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“We can’t live on an island” -
Inter-organisational relationships practiced
by Non Profit Organisations providing after-
school care for vulnerable children in Cape
Town

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requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in
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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: _____

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Abstract

With their lives shaped by poverty, crime and disease, many South African families are unable to provide their children with the means to enjoy a secure existence. The government offers support through a variety of social welfare measures and services aimed at alleviating this situation. Some of these services are delivered by Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs). South Africa's pluralist approach to development and welfare services places high demands on co-ordination and co-operation among the various actors involved. Through in-depth qualitative interviews with eight NPOs in two Cape Town townships this thesis discusses the support that NPOs which provide after-school care for vulnerable children receive, or feel that they should receive from the Department of Social Development (DSD). It also looks at whether these NPOs communicate, co-operate and compete with each other in the delivery of their programmes. The thesis concludes that after-school care in the selected townships is not adequately synchronised, and that NPOs expect the DSD to take leadership. It recommends that NPOs should find ways of becoming less reliant on government support, and that both the DSD and NPOs should expand their efforts to ensure efficient co-ordination of after-school care.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Preamble

It's a scorching day in the Cape Flats, and the township is bustling with people of all ages going about their daily business. Around the small clinic located in the middle of the community the normally hectic activity is slowly fading as the afternoon progresses. A group of women with their babies tightly tied to their backs are resting in the shade. Around a separate entrance a few patients with masks covering their faces are waiting. The ringing of a school bell nearby indicates the end of another school day, and soon the cheerful voices of children draw closer. Dressed in maroon school uniforms, children of various ages approach the clinic premises, skipping and laughing. They are aiming for a small container situated next to the clinic building. Outside the container under a large provisional plastic cover stands a petite woman dressed in a smart skirt and a bright headscarf, offering the children a warm smile. Soon she is surrounded by lively children who are clearly comfortable with her. She seems to be disappearing in the chaos that is subsequently generated. Lovingly she reprimands the children, ushering them into the container. Inside, another woman is occupied with two large pots that balance on an electric stove, and the smell of chicken stew satiates the small room. Rows of red plastic chairs have been arranged, and gradually they are being occupied by little boys and girls. A few older children take a seat on chairs that have been placed outside in the shade. Food is distributed on colourful plates, and the children calm down as they begin to eat. Soon the women begin to talk in isiXhosa, and the children listen attentively. A song is initiated. Later, little notebooks that the children know as their 'hero books' are distributed, and the children scatter on the floor, eagerly grasping for pencils and crayons. The carer with the headscarf moves around the room, listening, resolving arguments, and assisting with spelling. While some children cheerfully draw colourful figures in their books, others appear earnestly submerged in writing down a story. Outside the older children have just

completed discussing their topic of the day, peer pressure, and are now in the process of writing and enacting a drama piece on the matter. A mix of gravity and the light-hearted bantering so typical for teenagers shape the scene. As the evening approaches, the children are assembled for the South African national anthem, before they get ready to leave. A few children linger, playing and chatting with the carers. One of the women gently comforts a young girl who appears to be in distress and promises to visit her home the following day. Eventually the container turns quiet, and the carers begin the task of cleaning, filling in forms and reviewing this day's after-school care events.

Background

In September 2011 I began to work as an intern for *Wola Nani*, a Cape Town Non Profit Organisation (NPO) that provides after-school care for orphans and vulnerable children. This was the beginning of a journey that would eventually lead to this Master's thesis. As I became more familiar with the work of this NPO, my sheltered existence at the University of Cape Town was placed in a tremendous contrast to the realities that I encountered in the townships where my internship took me. Although a previous internship in Nairobi, Kenya, had prepared me for the desolation that also tends to shape 'underprivileged' communities in South Africa, the precarious situation that many children find themselves in, only a short distance from the affluent Southern Suburbs of Cape Town, was nonetheless disconcerting.

While I spent most of my time at *Wola Nani's* offices in the Southern Suburbs, I frequently had the opportunity to visit the organisation's after-school care programmes in the Philippi and Mfuleni, two townships in the Cape Flats. Although Philippi is significantly larger than Mfuleni, the demographics of the two communities are strikingly similar. Both communities are shaped by high unemployment rates and low average incomes, with many citizens relying on social grants¹. Approximately thirteen per cent of children in the Western Cape were estimated to live on 2\$ a day in 2010, and families with children in South

¹ In the Western Cape, 1,300,389 social grants (counting all the various types of grants) had been distributed by September 2012 (SASSA, 2012).

