

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

An exploratory study of the experiences of young people in becoming agents of social change in Cape Town.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Social Science in Social Development.

Myrna Lemmen (LMMMYR001)

7/15/2013

UCT supervisor Eric Atmore

Faculty of Humanities

University of Cape Town

COMPULSORY DECLARATION:

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature:

Date:

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Abstract

This is an exploratory study of the experiences of young people in becoming agents of social change in Cape Town. The study was carried out on a sample of seventeen young agents of social change from seven developing communities in Cape Town. It adopted a qualitative and exploratory research approach, using a semi-structured interview schedule for the face to face interviews with the young changemakers. The sample was purposively selected: the researcher targeted a specific group (young agents of social change) in a specific area (Cape Town region).

The findings revealed mainly that being a young agent of social change stimulates personal growth, youth development, and improves future prospects for young people from developing communities.

The young agents of social change in this study are mainly active within civil society and, like most South African youth, do not engage much with party politics. It suggests that young people are poorly represented politically which weakens South Africa's young democracy, can lead to social and political instability, and makes nation building more challenging.

Civil society plays a key role in stimulating youth to become agents of social change. However, generally civil society does not stimulate youth directly to develop agency in social change, and does not provide youth with opportunities for leadership and ownership over projects. Alternative education (workshops, self-learning and socially conscious arts) can have a stimulating impact on young people to become agents of social change. Becoming an agent of social change is ultimately a process that happens from within an individual and is part of identity forming. An internal transformation is empowering and leads to agency.

Furthermore, being a young agent of social change is challenging. The main barriers experienced by young agents of social change are government bureaucracy, corruption by local gatekeepers; NGOs' lack of collaboration; and ageism against youth. But also the modern youth culture that popularizes materialism and individualism, makes it difficult for young people to become agents of social change.

The main recommendations given are that the youth needs to be viewed more positively and society needs to recognize the importance of young agents of social change. Institutions and actors need to apply positive language when dealing with youth. Words like “at-risk” or “lost” victimize youth and entrench debilitating power hierarchies.

Government and civil society need to improve and invest in citizenship- and arts education. The government needs to restore its relationship with young agents of social change by providing enabling and adequate support (including funding allocation).

Youth Resources Centres need to be established in developing communities. And partnerships between established NGOs and young agents of social change need to be stimulated and promoted. There is a need for advocacy projects around youth leadership in social change to stimulate a culture of social change.

Acknowledgements

The researcher wishes to thank the following individuals and organizations for their support given towards this research project:

Brigitte Baake
Busi Mtabane (Bush Radio)
Claire Martens
Community House Salt River
Department of Social Development (University of Cape Town)
Educo Africa
Elizabeth Ann Clack (The Warehouse)
Eric Atmore (University of Cape Town)
Gradus Lemmen
Human Rights Media Centre
Ignatius Pertrus Vermaak
John & Margaret Overbeek Scholarship
Langa Youth Development Centre
Marielle Arnoldus
Monique Barling
Shirley Gunn (Human Rights Media Centre)
Soundz of the South (SOS)
University of Cape Town
Wiebke Nedel (Educo Africa)
Workers World Media Productions

And last, but not least, the researcher wishes to thank and show gratitude to all the research participants for their collaboration:

Anele, Carmenita, Double M, Earl, Indigenous, Khusta, Lunga, Mabhelandile, Mahlubi, Mandisi, Ngcwalisa, Niki, Ntombi, Sisa, Sisanda, Siyamboleka and Solitude.

Table of Content

List of Tables and Figures	01
1. Introduction	02
1.1 Introduction	02
1.2 Statement of the Problem	02
1.3 Rationale and Significance	03
1.4 Topic	04
1.5 Main Research Questions	04
1.6 Research Objectives	04
1.7 Main Assumptions	05
1.8 Clarification of Concepts	05
1.9 Ethical Considerations	06
1.10 Reflexivity	07
1.11 Structure Research Report	08
1.12 Summary	08
2. Literature Review	09
2.1 Introduction	09
2.2 Youth from Developing Communities	09
2.3 Youth Culture	10
2.4 Youth Identity	11
2.5 Youth Active Citizenship	11
2.6 Importance of Young Agents of Social Change	12
2.7 Stimulators and Barriers	15
2.8 Policy Framework	17
2.9 Theoretical Frameworks	18
2.9.1. People Centred Development	18
2.9.2. Social Capital	19
2.9.3. Development as Freedom	20
2.10 Summary	21
3. Methodology	22
3.1 Introduction	22
3.2 Research Design	22
3.3 Methodology	23
3.3.1. Sampling	23
3.3.2. Data Collection Strategy	24
3.3.2.1. Data Collection Method	24
3.3.2.2. Data Collection Instrument	24
3.3.2.3. Data Collection Approach	24
3.3.3. Data Collection Analysis	25
3.4 Data Verification	26
3.5 Limitations of the Study	27
3.6 Summary	27
4. Findings and Discussion	28
4.1 Introduction	28
4.2 Young Agents of Social Change	28
4.2.1. Agency in Social Change	28
4.2.2. Education and Employment	30
4.2.3. Personal Characteristics	33

4.2.4. Active Citizenship	33
4.3 Stimulators to become Agent of Social Change	35
4.3.1. Civil Society Organizations	35
4.3.2. Family, Friends and Role Models	36
4.3.3. High School	38
4.3.4. Alternative Education	39
4.3.5. Life experiences and internal transformation	40
4.3.6. Support Structure	42
4.4 Barriers in becoming Agent of Social Change	44
4.4.1. Youth Culture	44
4.4.2. Life Challenges	45
4.4.3. Lack of Opportunities and Examples	46
4.4.4. Being Young	47
4.4.5. No Need or No Point	47
4.5 Barriers experienced by Young Agents of Social Change	48
4.5.1. Life Challenges	48
4.5.2. Support and Participation	49
4.5.3. Resources	50
4.5.4. Government	51
4.5.5. NGOs	52
4.5.6. Being Young	53
4.5.7. Negative Consequences	55
4.6 Importance of Young Agents of Social Change	55
4.6.1. Personal Development	56
4.6.2. South Africa's Future	57
4.7 Summary	58
5. Conclusions and Recommendations	59
5.1 Introduction	59
5.2 Conclusions	59
5.2.1. Objective One	59
5.2.2. Objective Two	59
5.2.3. Objective Three	60
5.2.4. Objective Four	61
5.2.5. Objective Five	62
5.3 Recommendations	63
5.3.1. Local Government	63
5.3.2. Department of Education, High Schools and Teachers in Developing Communities	64
5.3.3. NGOs, Social Workers and Development Practitioners	65
5.3.4. Family, Role Models and other Community Members	66
5.3.5. Young Agents of Social Change	66
5.3.6. Researchers and Academic Institutions	67
6. Bibliography	68
Appendix I – Written comments from two participants	73
Appendix II – Photos of the participants	74
Appendix III - Findings Overview	80
Appendix IV - Interview schedule	83
Appendix V – Sample Informed Consent Form	87
Appendix VI – Biographical overview of the participants	88

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1 <i>Agency Participants</i>	27
Table 2 <i>Agency in high-school</i>	37
Table 3 <i>Support from Government</i>	41
Figure 1 <i>Starting point as agent of social change</i>	28
Figure 2 <i>Type of high school</i>	29
Figure 3 <i>Education level</i>	30
Figure 4 <i>Employment status</i>	31

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the importance of including young people in development activities and highlights the need of having more young people as agents of social change in South Africa. The topic, the main research questions, objectives and assumptions of this study are given. Thereafter, the clarification of some concepts and the ethical considerations of this research study are discussed, followed by the reflexivity of the researcher. This chapter ends with an overview of the structure of this research report and a short summary of this chapter.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

South Africa faces various development challenges that especially affect young people who live in developing communities where unemployment, poverty and crime are prevalent (Normand, 2007; The World Bank, 2013). In the Cape Town area these communities include Khayelitsha, Delft, Bonteheuwel, Sweet Home Farm, Retreat, Langa, and Gugulethu (City of Cape Town, 2001; Esau & Nleya, 2008; Sacks, 2012). Many young people in developing communities are unemployed, receive poor quality education, fall in chronic poverty, are socially excluded, live in dirty and unhealthy environments, and grow up in distressed households (Bloch, 2009; Kekana & Richter, 2003; Ramphela, 2002). This makes it difficult for the youth to make the transition into adulthood (Kekana & Richter, 2003). In addition, young people from these communities carry a negative identity. They are stereotyped as being lazy, criminal, uninterested in politics, drug addicts, materialistic, apathetic to society's needs, and uneducated (Jobson, 2011; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005; Roche & Tucker, 1997). This negative identity alienates young people from the greater society and increases their challenges in life (Roche & Tucker, 1997).

The constitution of South Africa provides a vision of participatory citizenship and welcomes the activities of young agents of social change (Local Government Action, 2011). Active citizenship is needed to strengthen democracy, establish social cohesion, and ensure that all voices are heard, including those of the youth. Increasing active citizenship amongst the youth and including young people in development activities can help them tackle challenges and transit into adulthood, and it can also reduce their negative image (ICP, 2010; McEvoy-Levy, 2001; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). Participation in development activities generally enhances capacity, conscientization, and empowerment, which improves young people's level of resilience and it helps them gain practical skills needed to improve their lives (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). Youth participation in social change thus enhances the youths' personal development.

Despite these benefits, active citizenship appears to be low amongst the youth in South Africa. Young people generally do not participate much in political or civil society activities aiming for social change (Enslin, 2003; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). Young people appear uninterested in politics

and the majority has never participated in any civil society organization, with the exception of religious institutions (Everatt, 2000; Jobson, 2011; ICP & Pravah, 2009; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006).

This research study explores what stimulates and what hinders young people from developing communities in Cape Town to become agents of social change. An agent of social change - or changemaker - is someone who acts towards the achievement of a just society (ICP & Pravah, 2009). Young agents of social change in this research study are young individuals who undertake activities to bring about a positive change in their community or society. They are called “agents” because they act out of their own “agency”, which can be considered the most desired form of participation in a democratic society (Sen, 1999; Crocker & Robeyns, 2009). Sen (1999) explains agency - or agent - as “someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives” (Sen, 1999: 19). Agents, says Sen, are individuals or groups that decide on matters for themselves, who shape their own destiny, help others and are “active participant[s] in change, rather than ... passive and docile recipient[s] of instructions or of dispensed assistance” (Sen cited in Crocker & Robeyns, 2009: 75). By exploring the experiences of young changemakers it can be understood how other young people can be stimulated to become agents of social change in order to uplift youth development and secure South Africa’s overall development and nation building.

1.3 Rationale and Significance

Everatt (2005) urges researchers in South Africa to focus on youth because young people need to be better understood in order to tackle the development challenges they face. Young people from developing communities are often alienated from society and they need to be more included - including in research studies - in order to reduce the challenges they face and unleash social and economic development (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009; Everatt, 2005; Roche & Tucker, 1997; Sen, 1999). Although a number of studies about young people from developing communities have been undertaken, most of these studies focus on what goes wrong with youth and less attention is given to what goes right (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). In development processes however, it is important to identify the available resources and determine where strength and opportunities lay. This research study views youth as an important resource in social change and therefore focuses on young people's potential by exploring the experiences of young agents of social change. Young agents of social change want to bring about a positive change in their community, or in the broader society, and are therefore positively engaging as active citizens.

This study provides an understanding of the experiences of young agents of social change in Cape Town. The study complements existing research by revealing similar findings on what stimulates and hinders young people to be positively engaged in society, and by showing the value of having young agents of social change in South Africa. But this study also brings new information. Unlike many other research studies around youth and

active citizenship, this study applied a qualitative and in-depth research approach. This allowed for the emergence of a greater understanding of the background of the young changemakers and their experiences with various stakeholders. Quantitative data, such as a large youth survey conducted by the Human Science Research Council (Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005), has shown that young South Africans are generally not agents of social change. This study provides findings that explain why. Insights on how young people can be better stimulated and supported in becoming agents of social change also emerged. This research study also provides new information regarding the entry point of developing agency in social change. This information can benefit a wide range of people and institutions such as researchers, policy-makers, social development practitioners, community-based NGOs, local government officials, political parties, and social movements. It can also be beneficial to young agents of social change and young people who aspire to become changemakers. Furthermore, this research project brought together different young agents of social change and the findings were shared with them in order to support and empower them. The study contributes to youth development by shedding a positive light on young people, by giving young agents of social change a platform to raise their voice, and by sharing the research results with important key role players in youth development in South Africa.

1.4 Topic

An exploratory study of the experiences of young people in becoming agents of social change in Cape Town.

1.5 Main Research Questions

1. Why is it important to have young agents of social change from developing communities?
2. What are the similarities in the background (employment, education, active citizenship, personality) of young agents of social change?
3. What stimulated the participants to become agents of social change?
4. What are the barriers young agents of social change experience?
5. What are the barriers for other young people from developing communities to become agents of social change?

1.6 Research Objectives

1. To explore why it is important to have young agents of social change from developing communities.
2. To explore what the similarities are in the background (employment, education, active citizenship, personality) of young agents of social change.
3. To explore what stimulated the participants to become agents of social change.
4. To explore what barriers young agents of social change experience.
5. To explore what young agents of social change think are the barriers for other young people from developing communities to become agents of social change.

1.7 Main Assumptions

The main assumptions of this study are:

- Young agents of social change can best explain what stimulates young people to become agents of social change and what hinders youth to become active in social change. Young agents of social change can provide rich information on their experiences that reflect the needs of the youth generation.
- Policy makers and programme developers need to hear the voices of young agents of social change as it is the youths' right to participate in social change, have a voice, and be heard. Their voices will elicit perceptions and experiences that policy makers and programme planners may not have heard and could fruitfully be used in the quest for relevant policies/programmes that promote the inclusion of youth in social change.

1.8 Clarification of Concepts

Active citizenship “refers to the ability of (young) people to be engaged in social action in every walk of life. Where people can take ownership for common spaces and act to make change by addressing important social justice issues” (ICP & Pravah, 2009: 4). Active citizenship thus refers to any action undertaken by the participants of this study to make a positive change in their community or society.

Agent (agency): Sen (1999) explains agency - or agent - as “someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives” (Sen, 1999: 19); agents are individuals or groups that decide on matters for themselves, who shape their own destiny, help others and are “active participant[s] in change, rather than ... passive and docile recipient[s] of instructions or of dispensed assistance” (Sen cited in Crocker & Robeyns, 2009: 75).

Citizenship “is that what makes us participative, proactive and responsible towards society. The core values of citizenship include democracy, social justice, equality, peace, respect” (ICP & Pravah, 2009: 4).

Civil society “refers to the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that are separate from the state and/or commercial institutions” (ICP, 2010: 6).

Developing community: relates to the definition of “developing country”. The World Bank states that “a developing country is one in which the majority lives on far less money - with far fewer basic public services - than the population in highly industrialized countries” (The World Bank, 2013: *online*). A developing community is therefore “a community in which the majority lives on far less money - with far fewer basic public services - than the population in more privileged/developed communities”. In South African developing communities, unemployment, poverty and crime are prevalent (Normand, 2007). In the Cape Town area these communities include Khayelitsha, Delft, Bonteheuwel, Sweet Home Farm, Retreat, Langa, and Gugulethu (City of Cape Town, 2001; Esau & Nleya, 2008; Sacks, 2012). The definition applied is positive as it suggests these communities are developing, without placing judgement on their state of development. This positive approach is important because this study aims to shed a more positive light on youth from these communities.

Participation: “The act of taking part or sharing in something” (“participation”, 2012: *online*). Participation in this study particularly refers to meaningful participation: young people are equal partners to others and take ownership of activities (Kwon, Nygreen, & Sánchez, 2006; McEvoy-Levy, 2001).

Social change activities: (Development activities) “Actions taken towards the achievement of a just society” (ICP & Pravah, 2009: 22). The social change activities undertaken by the participants of this research study vary from small actions like tutoring learners after school, to big undertakings like starting and/or leading a youth organization.

Social exclusion “refers to the fact that despite welfare and general wealth, there remains a group that is excluded from the mainstream benefits of the society and is prevented in some way from fully enjoying the general prosperity” (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009: 39).

Stimulating: “To encourage interest or activity in (a person or animal)” (“stimulating”, 2013: online).

Youth: “Young people between the ages of 14 and 35” (RSA, 2009: 44).

Youth Development: “An integrated and positive approach that recognises the assets and strengths of young people rather than focusing only on their problems and limitations. Youth is regarded as a developmental phase in its own right with a unique contribution to make to the individual’s and society’s present and future” (Kekana & Richter, 2003: 15).

1.9 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations from De Vos (2001) were applied in this research study. The researcher has done everything in her power to prevent problems and ensured no harm was caused during the research process.

Before the start of the data collection, the participants signed an informed consent form and it was made sure that the participants were fully aware of the research purpose and process. The participants were informed that they can withdraw their participation at any given point. Even though the interviewees voluntarily participated, the researcher recognized that the participants might have had hidden expectations. For example, some participants expressed hope that this research study would assist them in obtaining funding for their projects. It was made clear that it was the intention of the researcher that the study would be of use to them, but no promises were made.

The interviewees received the opportunity to participate anonymously and were allowed to use a pseudonym to ensure the facilitation of an open and honest conversation. It was important to the researcher that the participants felt comfortable and safe during the interviews and that there were no distractions. The facilities used for the data collection were therefore quiet and private rooms. Tea and cookies were readily available to create a welcoming atmosphere. Differences among the participants and the researcher, such as language and culture, were respected by the researcher who consciously aimed to be flexible and not judgemental.

All participants provided personal and sensitive information during the interviews and sometimes emotions whelmed up. It did not feel right to the researcher to not have any further contact or interaction after the interviews and therefore the researcher has attempted to keep contact with the participants in order to show respect, support, understanding and interest. Unfortunately the researcher was not able to keep regular contact with all

participants due to time constraints and mobility issues. In writing up this report, the researcher has respected the respondents' privacy and handled information in a confidential manner. For example, some quotes have been left out of this report to respect the participants' privacy.

1.10 Reflexivity

This section outlines the social boundaries of this study. "Research that requires a communication of knowledge, opinions, feelings and experiences from the participants to the researcher needs to overcome, at least temporarily, any boundaries that may inhibit that communication" (Ryan & Golden, 2006: 1191).

After having previously done research on young people who were unemployed, poorly educated and stuck in a community with limited opportunities, I became quite concerned about youth development in South Africa. The literature I came across during my research often presented a negative viewpoint on youth from developing communities, which I felt did not help young people break away from their negative identity. Therefore I decided to contribute to a more positive viewpoint on youth by focusing on young agents of social change in this study.

The participants in this research study are all passionate young people who are eager to bring about social change in South Africa. I expected my participants to show stubbornness, anger and impatience because social change is a slow process and it involves many different opinions and viewpoints that lead to complex debates. Young agents of social change are often described as "young lions", rather than diplomats and strategists. Although the participants did show "young lion" characteristics (they want change, and they want it now), they often surprised me with their wisdom, patience and understanding. This can be explained by the mere fact that the participants are older youth, and not teenagers.

It was great to meet such inspiring young people who are passionate about social change and caring about South Africa. The interview process went smoothly because the participants were easy to talk to. They generally had a high self-esteem, were confident, understandable in English, and they were excited to talk about their experiences because social change is their passion. Instead of trying to get them to talk, I often had to work hard to keep the conversation focussed. I feel that I connected with the majority of the participants and I experienced the interviews as interesting, informative and personal. We debated, laughed, got angry together, and sometimes we totally went off the topic. As a result, the interviews and transcribing took longer than intended.

A boundary in this research may have been the social, cultural and historical differences between the participants and me. I come from Europe and have a fairly privileged and academic background, while the participants generally have had a very different life and work on a grassroots level. How can I ever truly understand what they experience? However, I felt that the existing gap between us narrowed once the participants understood that I was truly interested in their story because I believe young people have an important role to play in social change.

1.11 Structure Research Report

This report consists of the following five chapters:

- Chapter One: Introduction
- Chapter Two: Literature Review
- Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology
- Chapter Four: Presentation and Discussion of Findings
- Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

1.12 Summary

This chapter introduced the problem statement of this research study and described the importance of including youth in development activities and the need of having more young agents of social change in South Africa. This chapter also presented the research topic: *An exploratory study of the experiences of young people in becoming agents of social change in Cape Town*. By using a qualitative approach, this research study provides in-depth information on the experiences of young agents of social change. To make sure that this research was conducted ethically, the ethical considerations of De Vos *et al.* (2001) were applied. The researcher finally reflected on the study process and an overview of the structure of this report was given. The following chapter discusses the literature review.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

There are numerous research studies done in South Africa and abroad about youth, participation, active citizenship, and social change. This chapter presents a discussion on the most important literature that correspond with this research study on young agents of social change. Some background information on youth from developing communities is given, followed by some insights on youth and active citizenship in South Africa. The importance of having young changemakers is discussed, followed by factors that either stimulate or hinder youth from becoming agents of social change. This chapter also examines whether the South African government policies provide an enabling environment for young people to become agents of social change. Finally, the theoretical frameworks that guide this study are presented.

2.2 Youth from Developing Communities

This research study focuses on youth from developing communities where unemployment, poverty and crime are prevalent (Normand, 2007; The World Bank, 2013). In the Cape Town region, developing communities are - among others - Khayelitsha, Delft, Bonteheuwel, Sweet Home Farm, Retreat, Langa and Gugulethu (City of Cape Town, 2001; Esau & Nleya, 2008; Sacks, 2012).

Youth is a population group that is often characterized as a transition period from being a child or teenager into becoming an adult and responsible grown-up (Roche & Tucker, 1997; The World Bank, 2006). In South Africa, the National Youth Policy of 2009 defines youth as those people aged 14 to 35 years old (RSA, 2009). The reason behind this broad age range is to include the large cohort of young people who struggle to transit into adulthood due to socio-economic challenges (Kekana & Richter, 2003). South Africa has a large youth population with around 37% of the population between 15 and 34 years of age, and this percentage keeps rising (Statistics South Africa, 2011: 57). South Africa's broad youth-definition includes many different types of young people who face different challenges and have different needs.

