Notice

General Information

As part of our commitment to research integrity, the University of Manchester follows the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

This means that by law, anyone wanting to collect your information must have a legal reason to do so and when the information is more sensitive an extra-legal reason is needed. The law allows us as researchers to collect your information under two legal reasons:

- 1) A task carried out in the public interest.
And for more sensitive information
- 2) Where the information is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes.

What is Personal Data (personal information)?

Personal data means any information which can identify you. It can include items such as your name, gender, date of birth, address/postcode or other information such as your opinions or thoughts. The specific information that the researcher wishes to obtain from you is listed on the participant information sheet.

What is sensitive information (special category data)?

Researchers may process some information about you that is considered to be 'sensitive' and this is called 'special category' personal data. This includes, but is not limited to, information such as your ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious beliefs or details about your health. These types of personal information require additional protections which the University ensures are in place.

Who is responsible for my personal information?

The University of Manchester is the **Data Controller** for this study. This means it is responsible for protecting your information and making sure it is:

1. Kept securely and confidentially.
2. Used only in the way the researchers tell you it will be used.

Who will my personal information be shared with?

Your personal information will be kept confidential/anonymised (your name and personal details changed/removed) as soon as possible.

Both your personal information as well as the confidential/anonymised information will only be shared with members of the research team in order to conduct the project. If they need to share

Date 05/08/2020

your information with anyone else, you will be told who they are and why this is the case in the participant information sheet.

How long will you keep my personal information?

Any personal information which has not been anonymised will be kept for 36 months to send to you the research finding (optional).

Any information which has been anonymised and cannot be linked back to you will be kept for 5 years.

Your rights

By law, you have a number of rights regarding the personal information we hold about you. These include the right to:

- See the information/receive a copy of the information
- Correct any incorrect information
- Have the information deleted
- Limit or raise concerns to the processing of your information
- Move your information

These rights only apply to your information before it is anonymised as once this happens we can no longer identify your specific information. Sometimes your rights may be limited if it would prevent or delay the research. If this happens you will be informed and have the right to complain about this to the Information Commissioner.

Who can I contact?

If you have any questions about the information in this document please contact the University's Data Protection Officer, Alex ~~Daybank~~ (dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk) or write to:

The Data Protection Officer
Information Governance Office
Christie Building
University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester M13 9PL

III. Interview guide

#	Topic	Description	Time
1	Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanking • Consent form signature (will be sent before the interview) • Answering information sheet questions (will be sent before the interview) • Asking permission to start Audio recording. 	3 minutes
2	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research background • Research aim and objectives • Research questions 	3 minutes
3	Understanding	What is his understanding of (Capacity-building)?, what is the scope	5 minutes
4	Methodologies	What are their current used methodologies in building their capacities?	5 minutes
5	Practices	What are their practices in building their capacities?	5 minutes
6	Impact	What is the impact they gained from capacity-building programs?	5 minutes
7	Difficulties	What are the main difficulties they phased in building their capacities?	5 minutes
8	Improvements	What are the potential improvements in building their capacities?	5 minutes
9	Donors	What is the donors' position from supporting capacity-building programs?	5 minutes
10	Open question	Is there any thing related to be added	3 minutes
11	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming steps and sharing the results • Procedure for any amendments • Thanking 	2 minutes

IV. Consent form



NPOs' capacity building in small cities: Exploring current practices, challenges and opportunities in central Saudi Arabia

Consent Form

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

	Activities	Initials
1	I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet 22/09/2020 for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.	
2	I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to myself. I understand that it will not be possible to remove my data from the project once it has been anonymised and forms part of the data set. I agree to take part on this basis.	
3	I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books, reports or journals .	
4	I understand that data collected during the study may be looked at by individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities, where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data.	
5	I agree that the researchers may retain my contact details in order to provide me with a summary of the findings for this study.	
6	I agree to take part in this study.	

Data Protection

The personal information we collect and use to conduct this research will be processed in accordance with data protection law as explained in the Participant Information Sheet and the Privacy Notice for Research Participants.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of the person taking consent	Signature	Date

1 copy for the participant, 1 copy for the research team (original).

Date 09/2020