Africa often survive on child support from the government (Children Count, 2012). In 2009, 557,784 children in the Western Cape received this Child Support Grant, a monthly unconditional cash grant of R280 paid to the caregivers of eligible children (Children's Institute, 2010).

Around 35 per cent of the populations of Philippi and Mfuleni are younger than 18 years. Consequently, Philippi has a total of fifteen primary and secondary schools, and in Mfuleni children have access to eight schools in total. After 2 pm when they normally finish school, children in these areas often find themselves at risk. In the streets of their communities children are exposed to crime, abuse, and the harmful influence of street gangs. Extracurricular activities are scarce, and home is not always experienced as a safe place. Drug and alcohol abuse is common in areas shaped by high levels of poverty, and children are subsequently often subjected to various types of violence at home (Jewkes et al., 2009). Further, food insecurity is an issue in such impoverished communities. In the Western Cape, 17 per cent of children are reported to be hungry on a regular basis, and 9 per cent of children suffer from chronic nutritional deprivation (UNICEF, 2008). Interventions such as after-school care can thus play an important role in keeping children off the streets, providing them with educational activities, psychosocial support as well as a nutritious meal.

Through my internship at *Wola Nani* I was able to observe and participate in the after-school programme's daily activities (that range from life skills education, homework support to art and drama) accompany the child carers during home visits in the informal settlements and contribute to evaluation processes. Yet, as a post-graduate student of Development Studies I also began to ask questions about where such a programme fits into the 'bigger picture' of social development in post-apartheid South Africa. Although this NPO appeared to be making a valuable contribution in the lives of the children they are supporting, it was unclear whether such a programme is part of a larger national or provincial strategy to transform the lives of vulnerable children, or whether this NPO is acting "in isolation", essentially trying to "mop the floor while the tap is still running". Eventually I realised that the NPO's child carers have very little

awareness of other after-school care organisations in the community, or how such services are being co-ordinated. While *Wola Nani's* management is in touch with a few other NPOs as well as the Department of Social Development, such interaction appears to be rather sporadic, and the staff were not able to provide me with a detailed overview of whether and how services for vulnerable children are being *synchronised*. For example, it is currently not established which geographical section of the community that each NPO's after-school programme is expected to target, or how organisations are meant to 'recruit' children. Further, there are no homogeneous criteria among NPOs according to which children are selected to be part of such programmes. The matter of responsibility is also significant. The South African Children's Act provides for a range of social services for children and their families, making the government legally responsible to ensure that services listed within this sector are provided. Yet, due to a lack of state capacity, government departments largely rely on NPOs to deliver social welfare services to poor and vulnerable populations. For example, *Wola Nani* is contracted and thus subsidised by the DSD. Nevertheless, the NPO struggles to meet the demands of the communities they are working in based on their present financial means. Other similar organisations are not recipients of government support at the moment. This raises the question why certain NPOs are contracted by the government while others are not, particularly since they provide a similar service and there appears to be a pressing need for such interventions. Moreover, it is not clear whether the DSD is mainly obliged to act as a funder of services, or to what extent the department is also taking on the role of a co-ordinator and advisor to the contracted NPOs.

Synchronisation of social services and co-operation between the stakeholders involved is fundamental for various reasons. Firstly, the co-ordination of programmes and projects aims to prevent the *duplication* of services. Duplication is likely to lead to a *waste of resources*, another problem that can be limited by proper co-ordination of services. Efficient *supervision and inspection* is also linked to social service management. Service providers can only be properly monitored and supported if the co-ordinating body is aware of their existence, and engages in regular communication with these actors. Further, geographical

co-ordination of services seeks to deploy the NPOs rationally to avoid overlap or a lack of services in some areas, and thus minimise the number of individuals that “fall through the cracks” of the system.

Based on such questions I begun my research process, searching for literature regarding inter-organisational relationships in development, and consulting NPO staff regarding the presence of other NPOs that run after-school care. Eventually I selected a theoretical framework that was well suited for the purposes of the qualitative study I was going to conduct. It focuses on *co-ordination* of social development initiatives, *co-operation* among various stakeholders and the *competition* that may arise between such development players. These concepts are important in practice as they represent three main modes of interaction between groups of people, each incorporating several other more specific typologies.