According to the World Bank (2006), there are five transitions young people have to make in order to become an adult: learning for life and work, getting employed, adopting a healthy lifestyle, forming a family, and exercising citizenship. Young people from developing communities often face challenges that delay their transition into adulthood. For example, these young people are likely to have limited access to good quality schools and learners often struggle to pass their important matric examination, leaving them poorly prepared for life and work (Bloch, 2009). Although the 2012 Western Cape matric pass rate is 82.8%, the struggling schools with low pass rates are predominantly situated in developing communities (Department of Basic Education, 2012: 8). In 2010, only 36% of people aged 20 or more had completed grade 12 (Department of Basic Education, 2010: 45). Without

a matric certificate, finding employment becomes challenging (Bloch, 2009). In 2012, one third of the youth were unemployed, not in education or in training (Statistics South Africa, 2012: xv). Of all the unemployed, 71% was between 15 and 34 years old, and that excludes discouraged work seekers (Statistics South Africa, 2012: 36). In 2012, the youth unemployment rate in the Western Cape was as high as 68.2% (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2012: 130).

Young people from developing communities are also likely to be confronted with social exclusion, HIV/AIDS, crime, gangsterism, abuse, teenage pregnancies, and breakdowns in family structures (Kekana & Richter, 2003; Ramphele, 2002; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). Due to these challenges, youth from developing communities can face psychological problems such as depression, despair, helplessness, physical- and mental exhaustion (Ramphele, 2002).

All these challenges block a smooth transition from teenager to adulthood (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). Adolescence presents one of the last opportunities to intervene in the human development of young people and help them overcome the above named challenges, before their problems become structural life patterns that are more difficult to deal with (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

2.3 Youth Culture

Traditionally developing communities value the principle of “ubuntu” that entails caring for one another and sharing resources (Perold, 2006). But today’s youth culture is influenced by globalization and modernization which can make young people be more individualistic and materialistic (Cooper, 2009; Mkhwanazi, 2011; Perold, 2006). Many young people from developing communities aspire to a better life and wish to leave their impoverished community (Cooper, 2009). Those who are successful leave their communities and as a result positive role models are often difficult to find in developing communities (Perold, 2006). The remaining youth often try to be part of modern life - to be included in society - by participating in the consumer culture that represents modernism and globalization (Cooper, 2009). The popular lifestyle requires young people to portray being wealthy and affluent by showing off their expensive goods (Mkhwanazi, 2011). Having expensive goods improves their social status (Mkhwanazi, 2011).

As part of this consumer culture, advertising and branding has a profound impact on young people, with sometimes devastating consequences. For example, more and more young people are exposed to alcohol advertising, which “creates a climate in which dangerous attitudes toward alcohol are presented as normal, appropriate, and innocuous. (...) The youth get so used to these advertisements that they do not respond to them in an economical way but rather a destructive way” (Dubihlela & Dubihlela, 2011: 211, 215).

However, having expensive goods does not always help young people escape poverty. To deal with socio-economic challenges and marginalization, many young people turn to hip-hop (Perullo, 2005). Hip-hop creates

opportunities for young people to raise their voice, share information, express feelings and affect change (Perullo, 2005). “The process of representation and education through music allows youth to voice their concerns to the public and learn to cope with the hardships that they encounter on a daily basis” (Perullo, 2005: 77).

2.4 Youth Identity

In South Africa, during the apartheid era, young people held an identity of being “freedom fighters”, but when apartheid was abolished they were no longer needed as activists (Everatt, 2005). Instead of including the youth in the reconstruction and development process of a new democracy, young people were asked to stand down, which led to their marginalization (Everatt, 2005; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). Youth were absent from political participation and the new democracy erased the identity and appeal of activism (Everatt, 2000; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). It became difficult for the youth to find their place in the new South Africa. The loss of the freedom fighter identity, together with the many challenges youth were facing, led to the emergence of “the lost generation”. Youth were now stereotyped as being lazy, criminal, uninterested in politics, drug addicts, materialistic and apathetic to society's needs (Jobson, 2011; Lefko-Everett, 2012; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Roche & Tucker, 1997). The negative stereotyping alienated the youth further from society (Roche & Tucker, 1997). Young people from developing communities are now perceived as being problems to be solved, rather than valuable resources for social change (Jobson, 2011). “In the post-apartheid era the notion of young-people's agency to contribute meaningfully to building the nation is almost non-existent in our dealings with them” (Jobson, 2011: 8).

2.5 Youth Active Citizenship

Exercising citizenship is one of the transitions young people have to make in order to become an adult (The World Bank, 2006). “Through civic engagement, young people's ideas and energy can contribute meaningfully as they participate in community building, work towards social change, and apply their leadership skills, all the while gaining access to services, supports, and opportunities that facilitate their own development” (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 3). Active citizenship provides a safe and positive platform for young people to deal with the challenges they face. A combination of youth leadership and active citizenship can be an effective strategy for successful youth development (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). But various life challenges make it difficult for young people to transit into adulthood, including the transition into exercising citizenship which holds the activities of young agents of social change and refers to political- and civil society participation. Although active citizenship amongst youth is poorly measured in South Africa (Jobson, 2011), the few studies that have been conducted show low rates of active citizenship amongst the youth (ICP & Pravah, 2009).

It appears that political participation and interest is decreasing amongst the youth (Enslin, 2003; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). The degree of active citizenship is often measured by looking at electoral trends and in South Africa young people are increasingly withdrawing from voting during elections, although this is also a global trend (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). There are many explanations given for this decline. For example, some young people think voting is of no use as they have heard many promises from politicians, but have not seen any change (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). A large survey on youth in South Africa showed that almost half of the youth feels leaders are not concerned about them; that it is impossible to get uninterested public officials to listen; and young people place least confidence in local government (Lefko-Everett, 2012: 23). However, the survey also revealed that about half of the youth trust that leaders are doing what is right (Lefko-Everett, 2012: 23), which could also explain their lack of participation in politics.

Youth participation in civil society activities also appears to be low (Enslin, 2003; Everatt, 2000; Jobson, 2011; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). The majority has never participated in any civil society organization (including community-based clubs), with an exception of religious and sports organizations (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). For example, 75% of the youth has never been involved in a community society and 80% has never been a member of any community organization (Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005: 30). This makes it difficult for youth organizations to reach young people and make an impact on youth development (Everatt, 2000).

Although young people are often perceived to be the instigators of demonstrations and strikes, a large youth survey in 2012 showed that the average age range of South Africans who participate often in peaceful or violent demonstrations is 34 to 36 years old; not youth (Lefko-Everett, 2012: 25). About one in five South Africans under 35 years of age reports having been involved in a violent protest in the past year (Lefko-Everett, 2012: 25). Participation in demonstrations, strikes or violent protests is especially low among young people aged 15 to 19 (Lefko-Everett, 2012: 25).

It appears young people are generally not very active in social change. Although opportunities for engagement are offered through government and civil society, it is unlikely for young people to participate when communities and the broader society fails to support them (Perold, 2006). Stimulating young people to become agents of social change could significantly help them transit into adulthood and can boost South Africa's development and nation building.

2.6 Importance of Young Agents of Social Change

Even though young people usually do not participate as active citizens, face development challenges, and are often seen as problems to development, there are many young South Africans who are contributing to social development, or desire to do so (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Perold, 2006). These young volunteers, activists,

youth-media, young social entrepreneurs, and youth-led NGOs are not always visible because youth organizations are often small, vulnerable and underfunded (Everatt, 2000; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). The existence of young agents of social change indicates that these young people refuse to accept the social and political circumstances they find themselves in (UNECA, 2012). Youth should have a voice and they deserve to be heard.

Often young people are referred to as “the future” because they will one day lead the country's development. It is important that young people acquire skills for leadership and development during their youth as this will have important long-term implications (McEvoy-Levy, 2001). “Most leadership theorists believe that the skills critical for effective leadership, including the capacity to understand and interact with others, are developed most deeply in adolescence and young adulthood” (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 4).

Young people should not merely engage in development activities because they will be important in the future, they must participate as leaders and in partnership with adults today because they currently have much to offer to society (ICP & Pravah, 2009; Jobson, 2011; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; UNECA, 2012). The negative identity of youth overshadows their role as key players - as leaders - in social change. Youth leadership development is therefore important because it creates more engaged citizenry among youth and offers opportunities for peer group support and meaningful engagement in community life (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; Perhold, 2006). Youth leadership development can increase community capability and stimulate social development (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

Young people have much to offer to social change processes. They tend to be more open to change, eager to try out new strategies or approaches, are future oriented, not bound to the past, they are courageous, flexible, innovative, they can be idealistic, are full of energy and creativity, and often more knowledgeable about their peers than adults are (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; ICP & Pravah, 2009; Roche & Tucker, 1997). Especially when it comes to youth development, young people are an important resource because they are best suited to identify the problems in their lives, prioritize needs and find solutions (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006). Young people can reach marginalized youth that government and NGOs cannot reach (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007). The youth can generate a mushrooming effect whereby more and more young people jump on the bandwagon of active citizenship which leads to greater youth inclusion (Roche & Tucker, 1997). Too often decisions are made *for* the youth, and not *with* them or *by* them, “losing their valuable perspectives and insights” (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007: 9).

Historic examples worldwide have shown the power of youth to enforce social change (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; UNECA, 2012). For example, it was the youth in Kosovo who played a crucial role in the reconstruction of the country after the war (Van Tongeren, Brenk, Hellema & Verhoeven,

2005); it was the efforts of the South African youth in 1976 that dismantled the apartheid regime (The World Bank, 2006); and it has been predominantly the youth who fought colonial and racist rule in Africa (UNECA, 2012).

Besides the fact that young people are powerful and have much to offer, they must also become agents of social change because they cannot rely on government or other institutions to improve their lives. Young people are deeply affected by social and economic challenges and they should be allowed to affect real change (Ansell, 2005). According to Ramphela (2002) who wrote a book on youth from developing communities, adults have let the youth down and society has failed to nurture young South Africans. Youth development programmes make limited impact and schools do not provide the skills young people need in order to find employment and improve the quality of their lives (Bloch, 2009; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). When public institutions continuously fail to make positive and meaningful changes in the lives of youth, it is advisable to draw on other existing resources, like the youth themselves (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006).

Active participation of youth in development activities breaks the cycle of social exclusion and dismisses youth-stereotypes that otherwise would limit the youths' potential to bring about social change (ICP & Pravah, 2009). In fact, a lack of young people's participation in social change poses a serious threat to youth inclusion, social cohesion, and to the foundations of South Africa's democracy (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). A lack of opportunities for the youth to participate in social change can lead to political violence and social instability (ICP, 2010).

Furthermore, participating in development activities helps young people directly as it involves a process of personal development. Development activities include capacity building and helps young people acquire skills such as networking, communicating and accessing information (ICP, 2010; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). Youth leadership development offers skills such as critical thinking, writing, public-speaking, planning and working in different group dynamics (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). All these skills improve the employment and education prospects of young agents of social change, which advances their transition into adulthood (Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005; Perhold, 2006).

Youth participation in social change can also improve the youth's identity; not only towards others in society, but also towards themselves. "It is important for the youth to identify themselves in a positive manner by taking ownership of the social challenges facing them, and adopt a stance on these" (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006: 8). Becoming an agent of social change can lead to a better sense of self, increased competence and self-esteem, and more tolerance to the needs and perspectives of others (Ansell, 2005; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005).

Improved identity and resilience help young people stay away from crime, violence and other negative situations (McEvoy-Levy, 2001). Young agents of social change are "less likely to fall through the cracks in society

and engage in risky and self-destructive behavior” (Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005: 29). The sooner young people positively engage with their environment the better (McEvoy-Levy, 2001).

Clearly there are good reasons to stimulate young people to become agents of social change. In fact, there will be no social change without the participation of the youth (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006). However, “there is scarce public acknowledgement of the actual, and potential, contribution that young people can make to their communities and the country at-large. In order to secure the environment for young people to lead effectively, therefore, a major shift in the public perception of young people needs to take place” (Jobson, 2011: 20).

2.7 Stimulators and Barriers

When social and institutional actors like family, peers, schools, community institutions and government departments provide enabling support to the youth, the likelihood increases for young people to become positive assets to society (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). Young people need relationships and networks that provide nurturing, guidance, and opportunities to try new roles, fight challenges and participate in social change (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 7).

Social relationships can be stimulating, but can also hinder young people to become agents of social change. For example, research has shown that when young people have a good loving relationship with their caretakers, this can mould them into becoming a caring individual (Chase-Lansdale, Wakschlag & Brooks-Gunn, 1995). Parents who care are usually proactive in trying to keep their child on the “right” path (Ramphela, 2002; The World Bank, 2006). Having a family-tradition in active citizenship can also be stimulating (ICP, 2010; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). However, due to their struggles many parents in developing communities fail to provide emotional support to their children and they do not teach about “right” and “wrong” which can hinder the transition into becoming an agent of social change (Chase-Lansdale, Wakschlag & Brooks-Gunn, 1995; Ramphela, 2002). Also, it is known that youth organizations often lack the support from parents because of differences in ideas and opinions about social issues (ICP & Pravah, 2009; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006).

Having positive role models can also stimulate young people to become agents of social change (ICP & Pravah, 2009), but good role models are often scarce in developing communities (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Perhold, 2006; Ramphela, 2002). Instead, gang members are role models to the youth (Ramphela, 2002). Many young people are pressured into joining a gang or are bullied when they are serious about their schooling - being “good” is not “cool” - and as a result many young people do not want to participate in development activities (Ramphela, 2002).

Public institutions also play an important role (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Ramphela, 2002; UNECA, 2012). For example, schools can provide youth with practical skills for active citizenship (Bloch, 2009; Roche & Tucker, 1997). Good quality education can help young people engage more positively with their environment and make

them feel more responsible towards their community (Ramphela, 2002). Poor quality education, on the other hand, can hinder young people from becoming agents of social change as it fails to provide the needed stimulations (Bloch, 2009; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Ramphela, 2002).

Other institutions in government and civil society can also stimulate young people to become agents of social change. However, a lack of institutional capacity from both the government and civil society organizations can de-motivate young people from becoming agents of social change (Ramphela, 2002). The youth might not see the point as they have no trust in weak institutions, and the youth's lack of knowledge and experience can make it challenging for them to work with institutional structures (Ramphela, 2002; UNECA, 2012). Young agents of social change need support and enabling opportunities from government and civil society organizations (UNECA, 2012), but barriers will remain if these institutions try to control the young changemakers. There must be an equal partnership (ICP & Pravah, 2009; UNECA, 2012). Unfortunately, many youth development programmes do not adequately respond to the need for meaningful youth participation, which blocks true empowerment and sustainable development (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). Often young people are not viewed as partners, and adults are seen as superior to young people (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). "Many marginalized youth feel that traditional youth development agencies do not really listen to young people, nor do they support the initiatives of youth, validate their thinking, or welcome their ideas" (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 8).

Personal experiences also play a significant role. Having certain experiences can determine whether a young person becomes an agent of social change because it influences a young person's interests, sense of justice, level of awareness, perceptions of responsibilities, life goals and ideals (ICP & Pravah, 2009; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). For example, positive experiences - such as having success - can give a young person the necessary confidence to become an agent of social change (Ramphela, 2002). But experiences can also bring resilience. According to Ramphela (2002), resilience means "the heart of hope" and it gives people the courage and energy to keep going for a better tomorrow (Ramphela, 2002: 11). A lack of resilience can be a barrier because it often leads to disappointments, low self-esteem and identity issues (Ramphela, 2002).

Furthermore, certain life experiences help young people become aware of social problems, which can stimulate them to become an agent of social change. A process through which "youth develop a critical analysis of their circumstances and then develop both a personal and collective response can be deeply empowering" (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 12). To give an example, life challenges - such as unemployment and poverty - can stimulate young people from developing communities to become agents of social change, because it reveals the need for social change (ICP, 2010; ICP & Pravah, 2009). However, these challenges can also form a barrier because finding work, for example, might be more important to a young person than engaging in development activities (ICP, 2010; ICP & Pravah, 2009; Ramphela, 2002; Roche & Tucker, 1997).

2.8 Policy Framework

The policy environment influences opportunities to participate in social change (ICP, 2010: 8). When there is a culture of active citizenship and an environment that welcomes youth participation in development activities, it is likely young agents of social change will develop and emerge.

South Africa is a country that welcomes active citizenship, especially amongst the youth. The democratic government adopted several international conventions that promote youth participation in development processes. For example, the Declaration of Universal Human Rights of 1948 influenced many South African policies, including the National Youth Policy of 2009, and gives young agents of social change rights like “freedom of expression” and “the right of association” (OHCHR, 2012). The Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and The African Youth Charter of 2006 pledge that young people should be taken seriously and they should have a voice in formal decision making processes (African Union Commission, 2006; Ansell, 2005).

Because South Africa is a democracy, public participation in politics and civil society is a right, a responsibility, and promoted by the state (Lefko-Everett, 2012; Local Government Action, 2011; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; UNECA, 2012). The South African constitution of 1993 provides a participatory vision of citizenship and welcomes the activities of young agents of social change (Local Government Action, 2011). South Africa’s people centred approach to development applies a participatory bottom up approach to development (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009). As a result, all policies and legislation in South Africa should be accessible to young people and local governments have the task to actively promote community participation in decision-making (Local Government Action, 2011).

The South African National Youth Policy of 2009 states that opportunities must be provided for young people to participate meaningfully in the economic, social and political life of the country (RSA, 2009). Based on this policy, the National Youth Service - for example - attempts “to forge the desired qualities of citizenship among young people” (UNECA, 2012: 6). This is important because young people need to learn the right skills to be active citizens.

Especially in a new democracy it is important to teach citizens about democracy and active citizenship (Mattes, 2011). During apartheid, the majority of people did not enjoy rights to be active citizens and their poor quality education led to people having limited understanding of what active citizenship or democracy actually entails (Enslin, 2003). South African schools currently teach citizenship education to help “learners understand what democracy is, how international issues affect their communities, how to exercise their democratic rights, how to hold leaders accountable, and to overcome a sense of powerlessness in the face of global and local inequalities” (Hammett, 2009: 5). However, research has shown that many schools in developing communities lack the resources to deliver citizenship education meaningfully (Hammett, 2009). It appears that the subject does

not match with learners' experiences in daily life and therefore learners do not see the relevance of the subject (Hammett, 2009). The struggling education system has missed an important opportunity to teach history, civic identity and citizenship accordingly (Lefko-Everett, 2012). This makes it more difficult for young people to become agents of social change.

Although there appears to be an enabling environment (on paper) for young changemakers to pursue their activities, in practice there are “insufficient opportunities for youth civic engagement at the grassroots level and a lack of assessment of policy impact” (ICP & Pravah, 2009: 16). Often implementation of policies and programmes are inefficient and ineffective, meaningful public participation is difficult to establish, and communication between the state and citizens is not optimal (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009; Enslin, 2003). In addition, although young agents of social change hold the right to undertake their activities, there appears to be only limited support for individual agency. Young people can partake in development activities organized by the state or civil society organizations, but there are limited structures in place that actively stimulate young people to set up and lead their own social change initiatives. It would be ideal if young people would not merely participate in structured development programmes of government and NGOs, but rather receive opportunities to direct, own and facilitate social change themselves (Jobson, 2011). Some NGOs recognize this need. For example, Innovations in Civic Participation promotes sustainable development through youth civic engagement, and Educo Africa has a youth programme called Sihambela Phambili (to lead and give back) that aims to empower and assist young people who want to be agents of social change (Educo Africa, 2012; ICICP, 2012). However, most often youth participation programmes are merely used to facilitate skills development, rather than giving young people real power (Jobson, 2011).

2.9 Theoretical Frameworks

There are many theoretical frameworks applicable in research on youth, participation and social change. Three theoretical frameworks were chosen to guide this study. The people centred development framework ensures that this research study has a humanistic and bottom up approach that focuses on the participants' experiences. The social capital theory shows the value of having young agents of social change. And the development as freedom framework acknowledges that young people's freedoms and opportunities to engage in social change need to be expanded. When young people have agency - when they participate, initiate, and have a voice in society - development can take place that is respectful and responsive to their needs and values.

2.9.1. People Centred Development

This research study is part of the framework of people centred development (PCD) which pledges that development should focus on human experiences to make it more meaningful (Davids, Theron & Maphunye,

2009). The PCD framework explains that social change should be enhanced through public participation. Grassroots people should actively, voluntarily and collectively be a part of development processes by participating in decision making, monitoring and sharing benefits (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009; Emmett, 2000). It is important that people are not merely consulted, but rather actively participate in development processes. It is believed that through active participation people will undertake a process of social learning (conscientization), which helps them become self-reliant (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009). The PCD framework values local knowledge and bottom up approaches, including those of young agents of social change. Through participation and social learning, people are empowered to take action (collective action) which can lead to social change. It is believed this can lead to sustainable development (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009).

This research study falls in line with the PCD approach because it promotes youth inclusion in development processes and focuses on grassroots human experiences. The experiences of young agents of social change from developing communities are captured and a platform is created for the participants to express themselves and participate in academic research that concerns them. The suggestions, thoughts and opinions of young agents of social change are reflected in this report because their voices need to be heard and taken seriously.

2.9.2. Social Capital

The theory of social capital refers to “norms and networks that enable people to act collectively” (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000: 225), but it is also described as “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures” (Portes, 2000: 48). Alexis de Tocqueville describes social capital as “the art of association” (Tocqueville cited in Fukuyama, 2001: 11). Social capital is thus about social relationships and it acknowledges the power and positive outcomes of socialization (Portes, 2000). Networking and socializing entails a process of learning, sharing and exchanging ideas, knowledge and skills that inform the development process from the bottom up (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000).

Social capital stands on two important pillars: civil society networks and social trust (Keeley, 2009; Kim, 2005). Civil society networks connect through shared norms and values, generating social trust, which facilitates cooperation and action (Keeley, 2009; Kim, 2005). Social trust generates cooperation between individuals, leading to a vibrant civil society that can change the status quo (Emmett, 2000; Fukuyama, 2001; Kim, 2005). “Social interactions and extended social relations nurture social trust among the general public in society.(...) The enhanced trust between citizens, in turn, facilitates civic co-operation and co-ordination for community development and the enrichment of civil society” (Kim, 2005: 208).