The NPOs

Patel (2012) argues that while the state in South Africa may be perceived as playing a leading role in social development as a financial supporter, regulator and direct service provider, it also works in partnership with other actors in society, such as NPOs. Such partners are not simply delivery vehicles but they also contribute to development in many other ways. They have additional resources, knowledge of local contexts, give a voice to poor and marginalised groups, provide greater flexibility in service delivery and responsiveness and increase state capability. Since 1994 the South African government has taken responsibility for delivering social services, employing a ‘partnership approach’ with NPOs, in which government is co-ordinating and partially funding services.

Besides *Wola Nani* I researched seven other organisations, three in Mfuleni and four in Philippi. Four of the studied NPOs all receive a certain degree of funding/subsidies from the DSD, whereas the rest of the organisations are not being contracted by the government at the moment. Most of the selected NPOs

provide some sort of nutrition, and all of them claim to incorporate 'psychosocial support' and life skills teachings in their programmes. Further, many of the programmes list activities such as homework support, drama and choir. However, as the NPOs are working with different levels of funding, only a few of the after-school programmes are able to offer activities that require more material resources, such as computer training and various types of sports. Limited funding also prevents some of the NPOs from employing professional staff, so that these NPOs are in need of more skilled employees and/or training for their current child carers.

Purpose of the study

Many South African families find themselves exposed to poverty, crime and disease, leaving them unable to provide their children with the means to reach a secure existence. Consequently, such children grow up in precarious circumstances, with few tools with which to develop resilience to environmental threats and risky health and social behaviours. Interventions that can close these gaps in a sustainable way and that can provide social learning and support, utilising resources on the ground, are in demand. South Africa's pluralist model of service delivery (direct state intervention, social welfare grants, funding for NPOs that work directly with communities) requires co-ordination as well as co-operation between the various stakeholders involved in providing such social services. Co-ordinated actions and actors who are working together are likely to be more effective than fragmented attempts by various disconnected individual organisations. Fragmentation can lead to duplication of activities in some areas and no activities in others.

The research aimed to investigate whether the NPOs interact with each other and co-ordinate their activities, including the recruitment of children to their programmes. It is based on the notion that co-ordination leads to the rational location of NPOs on the basis of needs rather than an *ad hoc* approach in which organisations simply choose to work in certain areas for convenience or the availability of space. It further assumes that lack of synchronisation is likely to

lead to duplication of services and hence unnecessary costs.

As co-ordination of services and co-operation between actors is key to such concerns, I decided to study the inter-organisational relationships between NPOs providing after-school care in Philippi and Mfuleni. Based on in-depth semi-structured interviews with NPO staff the thesis examines the support that NPOs providing after-school care for vulnerable children receive, or feel that they should receive from the Department of Social Development (DSD); the department responsible for supporting vulnerable children. It also discusses whether these NPOs communicate and co-operate with each other.

The thesis is situated theoretically within the current paradigm of a 'pluralist model' of service delivery that assumes that NPOs can make a valuable contribution to social development. In line with this theory the common practice in South Africa has been one of multi-source financing, with a combination of external funding and national government grants disbursed through provincial departments. Today, as international funding is drying up, many NPOs are expecting to receive more extensive funding from the government. The research is located in this reality, and its aim is to understand it and the situation of the NPOs. Hence, its purpose is not to launch a theoretical critique of the South African model of social development.

Thesis outline

Following this introduction, chapter two presents the thesis's theoretical framework as well as literature relevant to the research. Chapter three discusses methodology, explaining the research methods used for this thesis, introducing the field research sites and providing an overview of the NPOs that were studied. Further, the scope and limitations of the research and the ethical considerations are discussed. Chapter four outlines and analyses the research findings, based on the theoretical grounding. Finally chapter five will draw conclusions from the findings and offer a number of recommendations.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction

Under the apartheid regime, social development and welfare services, health and education provision were racially segregated for the different population groups, with whites being a “privileged minority” (Knijn & Patel, 2012:598). While statutory racial discrimination was banned in South Africa after democratisation in 1994, the end of apartheid has not been accompanied by a decline in social and economic inequality (Seekings & Nattrass, 2002). While overall poverty levels have dropped since 2000, half of the population is still considered to be living in poverty, especially in the rural areas located largely in the former Homelands. There are thus continuities with past social trends and the continuing co-occurrence of race, class and place in the democratic society (Knijn & Patel, 2012:598). The country continues to struggle with a range of social, economic and institutional problems that originate from its colonial and apartheid legacy. This heritage, combined with contemporary issues and challenges posed by neo-liberal policies, presents the country with enormous challenges in economic, social, healthcare and education policies, despite constitutionally guaranteed social rights and fairly developed institutional arrangements such as regulatory frameworks and social legislation (Knijn & Patel, 2012:597). The high HIV and AIDS rates have exacerbated past social tendencies, with poor health outcomes and rising numbers of child-headed households, orphans and vulnerable children (Knijn & Patel, 2012:598).

The new democratic government has had to face this complex legacy shaped by structural unemployment on a massive scale. South Africa has further inherited a cumbersome, hierarchical state structure. Since 1994, the social welfare bureaucracy, like the rest of the public service, has been changed into a public service that is representative of the country’s population. This transformation has had its own racial and class dynamics as black employees were incorporated into the new post-apartheid welfare bureaucracy. While this is an important achievement in reversing control held by former elites, it has at times also

resulted in a shortage of qualified cadres, a situation that has compromised service delivery (Patel, 2012:614).

Public welfare is essential for the mitigation of acute poverty, and is especially vital in a society where people are willing to work but are unable to find employment (Seekings & Nattrass, 2002). The magnitude of the challenge of providing services and assistance to millions of people has resulted in a pluralist approach, involving a leading role for the state in partnership with NPOs that are contracted by government departments (Patel, 2012). Although social assistance in the form of expansive non-contributory cash transfers has been developed, the neglected, under-funded and smaller system of social and care services rely mainly on families and under-paid welfare staff, the unpaid care work of women and an over-stretched voluntary welfare sector (Patel, 2012:603). This situation has resulted in the inadequate provision of services to children and families, women, older persons, people living with disabilities and those affected by chronic illnesses and HIV and AIDS (Patel 2012).

The overview of social service delivery presented in this thesis relies on the analysis of Patel (2012). South Africa's civil society sector, that delivers most welfare services, is far from homogeneous. Multiplicities of NPOs operate in the welfare and development field with different political and ideological orientations, and with discernible differences in their approach to social welfare and in their organisational cultures. Nonetheless, welfare and development NPOs constitute a significant sector and a substantial contribution to social development that needs to be constructively utilised and managed by the state. This thesis looks at this relationship through the experience of eight NPOs in two Cape Town townships. It argues that the relationship between civil society organisations and the state, which is envisaged to be cooperative, faces many challenges, some of which are reviewed in this chapter. Drawing heavily on the illuminating work of Robinson et al. (2000) this study looks critically at three key concepts in this relationship: co-operation, co-ordination and competition.

This chapter first examines the South African government's conception of the

developmental state, followed by a discussion of the role of NPOs within this model. It then turns to the question of vulnerable children in the South African context; the constituency served by the NPOs studied. Finally it outlines Robinson et al.'s theorisation of NPO-state relations. This development management theory is applied in the analysis to help explain the inter-organisational challenges faced by NPOs providing support to vulnerable children in two impoverished areas of Cape Town.

The developmental state

"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable."

(Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776)

In their document 'Constructing a democratic developmental state in South Africa' the HSRC defines the democratic developmental state as

"a state that could act authoritatively, credibly, legitimately and in a binding manner to formulate and implement its policies and programmes. This will entail possessing a 'developmentalist' ideology. Such a state also has to be able to construct and deploy the institutional architecture within the state and mobilise society towards the realisation of its developmentalist project"

(Edigheji, 2010:4).

The South African government is one of the few governments in the world that has explicitly committed itself to the construction of such a developmental state (Edigheji, 2010). After 1994, the South African ruling party African National Congress (ANC) created a vision of a developmental state that is democratic and socially inclusive, in order to address the severe developmental challenges facing the country – including growing the economy and reducing the high rates of poverty, inequality and unemployment, as well as improving livelihoods of South Africans (Edigheji, 2010:1).