Having a vibrant civil society with high levels of social trust is important for democratic stability (Keeley, 2009; Kim, 2005). Social capital is truly essential in ensuring the proper functioning of public institutions (Fukuyama, 2001). However, social trust does not necessarily lead to political trust and participation. In fact,

“people with a high stock of social capital are less likely to trust political institutions and less likely to become involved in the political world” (Kim, 2005: 197). It is believed that low confidence in political institutions stimulate people to be active in civil society, while refraining from political participation (Kim, 2005).

Social capital can be built through volunteerism and civic engagement (Fukuyama, 2001; Jobson, 2011; Perhold, 2006). Civil society organizations can empower, mobilize and stimulate otherwise excluded youth to become active citizens (Fukuyama, 2001; Kim, 2005). “It was only by coming together in civil associations that weak individuals became strong; the associations they formed could (...) serve as ‘schools of citizenship’ where individuals learned the habits of cooperation that would eventually carry over into public life” (Fukuyama, 2001: 11). But also other social or institutional relationships like family, friends, role models or school can stimulate and enable youth to become agents of social change (Emmett, 2000).

Young people have high social capital when they have developed trusting and active connections throughout their community and beyond (Jobson, 2011). Young agents of social change are likely to have high levels of social capital because their activities are defined by socialization and participation. The social capital theory perceives young agents of social change as an important asset to the social capital of a community or society. Their ideas, knowledge, experience and networks are valued because they can strengthen the social power of a community or society. However, trust is essential in social capital and therefore society should trust and cooperate with young agents of social change (Emmett, 2000; Kim, 2005).

2.9.3. *Development as Freedom*

The development as freedom framework of Amartya Sen (1999) argues that development should be about expanding people’s real freedoms (and capabilities) in order for them to live a kind of life they value. Expanding the freedoms of young agents of social change in South Africa is thus in itself a step towards development because it will enlarge young people’s capability sets, allowing them to live a kind of life they value. Barriers to agents of social change must be removed in order for freedoms to be expanded.

The development as freedom framework argues that people are the *means* and *end* to development. The *end* of development is for people to enjoy a good well-being by living a valued life (Sen, 1999). The development activities of young agents of social change reflect what kind of life they value. Their desire for social change mirrors their dissatisfaction of the kind of society they live in. But people are also the *means* to development. Expanding people’s freedoms (the *end* of development) is achieved through people’s agency (the *means*). People work towards their own improved well-being (bottom up approach). Sen (1999) explains agency - or agent - as “someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives” (Sen, 1999: 18). Agents, says Sen, are individuals or groups that decide on matters for themselves, who shape their own destiny, help others and are “active participant[s] in change, rather than ...

passive and docile recipient[s] of instructions or of dispensed assistance” (Sen cited in Crocker & Robeyns, 2009: 75). Sen believes that actions to expand freedoms should be at the heart of public action (Evans, 2002), such as the actions of young agents of social change.

As explained in section 2.8 in this chapter, young South Africans often have the freedom to undertake their actions, but in practice these freedoms are not always accessible. Expanding the freedoms of young agents of social change requires promoting youth participation and leadership in social development. If young people exercise their own agency in expanding their freedoms and capabilities, they are more likely to realize their own desired well-being than if they depend on others (Crocker & Robeyns, 2009).

Expanding people’s freedoms through people’s agency entails a process of capacity building. Various capabilities of people come together - such as skills and ideas - which allows people to improve their capability-set. An expanded capability-set means an individual has more opportunities to live a kind of life they value, which improves their well-being (Sen, 1999).

Finally, development as freedom acknowledges that people and groups are different and therefore need different freedoms to attain different kind of lives, based on the different values they have (Sen, 1999). This theory therefore provides space for the innovative, progressive, and sometimes striking ideas that young people have, as well as space for sharing ideas and learning from older generations.

2.10 Summary

This literature review discussed various contexts and challenges faced by young people from developing communities that hinders their transition into adulthood. Stimulating youth to become agents of social change - to be active citizens - is an important strategy in youth development with long lasting benefits to the youths’ personal development and South Africa’s nation building. But active citizenship amongst youth appears to be low. Although the participation of youth in development is promoted in policies, academic research and in civil society programmes, a lack of true implementation results in limited opportunities for youth to lead and have agency in social change. Furthermore, the literature review discussed various ways of how young people can be stimulated and hindered from becoming an agent of social change. Finally three theoretical frameworks (PCD, social capital and development as freedom) that guide this research were outlined and discussed. The next chapter covers the research methodology adopted in this study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives details on the research approach and methodology. The research design applied in this study is outlined, followed by a description of the sample of participants. The methods used for the data collection, capturing and analysis are also discussed. This chapter ends with the provision of some limitations of this study.

3.2 Research Design

The data in this qualitative research study was collected through once off, one-on-one interviews with seventeen young agents of social change from seven developing communities in the Cape Town region. By using this strategy, a fuller and more personal understanding could be developed of the experiences of these young agents of social change. One-on-one interviews help understand “the world from the participant’s point of view, to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences, [and] to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations” (Kvale cited in De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 287).

It was the intention of the researcher to collect further data through a focus-group session, but because the one-on-one interviews revealed enough rich information to answer the research objectives it was decided to instead have feedback sessions with the participants where the results were shared with them. Instead of collecting new data, these sessions allowed the participants to engage with the findings and give feedback. It has always been the intention of the researcher to ensure that the participants fully support and stand behind this research report. The researcher also created a facebook-group where the participants can interact with one another. The researcher hopes that this will empower the participants as it increases their social capital.

There are plenty of quantitative and qualitative research studies that have produced rich data and interesting insights on youth from developing communities, but not much research has been done on young agents of social change. Research on youth and active citizenship has generally been limited and rarely in-depth (Jobson, 2011). Only a few qualitative research studies exist that illustrate a deeper understanding of the experiences of young people who are changemakers. This exploratory study therefore fills a gap and explores what the experiences are of young people in becoming agents of social change.

It is important for different stakeholders such as policy makers and development practitioners to hear the voices of young agents of social change. *Applied research* was therefore in order and used in this study. This means that the researcher aimed to make this qualitative research study “more humanistic and relevant to the lives of the people” (De Vos *et al.*, 2001: 80.) This is also in line with modern development trends - such as

the people centred development framework - that value participatory approaches and development research focused on human experiences (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009).

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1. Sampling

The participants were purposively selected based on the judgment of the researcher (De Vos *et al.*, 2002). The researcher targeted a specific group (young agents of social change) in a specific area (Cape Town region), because it was expected that this group would be best able to respond comprehensively to the research questions.

Selected persons who fitted the sample criteria and who were available and willing to participate were interviewed. The sample criteria were set as follows:

- 1) The young agents of social change had to be aged between 14-35 years old; South Africa's official definition of youth (RSA, 2009).
- 2) The participants had to be able to express themselves in English.
- 3) The participants had to come from a developing community. These are communities in which the majority lives on far less money - with far fewer basic public services - than the population in more privileged/developed communities. This definition emerged out of The World Bank's definition of a "developing country" (The World Bank, 2013). This research study is limited to youth from developing communities because these communities need their young residents to participate with agency in development activities. Youth from more privileged communities can also be agents of social change and try to improve conditions in developing communities, but integrating them in this sample could skew the data because they have far more resources available to them and it can therefore be expected that their lived experiences will significantly differ from youths in developing communities.
- 4) The participants had to have undertaken an activity to improve the lives of people in their community or in the broader society. These activities range from something small like helping learners with homework, to something bigger like organizing protests or running a youth-organization. The reason for this inclusive approach of a wide range of development activities is that many young people are not capable of undertaking big development activities due to various barriers. This research study acknowledges and recognizes the value of small initiatives that facilitate social change.

The sample consisted of seventeen young people (12 male, 5 female), between the ages of 23 and 34. The participants come from seven different developing communities in the Cape Town area: Khayelitsha, Delft, Bonteheuwel, Sweet Home Farm, Retreat, Langa and Gugulethu. For more biographical details see Appendix VI on page 88 of this report.

3.3.2. Data Collection Strategy

3.3.2.1. Data Collection Method

The data was collected through one-on-one interviews with seventeen young agents of social change. By doing this, a fuller understanding of the mind-set, thoughts and feelings from the young people could be developed. It is considered that by asking the right questions, the reality of the respondents can be known (De Vos *et al.*, 2001). In-depth interviews provide a good understanding of the participants' experiences.

3.3.2.2. Data Collection Instrument

A semi-structured interview schedule was designed with questions that reflected the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews allow flexibility to generate a good understanding of "a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic" (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 296). With semi-structured interviews the participants are perceived as experts of the research topic and they therefore had maximum opportunity to tell their story (De Vos *et al.*, 2005). The interview schedule, included in this report as Appendix IV (page 83), served merely as a guide; there was space to ask other related questions as well.

The interviews took place in English as all the participants were able to communicate in English. A digital recorder was used to record the interviews, with the approval of the participants. This way the researcher ensured that no information was lost.

3.3.2.3. Data Collection Approach

In order to find research participants, different people and organizations were approached. The researcher received a few leads and put in action a snowball effect that started at different individuals. All contacts and potential participants were asked to find other young agents of social change that fitted the study criteria. This process took a bit longer than expected because the researcher did not have direct control over finding people; the researcher was often dependent on others to find participants and to get in contact with them

The interviews took place at a time and place convenient for the participants. Flexibility from the researcher's side was important because the participants live in different communities and some have jobs or other commitments. The interviews therefore took place in different locations. The researcher always tried to secure a venue with a private room to limit disturbances.

All interviews took place in June and July 2012. All transport costs were paid by the researcher. Lunga was first interviewed on 26 June at his office space in Khayelitsha, and a follow up interview took place on 3 July at Workers World Media Productions in Salt River. Earl was interviewed on 27 June at the University of Cape Town. Mandisi was interviewed on 3 July at the Baxter Theatre in Cape Town. Mahlubi was interviewed at his home in Langa on 5 July. Niki was interviewed at the Educo office in Plumstead on 10 July. Anele was

interviewed on 10 July at the researcher's home in Woodstock. Khusta (11 July), Indigenous (13 July), Solitude (13 July), Mabhelandile (18 July), Double M (19 July) and Ngcwalisa (19 July) were interviewed at the International Labour Research and Information Group (Ilrig) office in the Community House in Salt River. This was a great location because the community house has a strong social change character with organizations like Ilrig, Workers World Media Productions and Khulumani Support Group present in the building. Ntombi was interviewed on 14 July at the University of Cape Town, Siyamboleka was interviewed on 17 July at the Warehouse in Wetton, and Sisanda was interviewed on 20 July at her office space in Greenpoint. Sisa and Carmenita were interviewed on 24 July at the Human Rights Media Centre office in Kenilworth.

The process of the interviews were generally as follows: the researcher introduced herself, explained what the research was about, what the participant could expect and not expect, what his or her rights are, what the process of the interview would be like, and the researcher tried to make the participant feel comfortable by offering tea and cookies. The participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions. After that, some biographical details were collected and the interview started. The researcher tried to follow the interview schedule, but added extra questions during all interviews for clarification. The interviews ended by thanking the participants and acknowledging their value in this study. They were asked how they experienced the interview, whether they had something to add, and the opportunity was given to ask questions.

The interview with Carmenita was the shortest and took 71 minutes (one hour and eleven minutes). The longest interview was with Lunga and took 182 minutes (three hours and two minutes). The average length of the interviews was 111 minutes (one hour and fifty-one minutes). These are the lengths of the recorded interviews; the introductions and endings were not taped.

3.3.3. *Data Collection Analysis*

The data was analysed inductively (De Vos *et al.*, 2001). After the interviews and the finalization of the literature review, the data was analysed and themes and patterns were identified. For this analysis process, and to make sure that the conclusions are trustworthy, the researcher adapted Tesch's eight steps in qualitative data analysis (De Vos *et al.*, 2001: 343):

1. The researcher got a sense of the whole by reading through all of the transcripts carefully. Ideas came to mind.
2. The researcher chose one interview and while she was going through it, she asked: "what is it about?" The researcher thought about the underlying meaning of the information.
3. Once the researcher completed the aforementioned task for several respondents, a list was made of all topics. Similar topics were aggregated and structured into columns that were arranged into major topics, unique topics and leftovers.

4. With this list the researcher returned to the data. The topics were abbreviated as codes and the codes written next to the appropriate segments of the text. The researcher tested this preliminary organizing scheme to see whether new categories and codes would emerge.
5. The researcher found the most descriptive wording for the topics and placed them into categories. She endeavoured to reduce the total list of categories by grouping together topics that relate to each other. Lines were drawn between the categories to show interrelationships.
6. The researcher made a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetised the codes.
7. The data material belonging to each category was assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis performed.
8. The researcher re-coded existing data if necessary.

3.4 Data Verification

To ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings, the notion of objectivity must be understood. This can be done with the approach of Guba and Lincoln (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). According to them, the trustworthiness (validity) of qualitative data can be determined through four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

In terms of *credibility*, the participants were selected according to strict criteria - clearly identified in the methodology - to ensure that the main research question could be answered in the best possible way. The qualitative in-depth interview approach allowed the emergence of a deeper understanding of the research problem.

In relation to the *transferability* of the study, meaning whether the findings of this research study can be applied or transferred to another similar context, the researcher has clearly laid out the theoretical frameworks that guided the study. A broad description of how the data was collected and analysed is also given. These methods used – and the methodological choices made – could be transferred to a similar setting. However, the sample size of this study was relatively small and context will always differ according to the research setting. Generalizing is therefore not possible.

Regarding the issue of *dependability*, a detailed description of how data was collected and analysed is given in this chapter. Chapter one outlines the ethical considerations applied in this research study and explains, for example, that the participants were participating voluntarily; there was no reason for them to twist the truth.

In the matter of *confirmability*, the data collected in this study was digitally recorded and fully transcribed to ensure no content or details were omitted. The eight-step data analysis approach of Tesch was used (De Vos et al., 2001). The findings relate to existing research, but new information also emerged. The researcher has attempted throughout this entire report to be as explicit and clear about the research process as possible.

3.5 Limitations of the Study

The participants included a wide variety of young agents of social change: they are of different ages, different racial and cultural backgrounds, and they undertake different development activities. This posed limitations to the study because it makes it difficult to generalize the outcomes of the study.

Another limitation is that the sample of participants consists of older youth. South Africa's definition of youth is quite broad, so officially all the participants are identified as youth. However, all the participants are above 22 years old and therefore their experiences as agents of social change are likely to differ from younger youth. Speaking of *young* agents of social change can therefore somewhat be misleading. However, having an older sample of participants - who are still youth - did bring benefits. The participants were able to express themselves well, their long standing experiences as young agents of social change helped them identify stimulators and barriers, and they were able to analyse situations. If the participants were younger, they would have less experience to reflect on and it might have been more difficult for them to respond to the research questions.

Furthermore, eight participants were drawn from the same organization where they are all leaders. All eight fit the sample criteria, but because they are from the same organization they share a similar vision and mission which does not necessarily represent all young agents of social change. Coming from the same organization, they also experience similar barriers. However, during the interviews it became clear that they all have different personal experiences in becoming an agent of social change which added richness to the study.

Finally, if the researcher had more time, a larger sample of participants could have been interviewed, which would make the research study more significant. Extra time would have also allowed the researcher to build up a stronger relationship with the participants, which could have led to gaining a more personal and in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences.

3.6 Summary

This chapter provided details on the research methodology. It was explained that this study applied a qualitative approach with seventeen one-on-one interviews using a semi structured interview schedule. The sample was purposively selected and the data was analysed according to Tesch's process steps. The data was also validated by using Guba and Lincoln's approach that explains credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Finally the limitations of this study were given. The next chapter presents and discusses the findings that emerged out of the analysis and that relate to the research objectives.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of this research study. The first section provides background information on the participants. The next section outlines what stimulated the participants to become agents of social change, followed by a section that outlines problems that inhibit other youth from developing into changemakers. The fourth section discusses the barriers experienced by the participants in their activities as agents of social change. The final section shows the importance of having young changemakers in society.

4.2 Young Agents of Social Change

This section provides background information on the participants regarding their employment, education, active citizenship and personality.

4.2.1. Agency in Social Change

The participants are agents of social change, which means they act out of their own agency. Sen (1999) explains agency - or agent - as “someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives” (Sen, 1999: 19). Agents, says Sen, are individuals or groups that decide on matters for themselves, shaping their own destiny (Sen, 1999). The participants care about their society or community and initiate development activities. This section identifies the starting point of when the participants transformed into individuals who act out of their own agency when working towards social change. Table 1 shows how the participants exercise their agency in social change. It is evident that most participants are concerned with youth development in their direct and surrounding communities. Furthermore, the development activities of the participants usually reflect their hobbies and passions.

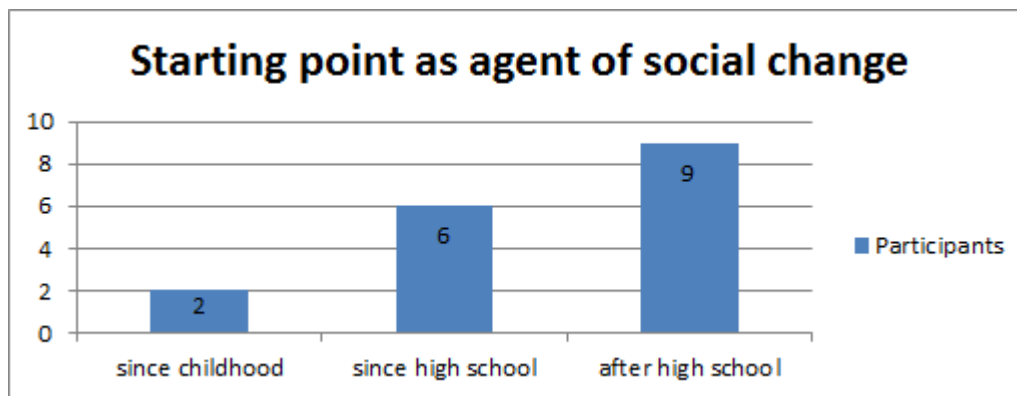
Table 1 Agency Participants

1. Mabelandile	Leader in the <i>Progressive Youth Movement</i> and organizes various protests in the Cape Town area.
2. Lunga	Facilitator of Sunday youth-group sessions in his community as head of the Khayelitsha youth structure and he is employed at NGO <i>Workers World Media Productions</i> .
3. Niki	Helps learners from her old high school with their homework and she is employed at NGO <i>Educo Africa</i> where she works with other young agents of social change.
4. Anele	Founder of the advocacy grassroots movement <i>Soundz of the South (SOS)</i> that mostly targets youth.
5. Indigenous; 6. Ntombi 7. Ngcwalisa 8. Solitude 9. Khusta	<i>Soundz of the South (SOS)</i> leaders who organize social change events. As artists they try to unleash social awareness among youth in the community through their music and poetry.

10. Siyamboleka	Sweet Home Farm community leader and employed as community development practitioner at NGO <i>The Warehouse</i> .
11. Carmenita	Motivational speaker at drug centres and she runs a soup kitchen through her church.
12. Sisa	Quit his regular job in order to become a full-time change maker. He now works and volunteers for various community projects working with youth.
13. Mandisi	Co-founder of <i>Theatre4Change</i> , a community-based theatre group that raises awareness and brings change through theatre performances and youth-workshops.
14. Mahlubi	Founder of the <i>Langa Youth Development Centre</i> , a community-based NGO.
15. Sisanda	Founder of magazine <i>Zazi</i> (available for free), which is filled with important information for high school learners in developing communities. Through workshops, the learners are empowered to create the magazine themselves.
16. Earl	Founder and leader of a skating project for youth in his community in order to give them skills, self-esteem and joy.
17. Double M	Initiated an anti-crime school project and aims to bring social change through his hip-hop music.

It is difficult to exactly establish when the participants became agents of social change because this process does not happen overnight. The researcher therefore asked the participants when they felt they had become an agent of social change. It appears that the starting point was mostly during and after high school (see figure 1). Particularly the years after high school seem significant because that is when most participants really started to develop as changemakers.

Figure 1 Starting point as agent of social change



“I have always been involved in helping other people and I always tried to volunteer and help out where I can. (...) I grew up with a mom who was also very active and who also believes in helping others. (...) So that's what I knew was right; that's what I knew people do” ~ Sisanda

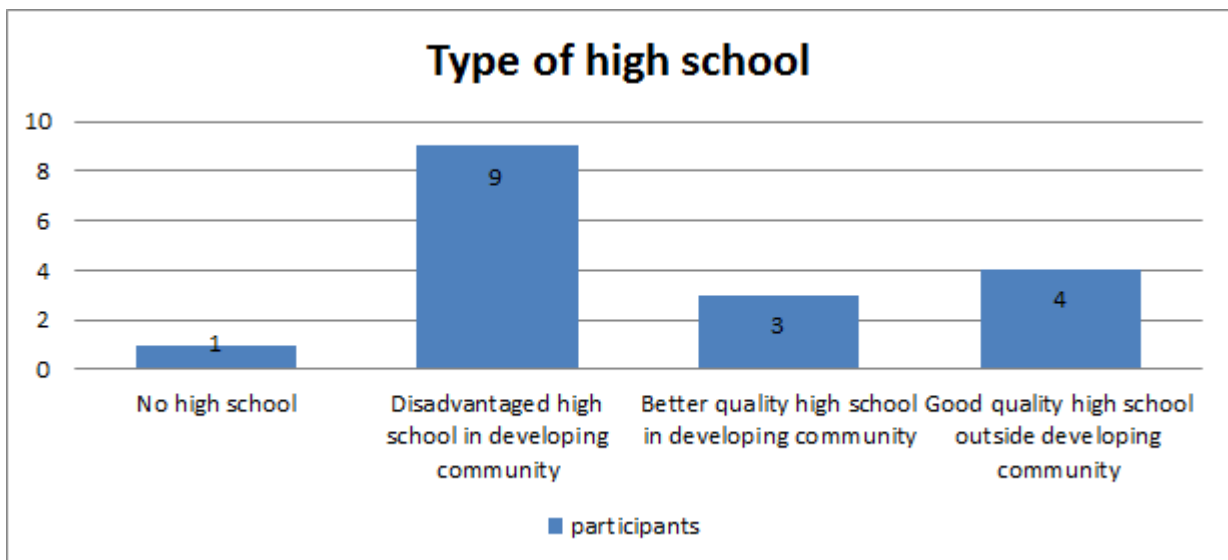
“I liked debating in [high] school. I was recruited on that basis by Youth4Work. There I discovered that debating alone doesn’t make sense: I need to take initiatives; I need to take these issues forward” ~ Mabhelandile

It is understandable that young people particularly grow into the role of an agent of social change after high school because active citizenship is one of the steps in becoming an adult (The World Bank, 2006). However, if young people would make this transition into active citizenship sooner, they might be better capable to deal with various challenges earlier on in life. Research shows that participation in social change gives young people valuable skills which can provide resilience during their high school years; a vulnerable stage in the youths’ life (McEvoy-Levy, 2001; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005; Perhold, 2006). For example, research in Argentina showed that youth participation in development activities can reduce high school dropout rates and improve educational performances (Perhold, 2006). Adolescence presents one of the last opportunities to intervene in the human development of young people and help them overcome challenges, before these become life patterns that ultimately are more difficult to deal with (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

4.2.2. Education and Employment

When young people receive good quality education, they appear to engage more positively with their environment, feel more responsible towards their community, and are more successful in life (Ramphela, 2002). However, youth from developing communities are likely to have limited access to good quality schools (Bloch, 2009). As figure 2 shows, most participants went to schools where resources were scarce, but nevertheless became agents of social change who engage positively with their environment and feel responsible for their communities.