South Africa's policies are pro-poor, designed to promote equity, and focus on social investments in human development. The state is envisaged to "play a

leading role in social development” in partnership with other development actors, including civil society (Knijn & Patel, 2012:598). ANC governments since 1994 have made major social investments, with social spending making up 58 per cent of the total budget in 2012, with an emphasis on health, education and non-contributory social assistance (Knijn & Patel, 2012:598).

However, despite the commitment to a ‘developmental state’, new demands of global post-industrial competition and economic crisis in the advanced industrial countries have resulted in a slowdown of national and regional economies in Southern Africa (Knijn & Patel, 2012:597). Unemployment is currently estimated at 23.9 per cent and although overall poverty levels have declined since 2000, over a third of South Africans live in less than 2\$ a day (Tregenna, 2012:2577). Inequality in South Africa remains exceptionally high by international standards, with a ‘Gini coefficient’ of 0.67 (Tregenna, 2012:2578). This is evident in the enormous gaps in levels of education that continue to exist among the various population groups (whites, Indians, coloureds and Africans). The HIV and AIDS prevalence is estimated to be around 17.3% among South Africans between the ages of 16-49 (Department of Health, 2011). As a result of the government’s scaling up of its antiretroviral (ARV) treatment programme, average life expectancy has begun to increase, being estimated at 57 years for men and 60 years for women in 2011 (Bradshaw et al., 2011). Yet, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has resulted in significant demographic changes (Steyn et al., 2011:278) and contributed to the growth of child-headed households, orphans and vulnerable children in South Africa (Knijn & Patel, 2012).

Finding a balance between mitigating the acute needs of the poor and at the same time overcoming poverty is a complex task. While immediate crises must be dealt with through social welfare services to ensure that the ‘symptoms’ of poverty are relieved, policies must at the same time ensure that social and economic *development* takes place to ensure that the cycle of inequality and unemployment does not keep repeating itself.

The role of the non-profit sector

Scholars generally agree that nations are made up of three different spheres, namely state, the market and civil society (DSD, 2010:14). The non-profit sector, part of 'civil society', is characterised by a wide variety of organisations of different sizes and shapes across the political, economic and social spectra of society. A non-profit organisation is defined, in terms of section 1 of the NPO Act (1997) as a "trust, company or other association of persons established for a public purpose and of which its income and property are not distributable to its members or office bearers except as reasonable compensation for services rendered". Hence, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) are collectively known as non-profit organisations (NPOs). In some instance, NPOs are also referred to as Civil Society Organisations (Department of Social Development, 2012).

Northern welfare regimes often do not consider the contribution of non-state sectors and actors in promoting social development (Patel, 2012:605). In developing countries around the world the position of NPOs has shifted from that of insignificant and little-discussed players focusing on the welfare of the poor to major, central actors on the world stage of development (Brass, 2012:387). For instance, non-governmental organisations are perceived by analysts (Fowler, 1991; Owiti et al., 2004) as more efficient, effective, flexible, and innovative than governments. They are seen to be other-oriented and ideologically committed to democracy and participatory pro-poor development, and to be more accountable and transparent than the government (Brass, 2012:387). Further, NGOs and CBOs have been at the forefront of promoting prevention, care and treatment from the onset of the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Rau, 2006:285). Yet, there are significant discrepancies regarding the geographical distribution of such NPOs. Eighty three per cent of such organisations in South Africa deliver services mainly in formally established urban areas, 65% in informal settlements and 57% in semi-urban areas. A total of 60% of all NPO service providers operate in the Western Cape and the Gauteng (Patel 2012).

Today, the South African government's developmental social welfare policy largely relies on NPOs to deliver social welfare services to poor and vulnerable persons and populations at risk. The government directs over 50% of the national social service budget to NPOs, which are usually also funded by a range of national and international organisations. Yet, this type of funding has been reduced in recent years of global financial crisis. As a result, many NPOs are facing difficulties in surviving.

Patel (2012) has criticised this pluralist vision of service delivery. She argues that there is inefficiency in the management of contracts with NPOs, such as delays in making payments, inconvenient procedures and reporting requirements, and a lack of consultation about key policy or procedural changes in service plans and contracts that impact directly on service delivery. Public officials are apparently not able to provide the leadership and management that are required to secure the implementation of the 'developmental approach' and manage the complex relations and interests between the various actors involved. Further, a lack of evidence-based policy-making and monitoring and evaluation capacity has been a significant barrier to implementation (Patel, 2012:614).