Figure 2 Type of high school



Most participants were committed to trying their best in school in order to get good marks. As shown in figure 3, eleven participants reached levels post-matric, which means they proceeded well in their education, taking into consideration South Africa's educational context. In 2010, only 36% of people aged 20 or more had completed Grade 12 (Department of Basic Education, 2010: 45). Particularly learners in developing communities struggle to pass their Grade 12 examination due to the poor quality of schools available (Bloch, 2009).

Interestingly, almost all participants who proceeded post-matric, studied for a profession concerned with social issues. Mabelandile studied social work, Earl studied community development, Ntombi studied psychology, Sisanda studied journalism, and Mahlubi and Niki studied social entrepreneurship.

Figure 3 Education level

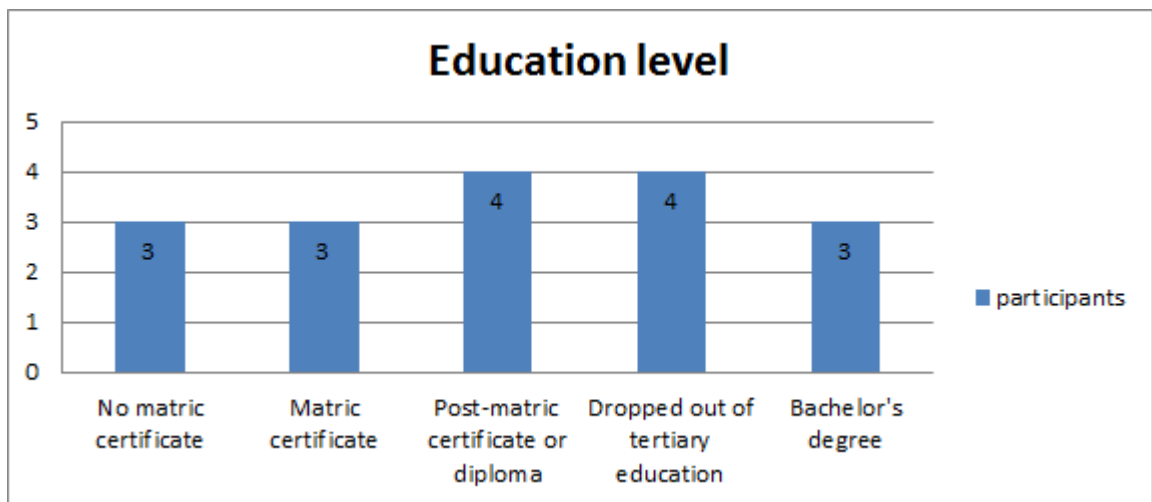
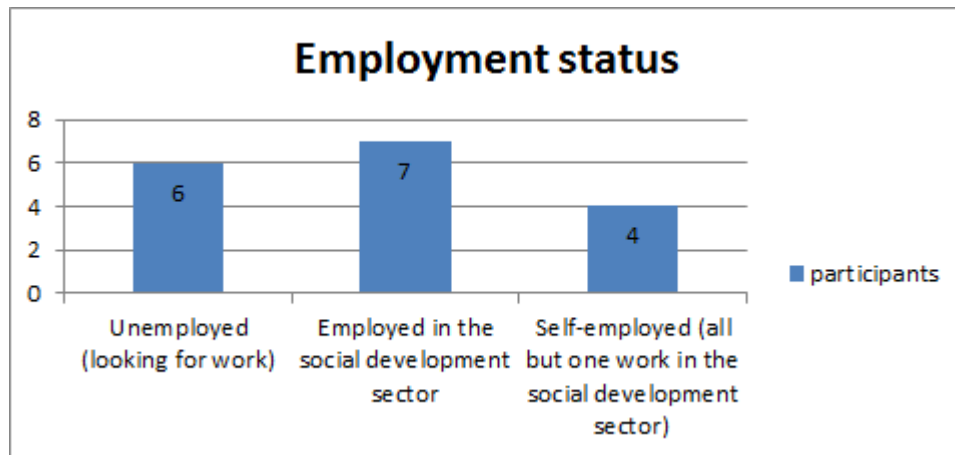


Figure 4 on the next page shows that most participants are employed or self-employed. Although this does not always lead to independence and financial stability among the participants, it can be considered a great achievement considering the high youth unemployment rate of 68.2% in the Western Cape (Western Cape Provincial Treasury, 2012: 130). Of those employed and self-employed, all but one work in the social development sector. Mandisi is the only one who does not work in this sector, but his work as a theatre performer is sometimes related to social change.

Figure 4 Employment status



As explained earlier, generally the participants developed into agents of social change after their high school career. Clearly their engagement in development activities did not stand in their way of getting into further education or employment. In fact, considering the wide social objectives in the participants' tertiary education and employment placements, there might be a relationship between their activities and their educational and employment achievements. Research shows that participating in development activities can provide skills needed for employment or educational accomplishments (ICP, 2010; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005; Perhold, 2006). According to the theories of social capital and development as freedom, being an agent of social change includes a process of acquiring important networks and skills which can improve a young person's educational and employment prospects (Fukuyama, 2001; Narayan & Woolcock, 2000; Sen, 1999). Some participants explained how their experiences in social development brought them important opportunities to study further or become employed.

"There was a vacancy and (...) they wanted to re-look at the whole idea of NGOs and their interventions in communities. And I was like: This is so interesting! It could be something that I would fit in very well as I have a bit of experience in working with communities. (...) And then I just got the job! I probably made an impression because I didn't have a rich c.v. like a lot of other people..." ~ Solitude

"I was a facilitator for Red Zebra (...) The funder (...) asked me what it is that I wanted to do? And I said: I have this dream to start a centre where I share what I'm doing as a facilitator. And then he told me about YIP [International Youth Initiative Programme]. (...) I got a scholarship!" ~ Mahlubi

4.2.3. Personal Characteristics

It is difficult and risky to describe the personal characteristics of the participating youth, especially for a researcher who does not share a history with the participants. The researcher therefore decided to ask the participants to describe themselves.

Initially the study did not examine what the participants were like before they became agents of social change, but during the process of data collection, the researcher discovered some interesting themes and so decided to pursue this. Notably, most of the participants explained they were not popular or outgoing children and they never got themselves into serious trouble with authorities. Furthermore, many participants pointed out they only had a few friends growing up, up until they became agents of social change. Many participants described themselves as being quiet and introverted as children and some were bullied by peers.

“When I was young, I was quiet. (...) I remember when I was in primary [school], my mother was called because I didn’t speak for the whole month in class. (...) I didn’t have a lot of friends (...) because I was not that much of a talkative person” ~ Mabhelandile

“I had a very low self-esteem. (...) I had an accident at the age of ten that really impacted on my confidence. (...) So I was always mocked by these kids. It made me, like, never look up, but always look down, because: insults, insults, insults...” ~ Mahlubi

Interestingly, when asked questions about their current characteristics and personality, most participants explicitly expressed that they now consider themselves to be outspoken and extroverted. It would suggest that becoming a changemaker stimulated this transformation. Research shows that being an agent of social change can boost young people’s self-esteem and transform them into confident individuals (Ansell, 2005; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). The social capital theory also explains that being actively involved in civil society increases an individual’s social capital (Fukuyama, 2001; Jobson, 2011; Perhold, 2006).

“I was always this black sheep. (...) I used to be shy. A meeting would end without me having talked. But I told myself: If I believe that people must not be abused, then I need to say it out loud. Otherwise I’ll sleep with it and it will affect me emotionally” ~ Lunga

“When I grew up, I was very quiet and reserved (...) When I meet my [old] classmates, they are like: “what happened?” Because now I am the one who talks and who does all the crazy stuff. While in primary [school], all the way up until I got active [in social change], I was always the reserved ever thinking type” ~ Anele

4.2.4. Active Citizenship

Active citizenship strengthens democracy and stimulates social and economic development (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). Active citizenship increases social capital which is necessary in order to change the status quo (Fukuyama, 2001; Jobson, 2011; Perhold, 2006). This study examined the degree of active citizenship by looking

at the participants' interest and involvement in politics and civil society. The participants represent a minority of young South Africans who are actively involved in community development and nation building, and it might therefore be expected that their degree of active citizenship is higher compared to their peers. Generally South African youth do not participate in civil society groups and are not politically active (Jobson, 2011; Mattes, 2011; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005).

When looking at the participants' experiences, civil society clearly played an important role in stimulating active citizenship. The participants have all participated in a civil society organization and often had positive experiences which stimulated them to become an agent of social change. They also all exercise their development activities in the civil society sector. By doing so, the participants are atypical compared to most South African youth. Various research studies show that generally young South Africans do not participate in development related civil society organizations (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Mattes, 2011; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005).

Because the participants are actively involved in civil society, they are likely to have a high degree of social capital (Fukuyama, 2001; Jobson, 2011; Perhold, 2006). Research shows that people with high social capital are "less likely to trust political institutions and less likely to become involved in the political world" (Kim, 2005: 197). Not surprisingly therefore, the level of party political engagement appears to be low among the participants. Although they expressed interest in politics and they engage with political figures through their development activities, their experiences were often unpleasant and most participants do not vote. However, "not voting" does not necessarily point to a lack of active citizenship. For many participants, "not voting" is a political action through which they can show their lack of faith in South Africa's political leaders. Furthermore, although a few participants have been active in political organizations in the past, to date, none of them are involved in a political party.

"What has this so called "[ANC] Youth League" done for the youth? There's nothing you can point at. That's why it's hard to attract youth [to this organization], because there is nothing to gain, except for those who are up in the ranks of that organisation" ~ Sisa

"I joined the ANC, but when I was there, I saw that it is not good for me, because there are a lot of liars there. They lie to people or they are making empty promises. I am not like that. (...) That is why I moved back and started talking on behalf of the community, not on behalf of any organization" ~ Siyamboleka

Clearly the participants are active citizens within civil society, but like their peers they do not enjoy participating in political activities and withdraw from voting during elections (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). The participants' political engagement is clearly limited. This suggests that a large youth cohort does not engage politically. Problems in the ANC youth league and the National Youth Development Agency deepens and reinforces this gap between politics and the youth, leading to young people being poorly

represented politically. This weakens South Africa's young democracy, can lead to social and political instability, and makes nation building more challenging (ICP, 2010).

4.3 Stimulators to become Agent of Social Change

Social and institutional relationships (social capital) can stimulate young people to become agents of social change (Fukuyama, 2001; Jobson, 2011; Perhold, 2006). This section discusses whether civil society organizations, family, friends, role-models, education, and life experiences provided such stimulations to the participants. It is important to understand that a mixture of the above variables have been influential. For example, when family has been significant in stimulating a participant, other factors like school, civil society organizations and/or friends may also have played an stimulating role. This section ends by looking at the support structures of the participants.

4.3.1. Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations active in communities can empower and stimulate otherwise excluded youth to become active citizens (Fukuyama, 2001). "It was only by coming together in civil associations that weak individuals became strong; the associations they formed could (...) serve as 'schools of citizenship' where individuals learned the habits of cooperation that would eventually carry over into public life" (Fukuyama, 2001: 11). All participants are and/or have been part of civil society organizations, but only a few participants report being directly stimulated by civil society organizations to become agents of social change, particularly because they received meaningful opportunities for leadership and ownership over projects that stimulated their agency. These young changemakers appear to be fortunate because they are an exception among the participants. Other research also shows that many civil society organizations do not provide young people with opportunities for leadership and ownership (agency) over development projects (Jobson, 2011; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

"At TSIBA [Tertiary School in Business Administration] (...) they've got projects where you can be involved in your own community. They call it "pay it forward". So ehm, each year you have to come with a business idea and then you have to take it to the community" ~ Niki

"I wasn't just a participant in this organization [Community Networking Forum]; I was given space to think; space to implement. (...) And I was young, I was like: yeah, yeah, yeah: I got energy, let's do this thing" ~ Anele

Although most participants were not directly stimulated by civil society organizations to become an agent of social change, positive experiences through these organizations have played a crucial role, if not the most significant role. All participants have had positive experiences, or received empowering opportunities, through civil society organizations, which stimulated them to become agents of social change.

“[With Dance for Life] I was in a school where I had to share what HIV does in my local environment. I could hear my voice echoing in the presence of 500 young people (...) I felt the power that I had of having the attention of 500 people, who were listening to what I had to say. And I realized: this is me fully, this is me, this is what I am capable of (...) I discovered my passion” ~ Mahlubi

Many participants also mentioned the significance of individuals from civil society organizations that put in the necessary energy, offered special attention or were inspirational by the example they set. Although this does not always include direct stimulation, it often did influence and inspire the participants to become an agent of social change. Individuals from civil society organizations that work with youth must be aware of the influence they exert with the personal attention they give and by the example they set.

“The facilitator of Love Life gave an insight of what I can do with myself. (...) One thing that attracted me was the facilitation skills he used in the classroom: being less serious; not having a switched on hand on us to pay attention. It was more informal, but more educational” ~ Sisa

Civil society organizations can clearly stimulate young people to become agents of social change. It is therefore worrying that most South African youth do not participate in civil society organizations (Enslin, 2003; Everatt, 2000; Jobson, 2011; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). They will miss out on important opportunities to engage in social change processes. However, it is evident from the data collected that a combination of stimulants have led the participants to become changemakers. Hence, while civil society organizations are important, other factors also play a significant role.

4.3.2. Family, Friends and Role Models

This study examined whether family, friends, role models and/or other individuals stimulated the participants to become agents of social change.

Generally the participants were not directly stimulated by their family to become agents of social change. However, family does play an important role and did influence the participants indirectly. To start, research shows that having a strong foundation at home can stimulate young people to become caring individuals who are more likely to engage in social development (Ramphela, 2002; The World Bank, 2006). Most participants have such a strong foundation because they grew up with an adult being actively involved in the upbringing. This means the participants received attention, were taught about “right” and “wrong”, and had someone making sure schoolwork was completed. This could have indirectly stimulated the participants to become agents of social change.

“My mom was very strict and there were things that you don't do! You have morals that you are taught (...) She took us through school; she did absolutely everything for us” ~ Sisanda

“I grew up with my grandmother (...) She is the person who taught me everything that I know today. (...) My upbringing has had a great positive impact on how I actually receive and

envision my ways [of doing things]. (...) If it wasn't for her, I would not be this person that I have become" ~ Solitude

Next to this strong foundation, most participants had family members who introduced them to social change by exposing them to thinking about society, development and/or activism. Although this was not a direct stimulation, this sometimes stimulated the participants indirectly to engage in social change activities. Research shows, for example, that family traditions in active citizenship and/or social development can stimulate a young person to follow the family's footprints (ICP, 2010; McEvoy-Levy, 2001).

"There are a couple of my family members that were politically involved in the struggle, but I never met them. (...) They actually really influenced me indirectly [to become an agent of social change]. Not in the sense that I met them, but through what I've heard" ~ Indigenous

"I met this brother of mine who was advocating for social change back in the days. (...) He said that this is not the world for the weak people: you need to stand up for what you believe in. I remember when he died, Chris Hani was there and I was still a little kid (...) When I look at who I am, I look up to my brother 'cause he said this and this and this to me" ~ Ngcwalisa

Unlike the participants in this research study, many young people in developing communities grow up having difficult relationships with their parents who often cannot provide emotional support to their children (Ramphela, 2002). This suggests that these young people do not have a strong foundation at home, nor does their family expose them to social change related thinking and activities. For this reason, social workers, role models and development practitioners are vital in developing communities in order to progress young people into caring and active citizens.

It is well known that friends often have a tremendous influence on young people's behaviour and choices (Barry, 2010: 126). Interestingly, only four participants were directly stimulated by a friend to become an agent of social change. It is not surprising that the participants generally did not receive stimulation from their friends to become agents of social change because development activities are not popular in today's youth culture, as will be further discussed later in this report (Everatt, 2000; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006).

"I am the one who influenced friends to go into the direction [of social change], not the other way round" ~ Sisa

This study also explored whether personal role models stimulated the participants to become agents of social change. While role models can be very influential (ICP & Pravah, 2009), positive role models are sometimes difficult to find in developing communities (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Perhold, 2006; Ramphela, 2002). Instead, gang members are often role models to the youth (Ramphela, 2002). However, the participants named various individuals they looked up to and who somewhat influenced them to be involved in social change. The participants

looked up to individuals who were either agents of social change, or who were admirable because they were good, caring and loving people who the participants wanted to identify with.

“My role model is this guy: Bishop Desmond Tutu, [because] he is saying what is right and what is wrong” ~ Siyamboleka

“There was this musician and his content was always focused on social upliftment and political issues. So I would see him and I would see myself in him. That is why I also decided to use this strategy [of making a change through music]” ~ Double M

It appears that the participants did not receive much stimulation from their close social relationships. Friends and family did not stimulate the participants directly to develop agency in social change, and role models also did not play a major role in stimulating the participants to become agents of social change. This is interesting, considering the usual significant influence these actors have.

4.3.3. High School

Good quality education can help young people engage more positively with their environment and make them feel more responsible towards their community (Ramphele, 2002). Citizenship education, for example, can stimulate young people to be active in social change processes. However, many schools in developing communities fail to teach history, civic identity and citizenship accordingly (Hammett, 2009; Lefko-Everett, 2012). Fortunately, during the high school years, opportunities are sometimes provided to learners to engage in development activities.

Table 2 shows whether high school stimulated the participants to become agents of social change.

Table 2 Agency in high-school

High school did not stimulate	6 participants	No stimulation received in high school to become an agent of social change, despite maybe having received opportunities such as joining the Student Representative Council (SRC), also known as the Representative Council of Learners.
Took on the opportunity in high school to be active in social change	6 participants	High schools offered the participants various opportunities to be involved in leadership and social change, sometimes through NGO school projects, which stimulated the participants to become an agent of social change. For example, Sisa joined the SRC where he was able to make changes in his high school. His school also connected him to Love Life and the Arts Cape Festival where he worked for HIV/AIDS awareness.
Created own opportunity in high school to be active in social change	5 participants	Five students created their own opportunities in high school to be involved in leadership and social change. For example, Mabhelandile became a leader among students - although not an official role - and organized protests in his school. Khusta connected his school to the Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa and became a peer educator in his high school.

“As peer educators our main role was to influence our youth positively. I approached the school that I was studying in and linked the organization with the school. (...) I would facilitate workshops during the Life Orientation or the guidance period” ~ Khusta

Although most high schools offered the participants opportunities and space to be involved in social change, school did not play a major role in stimulating the youth to become agents of social change. Schools were not proactive, but rather passively involved in the youths social change engagements during high school. Many participants complained that high school did not reward agency or critical thinking. They had to submit to their teachers and critical discussions were usually not welcomed.

“If we have kids that can question without the fear of teachers' authority, you'll have more open minded people. But now you have kids who need to submit. Now (...) you build a community that needs to submit to supervisors, without a question” ~ Sisa

4.3.4. Alternative Education

Alternative education has made the participants aware of injustices, helped them access important information and mould them into critical thinkers. This stimulated them to become agents of social change. Alternative education, meaning non-mainstream education, can provide new and different perspectives on social problems and includes attending workshops organized by government or civil society, self-learning (through reading books or watching documentaries), and engaging in socially conscious art like hip hop music, poetry, theatre and dance. One study shows that “education through music allows youth to voice their concerns to the public and learn to cope with the hardships that they encounter on a daily basis” (Perullo, 2005: 77). Many young people turn to hip-hop to deal with socio-economic challenges and marginalization (Perullo, 2005). Hip-hop creates opportunities for young people to raise their voice, share information, express feelings and affect change (Perullo, 2005). This also suggests that young people can be stimulated to become agents of social change when the activities relate to their hobbies and passions. Through these channels young people can be reached, communicate and engage in social change.

“[Once] I got this cassette as a gift from a friend, and my uncle (...) made me listen to it and then he would tell me what the song would say. There was a song called “peace, peace, perfect peace”, and he would break it down and talk about this idea [of peace]. When he was telling me about songs, I would always want to listen to the song and want to know what the person is saying” ~ Solitude

“[Being critical and] the debating skill that I got, I got from the organization Love Life. (...) It makes you see that what you have been given, you don't just have to accept it or take it as it comes. Think about it your own way; have your own standing about it. (...) Eh..... Before the debates, I would take what the society feeds me” ~ Khusta

According to the participants, alternative education changed their perspective on society as they became aware of social problems. This stimulated them to become agents of social change. A “process through which youth develop a critical analysis of their circumstances and then develop both a personal and collective response can be deeply empowering. (...) Volunteering in a soup kitchen is nice, but it's not enough. Young people must understand why there are soup kitchens in the first place and then take action to address the structural systems that perpetuate poverty and other social problems” (Gibson cited in Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 12, 14).

4.3.5. Life experiences and internal transformation

Various experiences can influence a young person’s interests, sense of justice, level of awareness, perceptions of responsibilities, life goals and ideals (ICP & Pravah, 2009; McEvoy-Levy, 2001). This study examined whether life experiences stimulated the participants to transform into an agent of social change.

Research shows that experiencing life challenges such as unemployment and poverty can stimulate young people to engage in social development because of their personal need for change (ICP, 2010; ICP & Pravah, 2009). All the participants come from developing communities and have been confronted with life challenges - such as poverty, unemployment and crime - on a regular basis. Many participants explained that observing or experiencing these challenges in their communities made them aware of the need for social change, which stimulated them to become changemakers.

“I know what it is like going out at lunch time and you don’t have money to buy [food], but other kids are buying (...) I need to fight for change so that no kid will ever have to go through what I went through” ~ Ngcwalisa

“I lost a female friend of mine who was HIV-infected. She actually opened up to me to tell me: “Indigenous, this is where I am at, I want you to know”. But I never paid attention to that until after two weeks: I went to her house and she had passed away. It really woke me up and brought me closer to the world of work around HIV” ~ Indigenous

Some participants pointed out that visiting other and sometimes more privileged communities increased their awareness and understanding of social problems, which stimulated them to be active in social change. The social capital theory also recognizes the potential of social integration (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000; Portes, 2000). When looking at the participants, it is clear that when their social capital increased - when they connected beyond their own community, their level of social awareness increased which stimulated them to become agents of social change. Social exclusion and segregation, on the other hand, can therefore hinder young people from becoming social changemakers.

“My awareness [about social problems] was gained from having opportunities to get out of my community. So, you have the ability to look at two communities and sjeez: why are people living in this community so different from people that live in my community?” ~ Earl

“When I was in primary and high school, I didn't get out [of my community] much (...) But then I started studying at UWC, I did stuff that I was never used to, like going into town (...). I realized that there were social ills in my community and that there were things that were not the same as in maybe other posh communities” ~ Ntombi

The participants also talked about how positive experiences in development activities stimulated them to become agents of social change. It is known that positive life experiences - such as having success - can give a young person the necessary confidence to become a changemaker (Ramphela, 2002). Next to being successful or receiving positive feedback, development activities can be enjoyable due to the type of activities it involves. Development activities are sometimes linked to youth cultural activities such as hip hop, theatre and dance, which act as an extra incentive for young people to participate. It is therefore not surprising that the social change initiatives of the participants often relate to their personal hobbies and passions.

“At Treatment Action Campaign, sometimes they would just say: “you chair the meeting.” [Or] “you have to give the introduction of Treatment Action Campaign”. So you are this Miss-know-it-all! It kind of makes you feel like [good/important]” ~ Ngcwalisa

“I just fell in love with arts. It became my own way of understanding society. (...) For me [music/arts] just became my first connection (...) With all of the projects that I have been doing, music has always been my push” ~ Indigenious

Some participants explain that being an agent of social change makes them feel good about themselves. It provides a feeling of fulfilment or it gives their life meaning. These personal motivations, combined with their lived experiences and received stimulations, brought about an internal transformation. Becoming an agent of social change is ultimately a process that happens from within. To many participants, being an agent of social change is more of a calling than a choice and it has become part of their identity. This reflects the empowerment process, which stimulates agency, that takes place when a young person participates in development activities. According to the people centred development framework, participation in social change includes a process of social learning which leads to empowerment (power from “within”) and self-reliance (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009). This ultimately leads to agency and sustainable development (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009).

“Even if it does not pay, it fulfils you in some way. (...) As long as you know that there is this one person that you managed to get on track: that is what is important. (...) Also, you know you are not part of the problem; you are part of the solution” ~ Khusta

“It becomes a personal vision, a personal issue, a personal identity.. (...) If I am here, I must make a mark” ~ Sisa

“It gives my life meaning. No matter how long or how short I have lived my life, I have packed my life with meaningful events and meaningful experiences, so that it was worth it in the end” ~ Mahlubi

4.3.6. Support Structure

Being stimulated to become an agent of social change is one thing, but who supports the participants in their actions? Support can come in the form of financial support, support in accessing resources, or receiving mentorship, guidance and advice.

Countless NGOs recognize the need to facilitate citizenship education and youth inclusion (Ansell, 2005; Enslin, 2003). It is therefore not surprising that all the participants in this study have received some form of support from civil society organizations, mostly grassroots organizations.

“I got more support and more skills from the Warehouse. (...) [For example], advocacy training, I did that” ~ Siyamboleka

“Irig [International Labour Research and Information Group] has been helping us as a [youth] organization, you know, because (...) we don’t have office space, we don’t have access to internet, we don’t have a telephone (...), so we use theirs” ~ Ngcwalisa

“Workers World [Media Productions] has allowed me much space to do my work and develop on my own” ~ Lunga

Although all participants have received some form of support from civil society organizations, generally they criticized these organizations because the support was often limited and not enabling. More details on this can be found in section 4.5 in this chapter.

When the participants were asked about support from the government, the responses were quite negative (see table 3). Although in policy and on paper there appears to be an enabling environment for young agents of social change to pursue their activities, in practice there are “insufficient opportunities for youth civic engagement at the grassroots level and a lack of assessment of policy impact” (ICP & Pravah, 2009: 16). The development as freedom theory advocates for the freedoms of young agents of social change to be expanded - on paper and in practice - to enable (youth) development and nation building (Sen, 1999).

Table 3 Support from Government

Government is not supportive at all, rather a stumbling block	8 participants	Local government is especially perceived as a stumbling block. This will be explained further in section 4.5 in this report.
Support from government is not enabling enough	3 participants	Lunga attended social change related government workshops, but states that the facilitators are often poorly skilled and the support is therefore inadequate. Sisanda participated in a competition for young change makers,

		organized by the National Youth Development Agency, but did not receive anything that was promised to her. Earl received funding from the government, but this process was far from smooth.
Support from government is adequate	1 participant	The City of Cape Town funded a project developed by Double M. Afterwards, the City put Double M on their database and therefore he still receives opportunities to make a change in his community.
Never sought support from government	5 participants	n.a.

“The Department of Social Development loved [my project idea] and they were always saying “we need to get together, we need to do this...”, and it has never happened. (...) There was also the National Youth Development Agency, haha... I entered a competition with them [and] was selected in the top ten. (...) They created all these little networking sessions with the promise of “investors will help you out”, and that never happened as well” ~ Sisanda

The researcher did not specifically ask about support from the private sector. However, none of the participants mentioned the private sector as a significant contributor when asked an open ended question about their support structure. However, two participants support themselves within the private sector because their initiatives are social entrepreneurship projects. Earl supports his skating project through his skating business Unique Movement, and Sisanda wants her magazine Zazi to sustain itself through advertisements.

Furthermore, the participants named individual friends, family, community members and comrades (other forms of social capital) in particular as important support structures, especially when it comes to support in the form of meeting basic needs. Sometimes support also comes in the form of mentorship, guidance and advice.

“[I have a friend], he is in PE. If I am in trouble at home, if I don’t have money to eat, if I don’t have shoes and all that, then he would say: “let’s put politics aside, now these are the realities that we are facing at home. I will try to find something”, you know” ~ Mabhelandile

“The community and friends (...) always confirm that what you are doing is a good thing” ~ Khusta

Clearly much should be done to improve the support to young changemakers. Although family, friends and comrades appear to play their part, their support is not optimal due to their lack of resources. Support from social and public institutions is also not adequate and they need to improve their services to young agents of social change on a grassroots level. The private sector can also assist young agents of social change, particularly when it comes to providing resources.

4.4 Barriers in becoming Agent of Social Change

South Africa needs more young agents of social change to strengthen social capital, to stimulate youth development, and to improve the lives of people in developing communities. According to the development as freedom theory, the freedoms to participate in development as young agents of social change should be expanded, and barriers should be reduced (Sen, 1999). Unfortunately, young people from developing communities face challenges and contexts that inhibit them from participating in development activities. The participants explained why they think so many of their peers are not becoming agents of social change. Their inputs are based on their own experiences and analytical capabilities. The participants particularly talked about youth culture, life challenges, the limitations of being young, the lack of opportunities and examples, and the lack of awareness amongst youth about the point and need of social change.

4.4.1. Youth Culture

Youth culture in developing communities inhibits young people from becoming agents of social change. According to the participants, the popular and fashionable lifestyle does not include development activities and distracts young people from engaging in social change processes. The youth culture promotes self-enrichment and individualism, moving away from traditional community principles and values. It is no longer the culture to look beyond individual needs and care for the community. Other research studies acknowledge the existence of an individualistic and materialistic youth culture where traditional values such as “ubuntu” are fading away (Cooper, 2009; Mkhwanazi, 2011; Perold, 2006).

“To be cool in the township today, you must wear Armani, you must wear Carvella, you must have as many women as you can have, you must drink Heineken, you must have a lot of friends... You must live a particular lifestyle and be flaunting about it. (...) The order of the day is: “get rich; do your own thing; it doesn't matter where it hurts other people”. Those people are glorified out there: horrible!” ~ Anele

“The lifestyle and the culture is that today you must wear certain clothes, you must drive or being able to drive, you must carry a gun, you must drink, and you must have a girlfriend” ~ Lunga

“Being young nowadays, it's obviously based on making money. Money is the driver of what they do. People are more individualistic, many times with no sense of community impact” ~ Earl

Although leadership is appealing and respected amongst youth because it provides “status”, being an agent of social change is not always popular or appealing. Young changemakers are seen as “boring” and certain facets of being an agent of social change - such as making no money and having no personal time - contrast with what the materialistic and individualistic youth culture requires from youth. The historic culture of the freedom fighters,

which was once so popular within the youth group, has now disappeared. Other research studies support this and show that when apartheid was abolished, the new democracy erased the identity and appeal of activism (Everatt, 2000; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). Nowadays “doing good” is not “cool” in developing communities (Ramphela, 2002). This also provides an explanation as to why the participants did not receive any stimulation from their friends to become an agent of social change.

“I am too serious. I'm in my own world. (...) I am too boring to hang with because I will bring abstract discussions (...) People who are social change agents are considered to be crazy people” ~ Anele

“[Many young people] are not working, but they make sure that by Friday they have money to drink. (...) [But as an agent of social change] you'll be sober and you'll be broke, haha” ~ Sisa

“[Social change activities], it's not [fun] coz you must do this and do that, when you could have been in a club, when you could have been at a party. [Social change], it's [considered] boring ya, haha” ~ Carmenita

Some participants stated that the media and capitalism teaches young people to be materialistic and individualistic. Other research studies have indicated that the consumer youth culture is indeed influenced by globalization and modernization, partly through commercial advertisements (Dubihlela & Dubihlela, 2011; Perhold, 2006). Research shows that this can have devastating social consequences because advertisements on television are not always socially responsible (Dubihlela & Dubihlela, 2011).

“From the day that we are born, the TV is programming us to be violent. (...) A pastor is telling us “do good” and the TV is telling me “kill him”” ~ Mahlubi

“Capitalism, privatization... it's ruining everything! It has created a lot of individualism. People just want to strive for themselves” ~ Ngcwalisa

“[Television shows] a certain way people wish they should live by telling them which alcohol is “in” and what they should be drinking and how you should look. (...) [TV] makes sure that people are kept or trapped in this place [township] where they can't see beyond it” ~ Solitude

4.4.2. Life Challenges

Life challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and drug and alcohol abuse, can keep young people from becoming agents of social change (ICP, 2010; Roche & Tucker, 1997). Many participants explained that life challenges can lead to young people prioritising other activities, such as crime or formal employment, in order to solve problems. Some participants also explained that being challenged with poverty makes people reluctant to volunteer because they need money.

“[Young people] do not want to volunteer. There is this stigma about volunteering: people say “no, I cannot just keep doing work for free”. (...) They see a link between voluntarism and slavery” ~ Ngcwalisa

“Some people think like: “I cannot just go volunteering if I won’t get the money”. Because some people don’t have a person at home who is working. If you would be volunteering, you need someone who can help you support you with finance” ~ Siyamboleka

The fact that life challenges keep young people from participating in social development is problematic because South Africa needs the participation of grassroots people in development processes (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009; Emmett, 2000). It is believed that development challenges, such as poverty, can be best dealt with when the grassroots participates in finding solutions. However, although poverty can inhibit people from participating, this study has shown that life challenges can also stimulate young people to become active in social change when it makes them aware of the need for social change.

4.4.3. Lack of Opportunities and Examples

According to some participants, a big problem is the lack of examples and information about opportunities to participate as an agent of social change. It appears that civil society organizations fail to reach youth and attract them to opportunities. This may explain why most young people are not active in civil society organizations (Enslin, 2003; Everatt, 2000; Jobson, 2011; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). According to a study on youth and civic engagement, “too many youth workers and youth development organizations fail to recognize that adolescent development is (...) profoundly influenced by the quality of the relationships, environments, and commitments in which young people are involved. As a consequence, programs and organizations that seek the participation and involvement of “at-risk” youth frequently have a difficult time with the recruitment and retention of adolescent participants” (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001: 7). When young people can participate meaningfully in youth development programmes where they obtain leadership roles to develop their agency, these organizations are likely to attract more youth (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; Roche & Tucker, 1997).

“The role-models that you find in the township are those that have taken the easy way out. (...) Youth leaders are gangsters and whatever. (...) Examples [of positive role models] are just not put up for youth to see” ~ Sisanda

“If you look at [NGOs], most of them are situated in the central business district. (...) They are not based in the communities (...) [Young people] want to be involved, they just don’t know where to be” ~ Ngcwalisa

“I think the biggest barrier is that [young] people are not given enough information about opportunities that are there for them [to become an agent of social change]” ~ Mahlubi

4.4.4. Being Young

Some participants think that typical youthful characteristics - such as being insecure, naive or inexperienced - can make it difficult to develop into an agent of social change. Also the notion of ageism is mentioned as a stumbling block. Ageism is “any prejudice or discrimination against or in favor of an age group” and can have far reaching social consequences (Palmore, 1999: 4). According to the participants, ageism is a tradition that makes young people believe they have to submit to adults and cannot question their norms. Critical consciousness is necessary to develop into an agent of social change, but too often young people grow up learning to be dependent on adults and are “poorly prepared to critically examine institutional systems” (Gil, 1992: 46).

“If you tell the youth from a tender age to submit, you are not gonna get outspoken people because you've told them down. (...) They grew up with understanding that when someone in front of you is superior, you cannot challenge that person. That's a thing that needs to be changed” ~ Sisa

“[Young people] feel like they will never be that [agent of social change], man. They always think less of themselves, because of what happened in their life or what they are going through. So they don't really open up to others, man...” ~ Carmenita

The findings suggest that moulding young agents of social change requires a cultural change to omit discrimination against youth based on their age. Youth development programmes and strategies must focus on building self-esteem to unleash agency and strengthen the voice of youth in social change processes.

4.4.5. No Need or No Point

Some young people simply lack awareness about the degree and complexity of social problems and they therefore might not comprehend the value of young agents of social change. The participants also explained that some young people think making a change in society is too difficult and there is no hope for a better future. Being afraid of change, or not knowing *how* to change things, keeps young people from trying.

“I think a lot of young people are not interested in knowing the information, which means that they live in the dark. Why would you wanna change something that you don't know is a problem?” ~ Ntombi

“We are so used to the bad; it's a way of life. So if you sit here and start talking about how great things COULD be, it's like “aaaaah...[deep sigh]”, you know. People have been waiting for good to happen. (...) Now we've learned to live with a lot of things” ~ Sisanda

It is difficult to establish why some young people might not see the need or point to become an agent of social change. Research has shown that South Africa's transition to a democratic state led people believe a better life is on the way (Perhold, 2006: 6). These cultural and contextual challenges dismiss a popular culture of social

change, which may explain why some young people do not see the need or the point to become an agent of social change.

4.5 Barriers experienced by Young Agents of Social Change

Young agents of social change can strengthen social capital and stimulate social change (Emmett, 2000), but they experience barriers that limits their success and power. This section discusses the main barriers experienced by the participants and these include life challenges, lack of support and participation, lack of resources, problems with government and NGOs, the limitations of being young, and the negative consequences of being an agent of social change. The development as freedom framework argues that these barriers need to be removed in order to expands the freedoms and opportunities of young changemakers and help them be more relevant in development processes (Sen, 1999).

4.5.1. Life Challenges

Life challenges sometimes hinder the progress of the young agents of social change. Some participants explained how poverty limits their capacity as changemakers, especially because development activities usually do not provide an income to the household. Sometimes they have to neglect their social change mission in order to deal with challenges and meet personal needs. On respondent, *Indigenous*, for example, is critical towards government as an agent of social change, but he feels he has to overlook some of his principles because he applied for a government learnership programme, hoping this will lead to employment.

“I find it difficult to cut myself into pieces. I want to be there [to continue my community project], but it’s impossible at this moment, having a full time job” ~ Niki

“It’s hard being a social activist when you’ve got nothing on the table... no food to feed and all those things” ~ Sisa

“You are not working, but you want to bring change around the community. (...) And I don’t even have any money to start up this thing. I have no money for transport” ~ Mandisi

Being socially excluded limits the participants’ ability to participate politically, economically, culturally and socially. “Social Exclusion refers to the fact that despite welfare and general wealth, there remains a group that is excluded from the mainstream benefits of the society and is prevented in some way from fully enjoying the general prosperity” (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009: 39). According to some participants, living in a developing community means they are isolated and so they struggle to access important networks, services, resources, and institutions. Some participants spoke about the exclusions they experience because of discrimination against their race, age and/or community. According to Roche & Tucker (1997) - who conducted comprehensive research on

youth - discrimination and negative stereotyping alienates young people from society. According to the participants this overshadows their voice, making it more difficult for them to access services and affect change.

“If you're from the township, well, Cape Town still has racism in tact some way, somehow! If it's not a white person, they [government officials] will start to scratch their head...” ~ Sisa

*“In Cape Town particularly there is a lot of racism which closes opportunities for us as young black people. Coz white people in Cape Town, when they think about black people, they think we are all the same. They do not know that there are people that are capable to bring change”
~ Mandisi*

4.5.2. Support and Participation

Public participation in community and nation building processes is essential to enable sustainable development (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009), but the participants expressed that this level of participation is limited. Most young people in their communities do not participate in development activities. This correlates with other research studies that identified that youth participation in civil society activities is low (Enslin, 2003; Everatt, 2000; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). In addition, some participants pointed out that those who do make an effort are often not recognized in society for their contributions.

“Most of the youngsters, they are in Shebeens, most of the time. But there are those who are participating [in social change], you know, by having activities with music and poetry and they use rap as their tool to speak about social issues...” ~ Double M

“Basically, 2% I'll say [participates in social change activities]. But the majority is doing their own things: drinking, drugging...” ~ Carmenita

“I don't think [youth] got the motivation to be involved in any community activities. (...) If [young people] see you are becoming an agent of change, then they try to break it away from you. For instance, in Delft they started building parks and trees and making that communal at the library. Weeks later it was vandalized” ~ Niki

The participants find it difficult to stimulate other young people to participate in development activities, making success in social change more challenging. Reasons for this lack of participation was discussed in section 4.4 of this chapter.

“We try to engage them. We try to let them see that we need their voice. [But] it is difficult” ~ Siyamboleka

“I wish I can learn how the psychological mind works, or the emotion of human beings, so that I can be able to reach them” ~ Double M

The lack of support from family is sometimes also an obstacle. The participants explained that parents or other family members can be overprotective or have household rules that interfere with their social change mission.

Research shows that a lack of support from parents often forms a barrier to young agents of social change (Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006). Parents can have very different ideas and opinions about how to tackle social problems, or how to live live, compared to their children (ICP & Pravah, 2009).

“When I was volunteering at Educo (...) my mom wanted me to bring in money. My mom was like: “why are you volunteering and not bringing in money?”” ~ Niki

“My wife sometimes struggles to say: “well done”. Sometimes [she says]: “no man, you’ll kill yourself doing all these things. Why didn’t you leave these people to do it themselves? (...) Why is it always you? Now you’re using the family-money for THAT and not for the family”” ~ Siyamboleka.

4.5.3. Resources

Resources are needed when organizing development activities, but the participants struggle to access resources to pursue their social change mission. For example, money is needed to fund development activities, but young agents of social change from developing communities with low income lack the capital to support their own activities. Accessing donor funds is often challenging in the social development sector and even more so for young people who cannot meet the requirements of donors and funding agencies. As a result young people have limited economic capabilities to pursue their activities according to their vision.

“We need the external funding, which is a problem [to get] (...) Going through mainstream fundraising [channels], we were asked things like “have you registered under the Social Development Department?” or “do you guys have audited books?”: all formalities that are important, but for us they are not key. They don’t speak to our commitment, they don’t speak to our vision and whatever it is we wanna do” ~ Anele

Many participants also struggle to access other resources, such as facilities like venues and public spaces. The participants name bureaucratic processes and mismanagement particularly as the reason why they find it difficult to access resources.

“We need to have access to public spaces, like public community halls, for which now we have to undergo a process of bureaucracy, of meetings, of going to this, of getting that... And we end up not getting it” ~ Solitude

“The municipality doesn’t allow you to use their facilities. (...) There are sports facilities for free that have to be used by young people; there are halls...but we can’t even access them nowadays because (...) you have to pay” ~ Lunga

NGO’s and local government officials are well positioned to help young agents of social change access facilities, funds and other resources. The private sector can also assist in this. It is important that young people access resources - to expand their freedoms and opportunities - so that they can manage their activities and exercise

ownership over projects. Other research studies elaborate and state that established institutions must build equal partnerships with young agents of social change and provide opportunities to the youth to direct, own and facilitate social change (ICP & Pravah, 2009; Jobson, 2011; UNECA, 2012). Unfortunately, many youth development programmes do not adequately respond to this need of meaningful youth participation, which inhibits youth empowerment and sustainable development (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

4.5.4. Government

Government is experienced as a significant obstacle to overcome. The participants find the bureaucratic system challenging and they struggle to get a “foot through the door”. Government operates in a complex matter and uses ambiguous language which makes procedures difficult to follow and often bureaucratic rules and requirements clash with the reality of what the participants have to offer. Research within the development sector has shown that government bureaucracy can be an obstacle towards young agents of social change (Ramphela, 2002; UNECA, 2012). Development expert Rondinelli (1993), for example, concluded that bureaucratic processes make government less flexible to respond to local realities.