Patel (2012) also points out that the irregularities between policy declarations and actual practice raise key questions about the value of a partnership model in welfare service delivery. However, Patel asserts that state dominant model of welfare service provision is not a feasible solution in the South African context due to a lack of state capacity in the delivery of welfare and care services. Even if the state *did* have the capacity to deliver these services, the policy rationale to be flexible, responsive, to give voice to local people, promote participation and to engage a diversity of partners outside the state to promote social development can best be realised through a partnership arrangement. Further, Patel emphasises that welfare and development NPOs constitute a significant sector and a substantial contribution to social development that needs to be constructively utilised and managed by the state. However, as Budlender and Proudlock (2010:37) emphasise, if the government continues to rely on NPOs to provide services, these organisations need to be paid adequately for their

delivery of Children's Act services and not, as at present, partially *subsidised* in the hope that donors and communities will fund the rest. This is the context, then, in which this study of the role of NPOs in delivering welfare services to vulnerable children takes place.

Children and vulnerability

While many development indicators are in fact improving in South Africa, this is not always the case for children (South African Child Gauge, 2012). Children are particularly vulnerable to environmental factors such as poverty and disease, with visible groups of children, such as street children or orphans, usually only presenting the "tip of the iceberg" of large numbers of children whose conditions are equally, or more, precarious (Richter & Desmond, 2008:1020). There is an extensive literature on the meaning of vulnerability (Casale et al., 2009; Edström, 2007). Drawing on this literature I shall use the concept in a rather broad manner, referring to the exposure to internal as well as external stress factors, and the resulting difficulty in coping.

Notwithstanding such rather expansive definitions of 'vulnerability', the term is largely associated with the image of 'the orphan' in sub-Saharan Africa. Estimates of the numbers of children being orphaned by AIDS-related deaths in the region raised international concern about an 'orphan crisis' and the burden of their care, especially in already fragile family and community circumstances (Crivello & Chuta 2012). As Crivello and Chuta (2012) explain, the attention given to orphans in the international child protection discourse suggests that orphanhood is a major, if not *the* major factor shaping child vulnerability in sub-Saharan Africa. In some cases, the 'orphan label' has even resulted in a 'privileged' identity and a way to access aid from donors. Despite "confused messages" and such "unintended consequences" (Crivello & Chuta, 2012:538), there is still a substantial amount of international aid available for orphans and vulnerable children via HIV/AIDS funding (Crivello & Chuta, 2012:538).

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa often does have devastating effects on children's lives. When parents fall ill, particularly in poor families, children come under intense stress that may continue in different forms for the rest of their lives. They may be taken out of school to help with farming or to take part in income-generating activities. Further, they may become caregivers themselves or even head households. In many cases, such children become increasingly vulnerable to malnutrition, poor health, abuse and various forms of exploitation as well as *psychosocial* effects, which are potentially very damaging, both in the short and long term (Gillespie et al., 2005:1).

Nonetheless, the very concept of 'orphans and vulnerable children' (OVC) has come to demonstrate the tension that exists between targeting specific groups of children for support – such as AIDS-orphans – and developing strategies for addressing child vulnerability more generally (Crivello & Chuta 2012:536). For example, as Foster et al. (2005) emphasise, focusing solely on children who have lost a parent fails to account of other 'vulnerable' children who are in similar or even greater need. Such an emphasis can result in inappropriate categorisation and labelling of children, which may generate conflicts over resources and priorities at community and household level. Edström (2007) agrees and argues that interventions should be directed to *all* vulnerable children and their communities, and integrated into other programmes to promote child welfare and reduce poverty, and therefore should not target on the basis of HIV or AIDS at all. The adverse effects of many orphan-targeted programmes have led numbers of NPOs to realise that deepening poverty due to HIV/AIDS is often a greater issue than orphanhood itself (Cheney, 2010:11). Many organisations have moved from focusing on vulnerability due to HIV/AIDS to vulnerability in general to focus on all children in various difficult circumstances (Cheney 2010:9).

According to Cheney (2010:11), "vulnerability" is now commonly used to define children as "objects for developmental and humanitarian intervention, often in problematic and contrary ways". He argues that the expansion of the notion of childhood vulnerability may have just as contradictory implications for aid as the

earlier “AIDS orphan crisis”, since vulnerability can be measured according to various criteria, such as health, education, socio-economic status, family conditions and so forth. Notwithstanding the broadening of the concept of vulnerability, much of development aid for vulnerable children is still largely being channelled into HIV/AIDS programmes.

While HIV/AIDS is not responsible for all of the challenges that vulnerable children in Africa (and elsewhere) face, the epidemic has certainly contributed to their severity (Skinner et al., 2006:1). Accordingly, the situations that make children vulnerable go beyond the loss of their parents. The lack of material resources may be the most obvious, and includes access to money, food, clothing, shelter, health care and education. Yet, additionally, many children experience emotional difficulties, due to the lack of care, love, support, time to grieve and the expectation of having to contain emotions. Further, social problems include the lack of supportive peer groups, of role models to follow, of guidance in difficult situations, stigma, and risks in the immediate environment (Skinner et al., 2006:1).

The impact on the individual of such struggles during childhood can prove to be devastating. While socioeconomic status can be responsible for measurable differences in learning, many such discrepancies can be improved by early childhood interventions in communities. However, neurobiological studies in children demonstrate that stress literally “shapes a child’s brain”, as persistent stress becomes “toxic” when it is associated with “strong and prolonged activation of the body’s stress response systems in the absence of the buffering protection of adult support” (Smith et al., 2001:1402). Smith et al. further argue that toxic stress measurably disrupts brain architecture and chemistry, impairs learning, memory, and the social-behavioural learning process, and increases a child’s lifetime risk of physical and mental disease. Consequently, economic inequities put children at risk for “persistent stress that may result in long-term effects on brain architecture as well as behavioural and health outcomes”. The gap that is created undermines children’s lifelong potential to benefit from economic opportunities, maintaining a “downward economic spiral”, which

subsequently undermines the positive development of nation's human resources. Evidently, interventions that aim to mitigate such destructive and preventable outcomes must be given high priority.

Response and responsibility

Regardless of how 'vulnerability' is understood, it is accepted that the situation for many children in South Africa is precarious. According to the *South African Child Gauge 2012*, one fifth of South African children have lost at least one of their biological parents, nearly two-thirds of children are dependent on less than ZAR575 (approximately US\$66) per month and over a third live in households where no adult is employed. Further, nearly two million children live in informal houses and backyard dwellings, and a third of children do not have access to piped drinking water at home (South African Child Gauge 2012). Many children grow up in environments that expose them to violence and abuse from a very early age; their safety is compromised in the home, at school and on the streets of their communities. They are exposed to substance abuse, and are vulnerable to unplanned pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (South African Child Gauge 2012).

On the other hand research has also highlighted the importance of child *resilience* in the African context (Mueller et al., 2011). Mueller et al. (2011:58) write that 'resilient' children have "strong self-esteem, self-efficacy and coping abilities in challenging environments", while children with a poorer sense of self-worth tend to be at a greater risk of anxiety and depression. In the South African context, as Swartz et al. (2010) highlight, the widespread effect of poverty means that children and youth have few assets with which to develop such resilience to environmental threats and risky health and social behaviours (Swartz et al., 2010:8). Poverty continues to play a fundamental role in the HIV epidemic in sub-Saharan countries, and affects the vulnerability of young people to HIV infection by generating risk-taking behaviour (Swartz et al., 2010:8). Hence, poverty, when combined with the usual "social upheavals of adolescence",

combines to make interventions for poor youth essential (Swartz et al., 2010:8).

Yet, as Skinner et al. (2006) and Swartz et al. (2010) caution, millions of young people in South Africa don't have access to mechanisms that can facilitate the delivery of these needs, due to poverty and a lack of community resources. Furthermore, many vulnerable children have little understanding of how to find help when needed (Swartz et al., 2010:10). Thus these children lack the opportunity to acquire the necessary 'resilience skills'. Interventions that can close up these gaps in a sustainable way, utilising resources on the ground, that can provide social learning and support are in demand (Swartz et al., 2010:10).