“There’s bureaucracy of signing forms and going to the city hall, I don’t know how many times before you can get something. You have to phone, you have to run up and down...” ~ Lunga

“[To] go to the City of Cape Town, the challenge that you’ll face is that the system that is put in place, the bylaws, the processes are not supporting the people of this community” ~ Mahlubi

Not only the bureaucratic system is complex and frustrates efforts, also government officials and other local “gatekeepers” can be an obstacle to overcome. The participants complained that local gatekeepers protect their own interests and agenda and interfere in development activities organized by the youth, through controlling the proceedings. Many participants particularly referred to ward councillors who fail to do their job properly. For example, local politics sometimes interferes with youth activities when councillors - who belong to a certain political party - refuse to assist youth who do not support them or their party.

“The first difficulty was with the councillor. There are numerous occasions where I set up a meeting with her, she hasn't appeared like 7 times” ~ Earl

“The councillors... [sigh] It's hard to track them down. (...) They don't call you, even when they have your contact details” ~ Sisa

“The government and the local gatekeepers, they will make it a point that each and every ending in the community, they control it. (...) You are trying to change things, but at some point your DA and the ANC will book limits” ~ Mabhelandile

“Whatever your idea is, you have to go through a certain structure for you to be able to take it forward. And then, if you don’t belong to a certain political party, or whatsoever, that will become a problem: that is a barrier!” ~ Khusta

There appears to exist a negative relationship between young agents of social change and the government. This is a setback in the development cycle. The lack of a positive and reinforcing relationship is a missed opportunity and it can harm democracy and public order (Jobson, 2011). The participants do not feel supported by the government. Instead government frustrates and hinders their work.

“The Social Development office here in Langa (...) has facilities and resources that can be used for the benefit of the people, but the people [in the department] are not interested in that. (...) It just makes your work very difficult because you want to do good things, but you will end up wanting to do things the bad way, you understand? It affects me as a changemaker, because what is missing there is the connection that completes the cycle” ~ Mahlubi

“We would approach the City of Cape Town: “Can you fund us?” We would go through a very bureaucratic crazy process. And then the park [project] that we did in Khayelitsha got hijacked by local politicians. (...) I would advocate that if we want maximum change, we have to do away with the government. That's how bad things are” ~ Anele

4.5.5. NGOs

NGOs in Cape Town have played a stimulating role in the lives of the participants, yet NGOs also pose problems. The participants explained that it is difficult to obtain collaboration and enabling support from NGOs, especially because funding is limited with today’s economic pressures. According to the participants, NGOs tend to work like companies, are sceptical of partnerships with young agents of social change, and are not willing to share funds, resources, information or ideas.

“Here in Khayelitsha there is that phenomenon currently, especially with the current economic crisis, that [NGOs] start to be sceptical of partnerships. And I don’t know why, because this is the time that people have to be together: let’s share the budget!” ~ Lunga

“I actually called on the local organizations to make up the board of LYDC [Langa Youth Development Centre]. (...) Their reaction is much like the business environment. Competitiveness is something that people see to be the way of life (...) it just makes the local environment very tense” ~ Mahlubi

When NGOs do work with young agents of social change, they sometimes tend to keep power over projects and determine the direction and agenda, instead of empowering young changemakers by handing over ownership of projects. Some participants have gone as far as to state that NGOs tend to help themselves first and exploit young people, rather than empower them. Research shows that youth development programmes often fail to provide youth with opportunities for leadership and ownership over development projects (Mohamed & Wheeler,

2001). Young people are usually not viewed as partners and adults are perceived as superior to young people (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001). Barriers to social change will remain if civil society institutions try to control the agenda and activities of young agents of social change (ICP & Pravah, 2009; UNECA, 2012).

“A lot of times, we [youth] don't determine the agenda and the pace. For example, I was once part of some youth conference (...) about the idea of a youth service. (...) But it ended up being driven by Europeans (...) [Another example], Treatment Action Campaign was very vibrant and very powerful, but I doubt very much if those young people determined what needed to be done. Today the organization has somehow semi-collapsed and all those young people have been deserted” ~ Anele

“[NGOs] undermine us, as if we don't know much. They always think that we are still growing: as if we have a lot to learn from them, but as if they don't have to learn from us” ~ Ngcwalisa

“[NGOs] are there to do exploitation: they ask money in your name, but you don't get that money; they will get it themselves. (...) Chairpersons tend to see themselves as “above human being”. It is like they are close to God. They are the boss and you must watch how you speak to them. But they don't watch how they speak to you. You must respect them, but they don't respect you” ~ Double M

4.5.6. Being Young

Being young can be a barrier to development activities. Young people have characteristics which may be considered “youthful” and which can make development difficult. Many participants explained that young people tend to be stubborn, naive, insecure, and lack patience, which can constrain development activities. They also mentioned their inexperience as a limitation. Extra education, mentorship and training is highly valued by many participants who acknowledge that young agents of social change are often not well organized, and lack important skills, knowledge, resources and networks. Other research also shows that when young people start their own initiatives, they tend to miss out on important skills and information needed to manage people and resources effectively (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

“My weakness as a social agent of change is that I'm a young person that has got limited experience. I've got the energy, the passion, but I need mentors who can share their experience and say: “if you take this path...” I need mentors that are really genuine about having an impact on the community” ~ Mahlubi

“I want to be able to articulate my thoughts so that I can fit in the broader conversation with people. [I want to] have confidence to stand and speak. I don't speak much because I get to be too attached to my emotions. When I speak, I get too passionate sometimes and angry at the same time. So I guess I am not that good with controlling myself in certain things” ~ Solitude

Another big challenge is the conflict caused by ageism that excludes youth from having a voice in society. It is often believed that older people are wiser and more dependable than young people (Palmore, 1999). As a result,

young people are not allowed to challenge or question elders. This is problematic because social change processes require young people to be critical of their environment in order to challenge the norm that is created by the older generation (Gil, 1992).

“The voice that needs to be heard is the older people's voice, and you must just obey to that. (...) They will label you as being disrespectful, because you are not allowed to disagree with an older person. (...) Or they ignore what you are saying, because you are young” ~ Lunga

“If you are a boy, (...) you don't have a voice. Not only in your family, not only even in elders, but in the community as a whole. (...) When I enter a meeting and I am trying to question certain things, they would tell you: “listen, listen, listen! We are holding this age and you're that age so you need to respect us! This guy doesn't have respect!”” ~ Mabhelandile

Besides it being disrespectful to challenge elders, the ideas and activities of the young changemakers are sometimes not acceptable to - or understood by - older generations. It is known that adults can have very different ideas and opinions about social issues, which limits their support to young agents of social change (ICP & Pravah, 2009). However, the differences among generations should rather be seen as positive. The development as freedom theory acknowledges that people and groups are different and therefore need different freedoms to attain different kinds of valued lives (Sen, 1999). There should be space for the innovative, progressive and sometimes striking ideas that young agents of social change have.

“[We should] learn from the different age groups. Because the [youth] generation in this country is changing: our mothers, our fathers and our grandmothers think another way” ~ Niki

“When talking to an elderly person, they would say that you don't know what it was like for them back in the days. You were not there. And then you just feel as if you are undermining their struggles. [But] they are not looking at the bigger picture: we got the so called freedom, but now [there are still problems]...” ~ Ngcwalisa

Taking into consideration these barriers caused by the participants' youthfulness, is it not surprising that most participants feel they are not taken seriously by society. This is further influenced by the negative prejudices and stereotypes that society identifies youth with (Jobson, 2011; Lefko-Everett, 2012; Mathoho & Ranchod, 2006; Roche & Tucker, 1997). Although there are young people who reinforce this negative youth identity by their destructive behaviour, countless young people are trying to make a positive contribution to society, but now receive limited opportunities because of prejudices they have to fight. It is important that people in South Africa create a more nuanced vision on youth, in order for young changemakers to succeed (Jobson, 2011). Not only do young agents of social change deserve to receive recognition and support for their activities, it is vitally important in establishing social cohesion (Jobson, 2011). The social capital theory stresses that trusting relationships must be built in order to move forward with social development (Emmett, 2000; Kim, 2005).

“There is a lot of negativity around the youth; the way we are seen by other people. When a young person is selling drugs, no one is surprised. But when a young person is making changes, doing things for the community, everyone is like: “but aren't you a bit young for that?”” ~ Ntombi

“Young people are blamed a lot for the problems that exist. I think we're also blamed for not being employed. So you would hear words like “lazy”, words like “lost generation”, and that kind of thing. Those young people who are actually not lost, who are not lazy, who do a lot of cool stuff; they are very much isolated. They get no support, including from government and all these other NGOs who are claiming to do good work” ~ Anele

4.5.7. Negative Consequences

Being an agent of social change comes with consequences that can limit the youth's motivation and capacity to pursue their development activities. The participants explained that as an agent of social change they sometimes ignore their own needs, or their family's needs, and their activities can be emotionally and physically draining. They also explain that it is easy to get demotivated because social change does not happen overnight. Being an agent of social change also comes with responsibilities and accepting criticism. Another unfavorable consequence mentioned by the participants is that the funds for development activities often have to come out of their own or their family's pocket.

“You might not focus on your schooling or not focus on yourself. You want to assist the next person, [so] you ignore yourself” ~ Lunga

“When you are an activist, things are not going to be the same as someone who has a 9 to 5 job. (...) I struggle actually to have a stable relationship because of the work that I do (...) I don't know if I'll ever have kids or if there's a woman who will be willing to tolerate the work that I do” ~ Indigenous

“I think the major challenge is not seeing the social change; not knowing if you are making a change” ~ Ntombi

4.6 Importance of Young Agents of Social Change

South Africa values a people-centred approach to development and therefore social change initiatives should not only be top-down, but must have a bottom up approach (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2009). The development as freedom concept explains that social change initiatives should be at the heart of public action (Evans, 2002; Sen, 1999). It is therefore important that young people participate in society as agents of social change. Their voice and agency must be considered in social change processes. However, considering the barriers experienced by the participants, the importance of young agents of social change needs to be unpacked to create a better understanding of their value. This section only features those main arguments that were considered most significant by the participants.

4.6.1. Personal Development

Being involved in social change processes stimulates young people's personal development, especially when they take up responsibilities and have ownership over development projects (ICP, 2010; Jobson, 2011; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005; Perhold, 2006). This conception is also central in the theories of social capital and development as freedom (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000; Sen, 1999). Socializing is an integral part of the activities of young agents of social change and can advance their networks and opportunities (Portes, 2000). The development as freedom concept explains that expanding people's freedoms is achieved best through people's agency which entails a process of capacity building. An expanded capability-set means an individual has more opportunities to live a kind of life they value, which improves their well-being (Sen, 1999). The participants explained that being an agent of social change improves their future prospects. Their activities provide them with valuable skills and networks that can, for example, improve their education and employment achievements.

"It opens doors for [young people]; like educational wise and employment wise. Because [as an agent of social change] you are outspoken and you have all these skills" ~ Mandisi

Some participants explained that being an agent of social change also keeps young people positively engaged in society. Various research studies support this and show that participation in development activities can keep youth from behaving negatively (Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005).

"[If I hadn't become an agent of social change], I was going to be an unguided person. (...) I would be one of these people who are not controlled, who are on the street, begging for money, robbing other people..." ~ Mabhelandile

"I don't regret taking this path because I don't see myself being self-centred. [Being an agent of social change] reminds me what it means to be a human being" ~ Sisa

Another important argument given by the participants, is that young people deserve the opportunity to fix social problems in order to create a better future for themselves. It is important to have young agents of social change who can represent the youth population, because young people cannot merely rely on adults to identify and fight for their needs. Research by Kwon (2006) elaborates and states that "when public schools and other public institutions routinely fail to meet the needs of urban youth, we cannot rely solely on the generosity of policy-makers or the expertise of academics and professionals to make changes in the lives of the youth. We must also draw on the vital resources, knowledge, and talents that are already present within these communities", and these can be found in the youth (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006: 120). If young people exercise their own agency in expanding their freedoms and capabilities, they are more likely to improve their own well-being than if they depended on others (Crocker & Robeyns, 2009).

“How can an old person say: “we want a youth centre”? WE [youth] gotta say that we want a youth centre. (...) Who would say those things if there is no youth around to identify the needs of the youth?” ~ Sisa

“No one else is gonna give the youth any help, or change any of their lives, so they need to do it themselves. They need to be in the drivers' seat. They must determine their own destinies themselves” ~ Anele

“The future belongs to the youth. For young people to be able to get more opportunities, it is important for them to be activists today, you know. They should be active and not wait to be spoonfed” ~ Double M

4.6.2. South Africa's Future

Being an agent of social change helps young people in their personal development as it provides them with opportunities and skills which stimulates their transition into adulthood (Jobson, 2011; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). Including young people in development activities therefore stimulates youth development. But the participants in this research study argue that the impact is bigger. They pointed out that young people need to gain leadership skills to ensure South Africa has skilled leaders in the future. Developing young agents of social change is critical for South Africa's national development.

“I think it's a good investment for the country to have [young agents of social change]. You cannot just be an activist at the old age (...) It's better to start at an early age so that you learn the ropes, the tricks, and the challenges” ~ Sisa

“Encouraging a young person to become a leader (...) is so important coz they are the future of South Africa. If you're not spending time nurturing the future, they won't know what to do in the future. What type of leaders are young people gonna be if you're not spending time creating agents of change?” ~ Earl

Although this research study has identified some limitations young people face due to their youthfulness, being young also has its advantages. History has shown that youth hold the power to change society (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; The World Bank, 2006; UNECA, 2012). The participants explained that young people often have fewer responsibilities, leaving them with more time to engage in development activities. Young people are also energetic, innovative and less stuck in conservative and traditional practices. This correlates with other research studies that acknowledge that young people have many skills to offer to development activities (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; ICP & Pravah, 2009; Roche & Tucker, 1997). Too often decisions are made *for* the youth, and not *with* them or *by* them, “losing their valuable perspectives and insights” (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007: 9). The social capital theory explains that young changemakers are an important asset to the social power of a community or society, but this requires communities to trust and cooperate with young agents of social change (Emmett, 2000).

“We are at the advantage of articulating our things better; getting more information, we are very quick, you know. We are curious at the same time. Once I know something, I pass it on to the next person, and that goes faster with young people” ~ Lunga

“Young people have the energy, they have the new ideas, they are exposed to more things, they are fearless. (...) I think because we are young we have the opportunity to grow easier and adapt easier” ~ Sisanda

“If you look into the South African history, it's always been young people who have been in the forefront of every struggle because they have the time, the energy, the enthusiasm, and what not. They're not locked up in looking after kids” ~ Anele

Clearly there are good reasons to stimulate young people to become agents of social change. In fact, there will be no social change without the participation of the youth (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006).

4.7 Summary

This chapter has outlined and discussed the findings that originated out of the analysis and relate to the research objectives. The findings revealed background information on the young changemakers, factors that stimulated agency in social change, barriers that keep young people from becoming agents of social change, barriers experienced by the young changemakers of this study, and finally, the importance of young agents of social change was discussed. Throughout this chapter, links were drawn to other research studies and theoretical frameworks. The next chapter provides the main conclusions of this study, followed by a set of recommendations that are based on the research findings, the theoretical frameworks and inputs of the participants.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the main conclusions of the research findings. The conclusions are given per research objective. Therefore this chapter answers the main research question: What are the experiences of young people in becoming agents of social change in Cape Town? This chapter ends with some key recommendations that are based on the conclusions.

5.2 Conclusions

This section provides the main conclusions of the research findings.

5.2.1. Objective One

The first objective was to explore why it is important to have young agents of social change from developing communities. This report shows that youth from developing communities face difficult life challenges that affect the whole of South Africa. In order to solve these problems, young people need to participate in social change processes. Young people have positive qualities that can significantly contribute to South Africa's national development. For example, they are often full of energy, innovative, creative and push boundaries. In fact, there will be no social change without the participation of the youth (Kwon, Nygreen & Sánchez, 2006). But young people must also participate as agents of social change because they deserve the opportunity to fix current social problems in order to create a better future for themselves. The leadership skills that young agents of social change acquire will benefit the country because South Africa needs skilled leaders in the future. Becoming a changemaker also helps young people deal with life challenges directly. As young changemakers they can stimulate their personal development as they receive opportunities and develop skills, which helps them transit into adulthood. Stimulating young people to become agents of social change thus includes personal development, youth development and national development. Unfortunately young people are often viewed as problem makers, rather than agents of social change. A stimulant culture of social change has disappeared in developing communities. In order to attract more young changemakers, a culture of social change needs to be popularized.

5.2.2. Objective Two

The second objective of this research study was to explore what the similarities are in the background of young agents of social change regarding their employment, education, active citizenship, and personality. The young changemakers in this research are mostly concerned with youth development in their own and other developing communities. Their activities often relate to their hobbies and passions and they particularly developed their agency in social change after their high school career. Interestingly, the young changemakers generally

proceeded well in their education and employment, compared to their peers, and the findings suggests that their development activities provided them with meaningful opportunities that led to their educational and employment achievements. When looking at their personality, it is evident that they transformed from quiet and introverted children, into confident, outgoing and extroverted young individuals. The findings, supported by theories and other research, suggest that their development activities stimulated this transformation. It may therefore be concluded that if young people would transform into agents of social change sooner, they might be better capable to deal with various challenges - such as unemployment - earlier on in life because the process includes a form of empowerment (Ansell, 2005; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; Morrow, Panday & Richter, 2005). And finally, when looking at the degree of active citizenship, it is evident that, different from their peers, the young changemakers are particularly active within the civil society sector. Like their peers, however, their participation in party politics is limited. This suggests that a large youth cohort does not engage politically, leading to youth being underrepresented in the political processes of South Africa. This is worrying because limited youth participation in politics weakens democracy, can lead to social and political instability, and makes social change more challenging (ICP, 2010).

5.2.3. Objective Three

The third research objective was to explore what stimulated the participants to become agents of social change. Various social and institutional variables emerged. To start, the participants did not have many individuals around them who stimulated them directly, but various people have been influential. Parents and caregivers usually provided the needed foundations that helped the participants develop into caring individuals who engage in development activities, and family members often introduced them to social change related topics or activities. The role models in the participants' lives were either agents of social change or were admirable because they were good, caring and loving people who the participants wanted and were able to identify with. Interestingly, none of the participants were stimulated by friends to become an agent of social change. A reason for this may be that development activities are not considered to be "cool" in modern South African youth culture.

Although all participants have had positive experiences at civil society organizations that were significant and influential, only a few participants were directly stimulated by civil society organizations to become agents of social change, particularly because they received meaningful opportunities for leadership and ownership over development initiatives. Other research studies support this finding and explain that when civil society organizations provide youth with opportunities for leadership and ownership over projects, these young people are more likely to be stimulated to develop agency in social change (Jobson, 2011; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001).

High schools sometimes provide opportunities and space for participation in development, but it appears that high schools are generally not proactive in stimulating young people to become agents of social change. The

participants experienced that agency was often disregarded and learners had to submit to teachers without questioning. Alternative education, however, made the participants aware of injustices, helped access important information and developed critical thinking, which stimulated them to become changemakers in society. Alternative education includes government- and civil society workshops, self-learning and engaging in socially conscious arts.

Life experiences, such as being confronted with poverty or being exposed to other and sometimes more privileged communities, helped the participants become aware of the context of problems in their home community, which stimulated them to transform into agents of social change. Having positive experiences in social development also stimulated agency. It is therefore not surprising that the participants' initiatives and projects often relate to their passions, such as hip hop, rollerblading, theatre, and writing. The personal experiences, combined with received stimulations, stimulated an internal transformation. Becoming a changemaker is ultimately a process that happens from within and being an agent of social change has become part of the participants' identity. In becoming an agent of social change, an internal transformation takes place that leads to empowerment and agency, which is needed to achieve sustainable development.

With regards to the participants' support structure, it appears that family, friends, community members and comrades provide most support, particularly in the form of meeting basic needs and guidance. Support from civil society is criticised because it is often not enabling, but rather controlling. Government is perceived as a stumbling block, rather than supportive, due to corruption and bureaucracy. None of the participants receive support from the private sector, although two participants aim to transform their development initiatives into self-sustainable projects within the private sector. Clearly much can be improved to facilitate support to the young agents of social change.

5.2.4. Objective Four

Objective four of this research study was to explore the barriers young agents of social change experience. Overall it seems that being an agent of social change is rather challenging. Life challenges, such as poverty and social exclusion, hinder the progress of young agents of social change. The lack of support and participation from other (young) people in their communities also makes it difficult to enforce social change. Furthermore, the young changemakers in this research study struggle to access resources, such as funding and facilities, which are critical in organizing development activities. Government's bureaucratic system is experienced as challenging and clashes with the realities of what young agents of social change have to offer. Local gatekeepers - in particular local councillors - pose problems because, according to the participants, they seem to be more interested in keeping power, than supporting and enabling young changemakers. There appears to exist a negative relationship between young agents of social change and the government, leading to a setback in the development

cycle. The relationship with NGOs and young agents of social change can also be improved. According to the participants, many NGOs do not seem to want to collaborate with young agents of social change and when collaboration does take place, NGOs tend to keep power and control over the young changemakers. While countless research studies show the importance of giving youth leadership roles and ownership over projects (ICP & Pravah, 2009; Johnson 2011; Mohamed & Wheeler, 2001; UNECA, 2012), considering the participants' experiences, it appears South African NGOs fails to recognise this.

Furthermore, the participants recognize the limitations of being young. They tend to have characteristics which may be considered "youthful", such as being insecure or inexperienced, which can make social change difficult. The conflict of ageism is another problem and results in young changemakers having limited platforms to raise their voice because they are not allowed to question elders. Furthermore, the ideas and activities of young changemakers are sometimes not acceptable to - or understood by - older generations. Not surprisingly, therefore, most participants feel they are not taken seriously by society. And finally, being a changemaker in society comes with various unfavorable consequences, such as financial pressures, which can de-motivate young agents of social change from continuing their activities.

5.2.5. Objective Five

The final objective of this research study was to explore the barriers for other young people from developing communities to become agents of social change. According to the participants, the modern youth culture is most challenging. It is popular to drink a lot of alcohol, to be materialistic and individualistic. Development activities are not "cool". The participants mostly blame the media, capitalism and globalization for this trend. Furthermore, life challenges, such as unemployment and poverty, result in young people prioritising other activities. Finding formal employment, for example, can be more important than engaging in social change. Information and/or examples about opportunities to participate as an agent of social change are also lacking in developing communities. Furthermore, youthful characteristics, such as being insecure, can hinder young people from becoming agents of social change. Young people might also feel they have to submit to adults and are therefore not willing to become a changemaker who questions the norm. And finally, some young people do not comprehend the need for social change, or they think it is too difficult to achieve. Therefore they may feel there is no point or no need to become an agent of social change.

The barriers discussed are particularly related to cultural practices such as ageism, materialism and individualism, but also to challenges that characterize developing communities, such as poverty, social exclusion and poor quality education. A major shift needs to take place in people's minds to view youth more positively and recognize the importance of young agents of social change. A culture of social change needs to be further developed and popularized.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the theoretical frameworks and the youths' inputs, the following recommendations are put forward.

5.3.1. Local Government

The following recommendations are directed to local government in Cape Town. Many of the recommendations also apply to political parties and policy makers in national government.

- Restore and build up relationships with youth in developing communities. Listen to young agents of social change and take them seriously. Recognize their power and acknowledge that youth is an essential resource in social and economic development. Find solutions in collaboration with young agents of social change.
- Organize workshops with young changemakers and other stakeholders to find solutions to the mismatch between bureaucratic practices and the reality on the ground, experienced by young agents of social change. These workshops must provide theoretical and practical information about active citizenship and government processes to help young people deal with bureaucracy. Young agents of social change can offer advice on how government can change their processes, rules and policies to strengthen collaboration.
- Establish Youth Resource Centres in developing communities. Young agents of social change need a physical space, like a community house or library that is freely available. The centres should provide resources and facilities that enable young people to organize and educate themselves. Important literature and documentaries concerning development, politics, activism, and history should be accessible while providing a wide range of perspectives. Youth Resources Centres provide young people with a platform where they can connect to other structures in civil society.
- Facilitate social inclusion and integration with other cultures and communities in Cape Town. People need to learn about other cultures and learn to question their own. This can be done by improving mobility, such as providing inexpensive and safe public transport. Furthermore, important government facilities, networks and services need to become more accessible and visible in developing communities, and they need to respond to local contexts.
- Invest in grassroot, social conscious art initiatives that aim to educate people, especially amongst the youth. This includes music, theatre, hip-hop, poetry and dance and has proven to be an effective strategy in youth development.

- Investigate the actions of local politicians and other gatekeepers in order to improve South Africa's political landscape. Develop structures and mechanisms that act against corruption. Hold local councillors and other gatekeepers accountable when their actions and decisions are not developmental.
- Apply positive language when dealing with youth. Words like "at-risk" or "lost" victimize youth and entrench debilitating power hierarchies. This language does not empower young people, it rather reinforces their insecurities. Furthermore, use language that young people understand and treat young agents of social change as respectable co-workers.
- Set up special funds to be allocated to young agents of social change on a grassroots level. In order for young agents of social change to be able to manage the application process and requirements, use clear language, offer assistance, and implement a simple accountability system.
- Promote collaboration between established NGOs and young agents of social change. This can be done by giving funding preference to projects that include an equal partnership between NGOs and young agents of social change/youth organizations.
- Request impact and evaluation research as part of government funding regulations to hold NGOs accountable for allocated funds and practices. Young participants of NGO programmes should participate in this research.

5.3.2. Department of Education, High Schools and Teachers in Developing Communities

The following recommendations are directed to the Department of Basic Education, high schools and teachers, but may also apply to other actors within the educational institution.

- Actively stimulate young people to become agents of social change. This can be done by investing and improving citizenship education and arts education.
- Citizenship education must unpack key policies of citizenship and show learners how they can participate as changemakers. Local opportunities and examples of young agents of social change need to be presented. The content must be linked to the local realities of learners to make the subject more approachable and appealing. Topics such as democracy, politics, and social organization need to be key in the curriculum, as well as strategies to hold local councillors accountable. Especially politics is an important topic because youth participation in politics needs to be stimulated to safeguard South Africa's democracy and political stability. Citizenship education must facilitate a process of self-discovery and confidence building to stimulate personal development, identity and agency. The facilitation should therefore be open and trustworthy; not top-down.

- Arts education deserves more attention and investment. Theatre, music, hip hop and poetry can greatly stimulate young people's interaction in development activities. It also has the potential to stimulate agency within social change. Arts education is known to build self-esteem and can help learners express themselves.

5.3.3. NGOs, Social Workers and Development Practitioners

The following recommendations are directed to NGOs, social workers, development practitioners and other actors active in the development sector.

- Recognize the importance of developing young agents of social change and that youth is a crucial resource in the development process.
- Provide citizenship education, especially because this kind of education in mainstream schools is currently not adequate. Such workshops should stimulate agency and show young people what their power is.
- Start development projects in partnership with young people, while stimulating them to be more than project participants; request their agency; provide opportunities for leadership and ownership of projects.
- Share resources with young agents of social change. These resources include funding, venues, computers, internet, telephone, boardrooms, literature, skills, strategies, and networks.
- Support young agents of social change by offering emotional support or counselling.
- Show impact and results. When young people see the impact of development activities it can motivate them to participate.
- Ensure that NGOs and social services are present, visible and easily approachable in developing communities.
- Initiate advocacy projects around youth leadership in social change to stimulate a culture of social change.
- Support families who struggle to offer a stable foundation at home. Help their children develop into caring and responsible individuals.
- Apply positive language when dealing with youth, . Words like "at-risk" or "lost" are forms of victimization that entrench debilitating power hierarchies. This language does not empower young people, it rather reinforces their insecurities. Use language that young people understand and treat young agents of social change as respectable co-workers.
- Encourage and reward youth when they take initiatives and show leadership. Ideas of youth can and must be challenged during an open and honest discussion. Their ideas cannot be dismissed based on their age, without receiving a platform to unpack ideas.

- Act as role models and set a good example. Stimulate young people to become agents of social change by investing time and energy in young people.
- Provide platforms where agents of social change (old and young) can come together to present their ideas, develop collaborations and provide each other with support, including emotional support.

5.3.4. Family, Role Models and other Community Members

The following recommendations are directed to families, role models and other members of developing communities.

- Provide a stable home foundation to children and youth, establish loving relationships and be actively involved in their upbringing. This will help young people grow into caring individuals.
- Talk about history, social change, and politics with young people. Challenge them to develop their own viewpoints, and challenge that.
- Show young people what their power is and how they should use it.
- Encourage and reward youth when they take initiative and show leadership. Ideas of youth can and must be challenged during an open and honest discussion. Their ideas cannot be dismissed based on their age, without receiving a platform to unpack ideas.
- Support young agents of social change by providing emotional support and resources. Development activities cannot stand in the way of schoolwork, household chores and other responsibilities, but the value of youth participation in social change cannot be underestimated as it can benefit young people and the greater society in various ways.

5.3.5. Young Agents of Social Change

The following recommendations are directed to the participants of this research study and to other young agents of social change in South Africa.

- Be visible in developing communities and share knowledge and resources with other youth. Direct other young people to opportunities to participate as changemakers.
- Work on those limitations that are characterized as “youthful”, without getting discouraged. Young people have lots of great things to offer to South Africa.
- Challenge materialism, individualism and ageism because these inhibit other young people from becoming agents of social change.
- Initiate advocacy projects around youth leadership in social change to stimulate a culture of social change. Youth development project that aim to build self-esteem are also important.

5.3.6. Researchers and Academic Institutions

The following recommendations are directed to researchers and academic institutions in South Africa. The recommendations suggest that further research is needed on the following topics:

- South Africa's youth culture, its implications and how to make things better.
- The conflict of ageism that marginalizes youth. How bad is it? How do people from different races, classes, genders, and generations experience ageism in South Africa?
- The state of citizenship education and ways to improve it.
- How policies and bureaucratic structures can respond better to local realities and young agents of social change.
- Conduct long-term monitoring and evaluation research that includes an impact assessment at NGOs who fail to include youth meaningfully in their programmes, and at NGOs who do provide youth with opportunities for leadership and ownership over projects.
- Teenagers who are agents of social change. To estimate if they have similar experiences as the participants in this research study.
- The goals, objectives and approaches of young agents of social change. Clearly young agents of social change would like to see society change, but what should society look like according to them?
- Youth and their engagements in civil society and politics. How many young changemakers are active in South Africa? What is their impact on society? What are the resources that they have access to?

6. Bibliography

- African Union Commission. 2006. *African Youth Charter. A strategic framework for youth empowerment and development activities*. Banjul, Gambia: Executive Council.
- Ansell, N. 2005. *Children, Youth and Development*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2001. *The practices of social research, South African edition*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Barry, M. 2010. Youth transitions: from offending to desistance. *Journal of Youth Studies*. 13(1):121-136.
- Bloch, G. 2009. *The toxic mix: what's wrong with South Africa's schools and how to fix it*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Burkey, S. (ed.). 1993. *People First. A Guide to self-reliant, participatory rural development*. London, United Kingdom: Zed Books.
- Chase-Lansdale, P., Wakschlag, L.S. & Brooks-Gunn, J. 1995. A psychological perspective on the development of caring in children and youth: the role of the family. *Journal of Adolescence*. 18(?):515-556.
- City of Cape Town. 2001. *Census 2001 - Suburb Profiles*. Available: <http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/stats/2001census/Documents/Suburb%20Index.htm> [2013, February 20].
- Cooper, A. 2009. "Let us eat airtime": youth identity and 'xenophobic' violence in a low-income neighbourhood in Cape Town. Working Paper No. 263. Centre for Social Science Research (CSSR). Available: <http://www.cssr.uct.ac.za/sites/cssr.uct.ac.za/files/pubs/WP263.pdf> [2011, October 12].
- Crocker, D.A. 2008. *Sen's Concepts of Agency*. School of Public Policy Institute for Philosophy & Public Policy. United States of America: University of Maryland.
- Crocker, D.A. & Robeyns, I. 2009. Well-being and agency. In *The Philosophy of Amartya Sen*. C. Morris, Ed. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 60-90.
- Davids, I., Theron, F. & Maphunye, K.J. 2009. *Participatory Development in South Africa. A Development Management Perspective*. 2nd edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- De Jager, K. & Steele, D. 2013. *Harvard UCT: Handbook on citation*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Libraries.
- De Vos, A.S. (ed.), Fouché, C.B., Poggenpoel, M., Schurink, E., Schurink, W. & Strydom, H. 2001. *Research at grass roots. A primer for the caring professions*. 3rd impression of first edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

- De Vos, A.A. (ed), Delport, C.s.L., Fouché, C.B., Strydom, H. 2005. *Research at grass roots. For the social sciences and human service professions*. Third edition. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Del Felice, C. & Wisler, A. 2007. The Unexplored Power and Potential of Youth as Peace-builders. *Journal of Peace Conflict & Development*. 11(x). Available: www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk [2012, April 27].
- Department of Basic Education. 2010. *General Household Survey (GHS) 2010. Focus on Schooling*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education. Available: <http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=172752> [2013, April 24].
- Department of Basic Education. 2012. *National Senior Certificate examination. School Performance Report 2012*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Dubihlela, J. (ed) & Dubihlela, D. 2011. Youth attitudes towards advertisements depicting nudity and alcohol: ethical dilemmas in advertising. *South African Journal of Psychology*. 41(2):207-217.
- Educo Africa. 2012. *Sihambela Phambili. Giving the learning back into community*. Concept document. Cape Town: Educo Africa.
- Emmett, T. 2000. Beyond community participation? Alternative routes to civil engagement and development in South Africa. *Development Southern Africa*. 17(4):501-518.
- Enslin, P. 2003. Citizenship Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Camebridge Journal of Education*. 33(1):74-83.
- Esau, M. & Nleya, N. 2008. *Citizen reportback in Bonteheuwel, Cape Town. A Score Card Report*. African Centre for Citizenship & Democracy, Bellville. Available: <http://www.accede.co.za/downloads/citizen%20scorecard%20bonteheuwel.pdf> [2012, November 28].
- Evans, P. 2002. Symposium on Development as Freedom by Amartya Sen. Collective Capabilities, Culture, and Amartya Sen's Development as Freedom. *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 37(2):54-60.
- Everatt, D. 2000. Keynote article: From urban warrior to market segment? Youth in South Africa 1990-2000. *Development Update*. July:1-39:x. Available: http://www.academia.edu/522667/From_urban_warrior_to_market_segment_Youth_in_South_Africa [2012, May 13].
- Everatt, D., 2005. Chapter 3: Youth Research in Africa. In *Contemporary Youth Research: Local expressions and Global Connections*. H. Helve & G. Holm, Eds. Aldershot, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing.
- Fukuyama, F. 2001. Social capital, civil society and development. *Third World Quarterly*. 22(1):7-20.
- Gil, D.G. 1992. *Unravelling Social Policy. Theory, Analysis, and Political Action Towards Social Equality*. Fifth Edition. Rochester, Vermont: Schenkman Books, Inc.

- Hammett, D. 2009. *Citizenship Education in South Africa. A Report to Schools*. Project 'Education, Citizenship Formation and Democratisation'. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.
- ICICP. 2012. *Innovations in Civic Participation. A Resource for Ideas and Action*. New Delhi, India: ICP. Available: www.icicp.org. [2012, June 8].
- ICP (Innovations in Civic Participation). 2010. *Youth Development through Civic Engagement: Mapping Assets in South Asia*. New-Delhi, India: ICP, Pravah & VOSESA.
- ICP (Innovations in Civic Participation) & Pravah. 2009. *Nurturing Youth Active Citizenship in India*. New Delhi, India: Innovations in Civic Participation (ICP) & Pravah.
- Jobson, J. 2011. *Interrogating Youth Leadership Development in South Africa. Overview and Leadership for a Winning Nation Strategy*. Cape Town: The DG Murray Trust.
- Keeley, B. 2009. *Human Capital: How what you know shapes your life*. OECD Publishing. Available: <http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/0107101ec007.pdf?expires=1368369535&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=1B004D5857E538606015A451097387E7> [2013, May 12].
- Kekana, M. & Richter, L. 2003. *Young people in South Africa: Status of the youth Report*. Johannesburg: Umsobomvu Youth Fund & Human Science Research Council.
- Kim, J. 2005. "Bowling Together" isn't a Cure-All: The Relationship between Social Capital and Political Trust in South Korea. *International Political Science Review*. 26(2):193–213.
- Kwon, S, Nygreen, K. & Sánchez, P. 2006. Urban Youth Building Community: Social Change and Research in Schools, Homes, and Community Based Organizations. *Journal of Community Practice*. 14(1/2):107-123.
- Lefko-Everett, K. 2012. *Ticking Time Bomb or Demographic Dividend? Youth and Reconciliation in South Africa. SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey: 2012 Report*. Cape Town: The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.
- Local Government Action. 2011. *Making local government work. An Activist's guide*. First edition. Section 27, Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa & Read Hope Phillips. Available: www.localgovernmentaction.org. [2012, May 28].
- Mathoho, M. & Ranchod, K. 2006. Identity Crisis? Youth, social and political identity in South Africa. Centre for Policy Studies (CPS). *Policy, Issues and Actors*. 19(4):1-31.
- Mattes, R. 2011. The "Born Frees": the prospects for generational change in post-apartheid South Africa. *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 47(1):133-153.

- McEvoy-Levy, S. 2001. *Youth as Social and Political Agents: Issues in Post-Settlement Peace Building*. Kroc Institute Occasional Papers, 21:OP2. December 2001. Research Initiative on the Resolution of Ethnic Conflict (RIREC).
- Mkhwanazi, P. 2011. *Conspicuous Consumption and Black Youth in Emerging Markets*. Master Thesis. University of Pretoria.
- Mohamed, I. A. & Wheeler, W. 2001. *Broadening the Bonds of Youth Development: Youth as Engaged Citizens*. Innovation Centre for Community and Youth Development. New York City, United States of America: Ford Foundation.
- Morrow, S., Panday, S. & Richter, L. 2005. *Where we're at and where we're going: Young people in South Africa in 2005*. Johannesburg: Umsobomvu Youth Fund.
- Narayan, D. & Woolcock, M. 2000. Social Capital: Implications for Development, Theory, Research, and Policy. *The World Bank Research Observer*. 15(2):225-249.
- Normand, C. 2007. *Exploring the resilience in youth living in a high-risk community*. Master Thesis. University of Stellenbosch.
- OHCHR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights). 2012. *United Nations Human Rights*. Geneva, Switzerland. Available: www.ohchr.org. [2012, June 8].
- Palmore, E. 1999. *Ageism: Negative and Positive*. Second Edition. New York City, United States of America: Springer Publishing Company.
- "Participation". 2012. *The Free Dictionary*. Available: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/participation> [2013, July 9].
- Perold, H. 2006. *Volunteering as a strategy to foster civic participation among youth in southern Africa*. Proceedings of the XIX IAVE World Volunteer Conference: Volunteering for Peace in Multicultural Societies. 10-13 November 2006. Delhi, India: Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA).
- Perullo, A. 2005. Hooligans and Heroes: Youth Identity and Hip-Hop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Africa Today*. 51(4):75-101.
- Portes, A. 2000. Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. In *Knowledge and Social Capital. Foundations and Applications*. E. Lesser, Ed. United States of America: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Ramphela, M. 2002. *Steering by the stars: being young in South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg
- Roche, J. & Tucker, S. 1997. *Youth in society. Contemporary theory, policy and practice*. London, United Kingdom: Sage Publications.

Rondinelli, D.A. (ed.). 1993. *Development Projects as Policy Experiments. An adaptive approach to development administration*. Second Edition. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2009. *National Youth Policy 2009-2014*. Pretoria: The Presidency. Available: <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/MediaLib/Downloads/Home/Publications/YouthPublications/NationalYouthPolicyPDF/NYP.pdf>. [2012, April 9].

Ryan, L. & Golden, A. 2006. 'Tick the Box Please': A Reflexive Approach to Doing Quantitative Social Research. *Sociology*. 40(6):1191–1200.

Sacks, J. 2012. *Sweet Home Report. An investigation into the socio-political character of recent road blockades by protesting shackdwellers*. Available: http://cdn.mg.co.za/content/documents/2012/09/19/Sweet_Home_Report_Final.pdf [2012, October 25].

Sen, A.K. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Statistics South Africa. 2011. *Social Profile of Vulnerable groups in South Africa. 2002-2010*. Report no. 03-19-00. Available: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/Publications/Report-03-19-00/Report-03-19-002002.pdf> [2012, December 10].

Statistics South Africa. 2012. *Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2012. Quarter 3*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/Publications/P0211/P02113rdQuarter2012.pdf> [2013, March 29].

"Stimulating". 2013. *Oxford Dictionaries: The World's most trusted dictionaries*. Available from: http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/stimulate [2012, August 12].

The World Bank. 2006. *World Development Report 2007. Development and the Next Generation*. Washington DC, United States of America: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank.

The World Bank. 2013. *FAQs: About Development*. Available: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTSITETOOLS/0,,contentMDK:20147486~menuPK:344190~pagePK:98400~piPK:98424~theSitePK:95474,00.html> [2013, July 10].

UNECA (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa). 2012. *Young People and Leadership*. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Available: http://www.uneca.org/adf/adfv/docs/Youth_and_Leadership.pdf [2012, April 10].

Van Tongeren, P. (ed), Brenk, M., Hellema, M. & Verhoeven, J.. 2005. *People building peace II: successful stories of civil society*. European Centre for Conflict Prevention. London, United Kingdom: Rienner Publishers.

Western Cape Provincial Treasury. 2012. *Provincial Economic Review & Outlook 2012*. Cape Town: Western Cape Provincial Treasury. Available: <http://www.westerncape.gov.za/text/2012/9/pero-2012.pdf> [2012, January 27].

Appendix I – Written comments from two participants

Sisanda:

In my opinion young agents of social change are important because if young people are not interested in making impactful positive changes in their communities, who do they expect to do so? Young agents of social change, such as me, are also important because not only do we create positive change, we also impact on others through our work and in turn inspire other young people to want to make a difference as well. So in actual fact we are not only a helping hand to the community, but also to families and individuals. If we receive the support we need from the community, government and existing NGO's, it would be so much easier to make sure things are changed for the better within our communities. In the township there aren't a lot of positive role models. But if people took better note of the work we as young agents of social change do, they would realise we ARE the role models that young people are looking for.

Have a look at Zazi, the magazine I created to empower youth:

<http://www.issuu.com/search?q=Zazi+Magazine> (scroll down).

Niki:

I believe the media must change its perception and negative reporting about youth. Rather, the media should illustrate the impacts that young agents of social change are making. I interact daily with young changemakers at Educo Africa, and I've seen that they have made the decision to stop complaining about "government not delivering", but instead they have taken a stand and do something about it. We as young agents of social change are taking charge of our future! We don't need pity or discouragement from the "adults" or "elders". All we need is someone to stand side by side with us to make social change happen. All I need is for someone to believe in me!

Appendix II – Photos of the participants



Anele



Carmenita



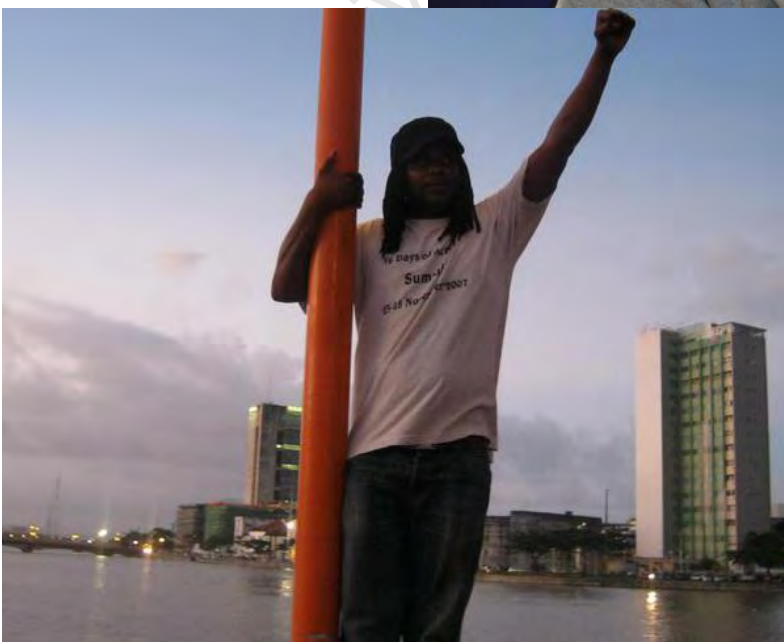
Double M



Earl



Indigenous



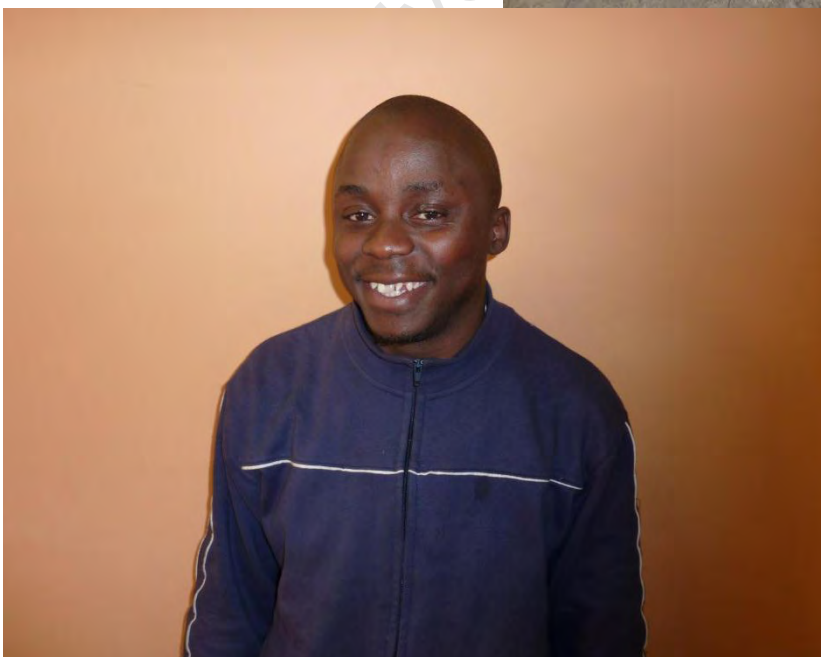
Khusta



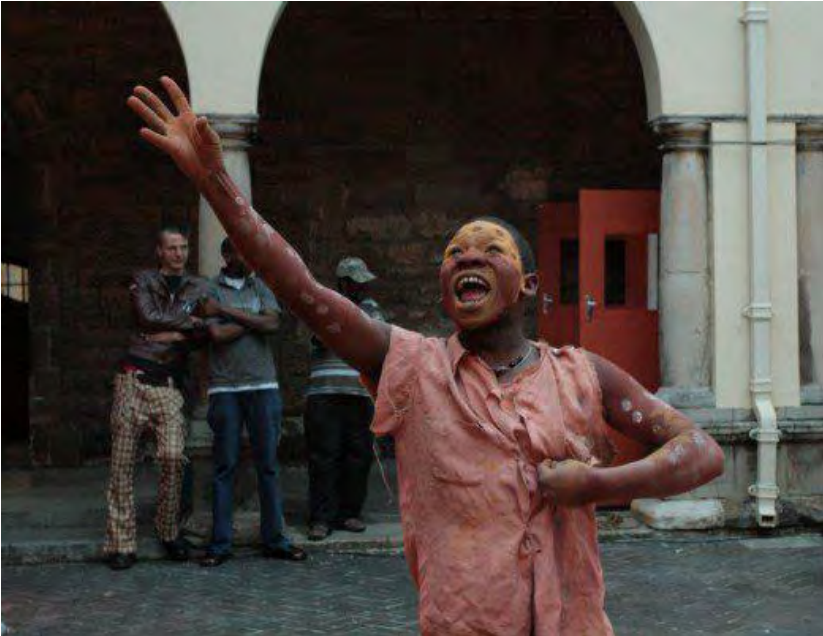
Lunga



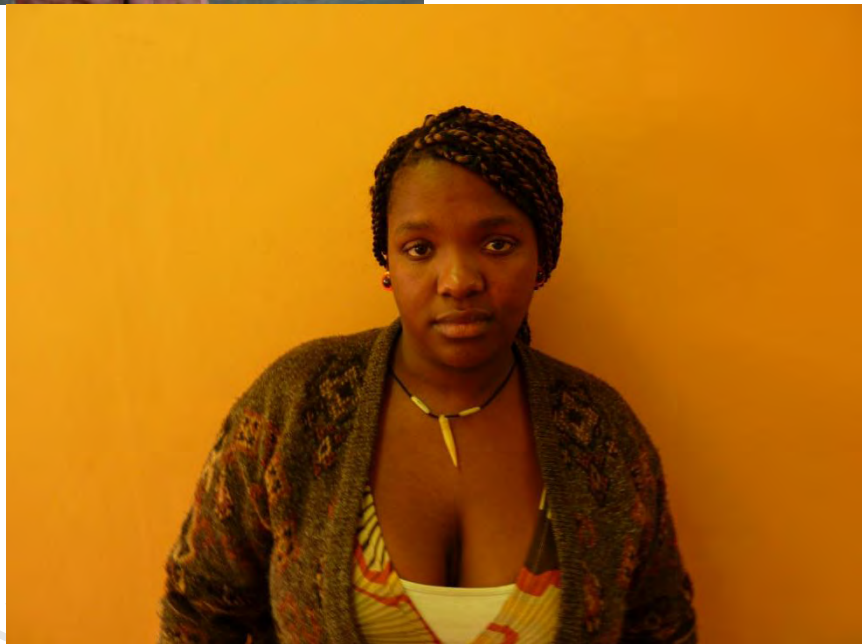
Mahlubi



Mabhelandile



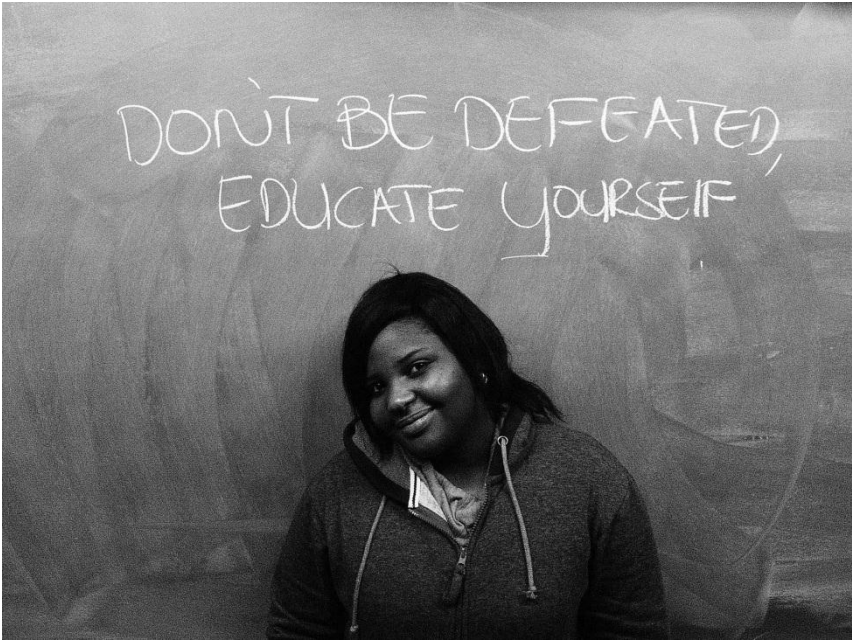
Mandisi



Ngcwalisa



Niki



Ntombi



Sisa



Sisanda



Siyamboleka



Solitude

Appendix III - Findings Overview

Reflecting chapter 4: Findings and discussion

4.2: Young agents of social change	4.2.1. Agency in social change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Definition agency ● Agency of the participants (agency in youth development & agency reflects passions) ● Development agency particularly after high school career
	4.2.2. Education and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High school background ● Good educational achievements, often with focus on social development ● Good employment achievement, usually within the social development sector
	4.2.3. Personal Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The participants were quiet and introverted as children / before they became agents of social change ● The participants are now outspoken and confident individuals
	4.2.4. Active citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High degree of participation and agency in the civil society sector ● Low degree of participation and agency in party politics (political sector) ● Youth appears to be poorly represented politically, which can lead to social and political instability

4.3: Stimulators to become agent of social change	4.3.1. Civil Society Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only a few participants received a direct stimulation to become an agent of social change (opportunities for leadership and ownership over projects) ● However, all participants have had positive experiences at civil society organizations which indirectly stimulated agency in social change ● Individuals from civil society organizations must be aware of the influence they exert
	4.3.2. Family, friends and role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Generally no stimulation from from family, but family did provide a strong home foundation which stimulates development into a caring and loving individual. Family also introduced many participants to social change topics. ● Friends were generally not stimulating ● Role models were usually agents of social change or good, caring and loving individuals who the participants wanted to identify with
	4.3.3. High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High school not proactive in stimulating agency in social change ● Opportunities for engagements in social development do appear through/at high school
	4.3.4. Alternative Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attending workshops organized by government or civil society, self-learning (through reading books or watching documentaries), and engaging in socially conscious art like hip hop music, poetry, theatre and dance. ● Brings new perspectives, raises awareness ● Links to hobbies and passions
	4.3.5. Life experiences and internal transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Life challenges (poverty & unemployment) stimulate agency in social change because of the personal need for change ● Visiting other (more privileged) communities raises awareness which

		<p>stimulates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive experiences in development activities stimulates agency in social change ● Becoming an agent of social change is ultimately a process that happens from within an individual. An internal transformation takes place; identity forming
	4.3.6. Support structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NGOs do provide support, but this can be improved ● Government is generally not perceived as supportive, but rather as a stumbling block ● None of the participants appear to receive support from the private sector ● Most support comes from family, friends, comrades and community members in the form of meeting basic needs and offering guidance

4.4: Barriers in becoming Agent of Social Change	4.4.1. Youth Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth culture of individualism and materialism contrasts with agency in social change ● Young agents of social change are seen as “boring” ● Media and capitalism to blame
	4.4.2. Life Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Life challenges lead to having other priorities ● Young people cannot afford volunteering
	4.4.3. Lack of Opportunities and Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young people don't know where to go; no visible examples of opportunities in developing communities ● NGOs appear to fail to attract youth
	4.4.4. Being Young	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being young keeps young people from developing agency in social change (lack of confidence / afraid to question elders)
	4.4.5. No Need or No Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of awareness about the complexity of social problems: no need for change ● Change is too difficult: no point in trying

4.5: Barriers experienced by Young Agents of Social Change	4.5.1. Life Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Life challenges (poverty and unemployment) limit capacity of young agents of social change ● Social exclusion makes being an agent of social change extra challenging
	4.5.2. Support and Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Limited support and participation from youth in developing communities ● It is difficult to get people on board; to increase participation ● Lack of support from family
	4.5.3. Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of funds ● Lack of other resources (venues and facilities)
	4.5.4. Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Government is obstacle to overcome ● Bureaucracy frustrates young agents of social change ● Local gatekeepers frustrate young agents of social change ● Negative relationship between government and young agents of social change

	4.5.5. NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No collaboration with young agents of social change. NGOs work like companies ● NGOs keep power and control over young changemakers; there's no equal partnership
	4.5.6. Being Young	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youthful characteristics (being insecure, stubborn, lack of experience) inhibit success of young agents of social change ● Ageism limits platforms for young agents of social change to raise their voice ● Intergenerational problems and misunderstandings ● Young agents of social change do not always feel they are taken seriously
	4.5.7. Negative Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As an agent of social change you may ignore your own needs, there's not a lot of money to make, it can be physically and emotionally draining, etc.

4.6: Importance of Young Agents of Social Change	4.6.1. Personal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Definition agency ● Agency of the participants (agency in youth development & agency reflects passions) ● Development agency particularly after high school career
	4.6.2. South Africa's Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing young agents of social change stimulates youth development and overall national development ● Developing leadership skills as young agents of social change means South Africa creates skilled leaders for the future ● Young people bring advantages that stimulate social change (they are innovative, have time on their hands, are energetic, etc.)

Appendix IV - Interview schedule

INTRODUCTION

- I introduce myself
- I share the purpose of the research and this interview (including that I will not be able to assist the participant to make their hopes a reality. I will not make money of this research and I cannot pay the interviewee for his/her participation)
- Discuss ethical considerations:
 - Voluntary participation (+ participant can withdraw from participation at any time);
 - Audio recording of the interview;
 - Anonymity;
 - Confidentiality;
 - Explain how this interview will be used and published (include that I will email the final report to the participant)
- Sign consent-form
- Fill in 'biographical details'
- Clarify that there are no 'right' or 'wrong' responses
- Explain that some questions are very similar or overlap which can lead to repetition

SECTION 1: AGENT of CHANGE

- Would you describe yourself as an agent of social change?
- What do you do as an agent of social change? (What kind of social change activities do you undertake)?
- When did you become an agent of change? (moment/how)

SECTION 2: LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES → explain that the participant must stick to the point here, because it is easy to lose valuable time in this section.

- I want to know a little bit more about your life before you became an agent of social change:
 - How did your family household look like? How were the relationships?
- How were the schools that you went to? (quality and safety) + How did you do in school?

- What were your friends like?

- Where and with whom did you hang out next to your friends? (job, NGO, school, hobbies etc.)
- Could you briefly describe your community?
- What are some of the main issues in your community? (If a topic like 'gangsterism', 'drugs' or 'crime' comes up, then ask: Why did you not get involved in gangsterism/drugs/crime/etc.?)
- Are young people in your community participating in social change activities?
- Did anything significant happen in your life that motivated you to become an agent of social change? (or more than one thing).
- Why did you become an agent of social change? (life story)
- What do you like about being an agent of social change?
- What do you not like about being an agent of social change?

SECTION 3: External contributors in becoming an agent of social change.

- Did anyone influence you to become an agent of social change? Who? How?
- Did your friends influence you to become an agent of social change? (positive/ negative) If so, how? (How) did they help you?
- Did school influence you to become an agent of social change? (positive/ negative) If so, how? (How) did they help you?
- Did your family influence you to become an agent of social change? If so, how? (How) did they help you?
- Did you have any role-models growing up?
 - If so, did they influence you to become an agent of social change?
 - If so, how? (How) did they help you?
- Were there any social development practitioners (or other professionals) who contributed to you becoming an agent of social change? If so, how? (How) did they help you?
- Who motivated you most to become an agent of social change? If so, who? And why? How?
- Has anybody assisted you to become an agent of change? If so, who? And why? How?

- Does the government assist you in any way? (or in the past?)
- Do other institutions assist you in any way? (like other NGO's or businesses)? / or people from institutions? (or in the past?)
- Who, along the way, has supported you most in your social change activities?

SECTION 4: Personal factors that contribute to becoming an agent of change

- How would you describe yourself? What kind of person are you? Or how would people describe you?
 - * What do you value in life?
 - * What sorts of things make you angry in life?
- Which characteristics do you have that have helped you in your social change activities?
- What – according to you – are the characteristics that someone needs in order to become a successful agent of social change?
- Where did you gain your awareness about specific social issues?
- Would you describe yourself as a 'critical thinker'
 - If so, where did you develop your critical thinking ability?
 - If not, do you think that critical thinking is needed in social change activities?
- Where/ how did you get the confidence to become an agent of social change; + do you ever have doubts?
- Where/ how did you learn the skills of being an agent of social change? (school/ workshops, etc.)
- What are your strengths as an agent of social change? (*What are you good at?*)
- What are your aspirations and goals as an agent of social change?
- Are you interested in politics? Why (not)? Do you vote?

SECTION 5: Barriers

- What are some of the barriers that you have faced as an agent of social change?
- What are your weaknesses as an agent of social change? (*What are you not good at?*)

- What do you *need* to become a better agent of change?
- Why did you become an agent of social change, but not other young people in your community?
- Why are not more young people agents of social change?
- What would you say are the biggest barriers for young people to become agents of social change?
- What do young agents of social change need in order to be successful in their social change activities?

SECTION 6: Value of young persons as agents of social change

- Do you try to motivate young people to become agents of change? How?
- Do you think it is important that young people become active in social change activities? Why?
- Why do we need young people in social change activities? Why can adults not deal with it alone?
→ What is the power of youth? (or, the value of youth?)
- What are young people not good at as agents of social change? What are young people's limitations?
- Do you think young people can be powerful enough to facilitate change?
- What should be the primary focus of young agents of social change in South Africa?
- Do you think young agents of change are taken seriously enough by adults/ society; do they listen to the youth?

CLOSURE:

- Thank you for spending this time with me and for sharing things about your life with me.
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me?
- Do you have any questions for me?
- Finally, how has this interview been for you?
- Would it be okay if I took a picture of you to publish in the final report?

Appendix V – Sample Informed Consent Form

**‘INFORMED CONSENT’ FORM: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

My name is Myrna Lemmen. I am conducting research on a project entitled, “An exploratory study on the factors which contribute to young people becoming agents of social change” (working title).

The project forms part of the qualification of Master of Social Science (MSocSc) degree in social development.

Prof. Eric Atmore is directing the project and can be contacted at:

Tel: 021 650-3481

Fax: 021 689-2739

Email: atmore@iafrica.com

Physical address:

Department of Social Development

5th Floor, Room 5.20

Robert Leslie Social Science Building

University Avenue, Upper Campus

University of Cape Town (UCT)

You can contact Eric Atmore should you have any questions.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the project. Before we start I would like to emphasise that:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary, thus no one has forced you to take part in this project;
- You are free to refuse to answer any question;
- You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

The interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to the researcher (myself). Extracts from the interviews may be made part of the final research report. A copy of the report will be kept in the UCT Libraries to allow its use only for academic purposes. However under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in the report.

Please sign this form to show that I have read the contents to you.

Name of participant

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

Please send a report on the results of the project:

YES NO (circle one)

Email address for those requesting a research report -----

Appendix VI – Biographical overview of the participants

Part 1

Name	Age	Sex	Residential area	Geographical area of social change initiative
Anele	27	Male	Khayelitsha	South Africa (mostly Khayelitsha)
Carmenita	23	Female	Retreat	Cape Town (mostly Retreat)
Double M	31	Male	Delft	Cape Town
Earl	27	Male	Bonteheuwel	Bonteheuwel
Indigenous	29	Male	Khayelitsha	South Africa (mostly Khayelitsha)
Khusta	29	Male	Khayelitsha	Western Cape
Lunga	28	Male	Khayelitsha	South Africa (mostly Khayelitsha)
Mabhelandile	30	Male	Khayelitsha	Khayelitsha
Mahlubi	27	Male	Langa	Langa
Mandisi	23	Male	Khayelitsha	Western Cape
Ngcwalisa	24	Female	Philippi	South Africa (mostly Khayelitsha)
Niki	23	Female	Macasser	Delft
Ntombi	23	Female	Khayelitsha	Cape Town (mostly Khayelitsha)
Sisa	26	Male	Langa	Langa, Nyanga East and Philippi
Sisanda	27	Female	Langa	Cape Town (mostly Langa)
Siyamboleka	34	Male	Sweet Home Farm (Philippi)	Sweet Home Farm (Philippi)
Solitude	25	Male	Khayelitsha	South Africa (mostly Khayelitsha)

Part 2

Name	Agency / social change initiative	Employment status	Highest education level passed	Home language
Anele	Leader/founder Soundz of the South, a social change movement around education, activism and arts (mostly hip hop and poetry)	Employed at Ilrig (NGO)	Matric	Xhosa
Carmenita	Runs a soup kitchen & motivational speaker at drug centres & volunteer Human Rights Media Centre	Unemployed	Standard 5	Afrikaans
Double M	Raises awareness among youth through activism, rap music, journalism and motivational talks	Self-employed artist and activist	1 year Journalism at UCT	Xhosa
Earl	Leader/founder of a youth development skate project in Bonteheuwel	Employed at the Desmond Tutu Peace Centre (NGO)	2 years Community Development at Cornerstone Institute	English & Afrikaans
Indigenous	Leader/founder Soundz of the South, a social change movement around education, activism and arts (mostly hip hop and poetry)	Unemployed	Matric + Certificate in Arts from Amac (NGO; 4 years)	Xhosa
Khusta	Leader/founder Soundz of the South, a social change movement around education, activism and arts (mostly hip hop and poetry)	Unemployed	2 years Retail Business Management at CPUT	Xhosa

Lunga	Leader at the Khayelitsha Youth Structure & community educator at Workers World Media Productions	Employed at Workers World Media Productions (NGO)	National Diploma in Journalism (CPUT)	Xhosa
Mabhelandile	Leader at the Progressive Youth Movement, a grassroots movement around service delivery	Unemployed	1 year Social Work at UWC	Xhosa
Mahlubi	Founder Langa Youth Development Centre	Self-employed / freelancer development practitioner	Matric + Diploma in Social Entrepreneurship from the International Youth Initiative Program (Sweden)	Sotho & Xhosa
Mandisi	Founder Theatre4Change: social change through theatre	Self-employed / freelance actor and director	National Diploma in Theatre and Performance (UCT)	Xhosa
Ngcwalisa	Leader/founder Soundz of the South, a social change movement around education, activism and arts (mostly hip hop and poetry)	Unemployed	Grade11	Xhosa
Niki	Helping learners with homework and assisting young agents of social change at Educo Africa	Employed at Educo Africa (NGO)	Bachelor's degree in Journalism (Tsiba Education)	English
Ntombi	Leader/founder Soundz of the South, a social change movement around education, activism and arts (mostly hip hop and poetry)	Employed at the Cape Town Drug Centre (NGO)	Bachelor's degree in Psychology (UWC)	Xhosa
Sisa	Life skills trainer to youth, awareness raising through multimedia	Unemployed (sometimes receives stipend as facilitator at Ethafeni Centre)	Matric	Xhosa
Sisanda	Founder and director of Zazi, an educational magazine for learners	Self-employed as director of Zazi Magazine & freelance editor	Bachelor's degree in Journalism (CPUT)	Xhosa
Siyamboleka	Community development practitioner at The Warehouse and elected Sweet Home Farm community leader	Employed at The Warehouse (NGO)	Grade 11	Xhosa
Solitude	Leader Soundz of the South, a social change movement around education, activism and arts (mostly hip hop and poetry) & helps vulnerable children at Chosa	Employed at Chosa (NGO)	Matric	Xhosa