However, Drimie and Casale (2009:32) argue that there is a misfit between the problem and the institutional response, as both national and international initiatives to tackle challenges related to child vulnerability have remained relatively static. A clear argument has emerged for more comprehensive interventions that are sustainable and enable families to strengthen livelihoods and children's security. The many and varied challenges mean that no single intervention will achieve significant or sustained support for the general wellbeing of children. However, by increasing the range of options that families have and their resilience, through services and safety nets, it is possible to optimise the positive outcomes for children (Drimie & Casale, 2009:32).

Support for children in South Africa

Under international and constitutional law, South Africa is obliged to guarantee and protect everyone's human rights, including those of children (Budlender & Proudlock, 2010). Accordingly, the South African Children's Act provides for a range of social services for children and their families, making the government *legally responsible* to ensure that services listed within this sector are provided. These services are aimed at preventing and protecting children from abuse and neglect, supporting and strengthening families suffering from chronic illnesses and/or poverty, supporting children who have lost their parents, providing alternative care (foster care, adoption and child and youth care centres) for

children who cannot live with their parents, and providing diversion programmes for children in trouble with the law. The Act also provides for partial care, and early childhood development programmes (Budlender & Proudlock, 2010:35). After-school care initiatives for vulnerable children, such as the ones examined in this study, fall under the programme 'Social Welfare Services'. They belong either to the sub-programme of 'Child Care and Protection Services' or 'HIV/AIDS' depending on the 'model' or target criteria that the NPO in question has decided on (Department of Social Development, 2011).

Theoretical grounding

Over the past decades, scholars studying the management of social development and welfare services have recognised the increased use of various forms of inter-organisational relationships (Pick et al., 2008; Selden et al., 2006). Collaborations, partnerships and alliances between public, private and non-profit organisations are believed to link disconnected services and resources into multidimensional delivery systems that, at least in theory, will decrease fragmentation and unemployment and increase access to services. However, according to Pick et al. (2008) few scientific evaluations or systematic assessments have been conducted of such partnerships at the global, national, or local levels. Hanlon's (1991) work on Mozambique is a notable exception. Nonetheless, various theoretical efforts have been made by scholars to understand government-NPO relations. For example, Clark (1991) feels that NPOs have three options when it comes to such relations: opposing the state, complementing it, or reforming it. Seibel (1992) has stressed three major angles of such inter-organisational collaboration: analyses of resource flows, of inter-organisational interaction styles, and of 'comparative advantage'. Coston (1998) has drawn up an eight-point typology range of relations between various actors: repression; rivalry; competition; contracting; third-party government; cooperation; complementarity and collaboration. Other researchers have examined governmental attitudes toward NPOs. Commuri (1995) has developed a continuum of governmental approaches, ranging from supportive, to facilitative, to neutral, to regulative, to repressive. Fisher (1998) presents a

similar model that ranges from government repressing NGOs; to ignoring them; to co-opting them; to taking advantage of them without trying to take control; to being collaborative and engaging in autonomous partnerships. Further, Najam (2000) has created a framework that explains different forms of relationships between NGOs and government, the 'Four-Cs-Model' that is based on Co-operation, Confrontation, Complementarity and Co-optation. This scholar has also acknowledged a possible fifth possibility, Non-engagement.

As Najam (2000:390) stresses, the 'Four-Cs' framework encompasses "the likely rather than the necessary conditions for each behaviour". Accordingly, one theoretical framework cannot possibly explain how complex inter-organisational relationships in the social development sector are actually practiced in any given 'real life' context. The theoretical foundation selected for this research consists of *three* basic modes for structuring inter-organisational relationships, so called 'ideal types', referring to the term employed by sociologist Max Weber to describe a theoretical construction that emphasizes the necessary traits of a phenomenon, which may not be the *only* traits. 'Ideal types' are essentially "tools for thinking with" (Robinson et al., 2000:4). This '3C' framework has been introduced in the collection of works *Managing Development. Understanding Inter-organisational Relationships*, edited by Robinson, Hewitt and Harriss (2000). The scholars have developed a theory on the ideal types of *co-ordination, co-operation and competition*, representing three ways in which groups of people relate to each other. As Robinson et al. (2000) explain, forces of competition, co-ordination and co-operation are constantly taking place, and any particular inter-organisational relationship or organisational arena may be more or less shaped by some combination of the principles and practices of these three forces. As these three 'traits' of such relations subsume several other typologies mentioned above, Robinson et al.'s framework was selected for the purposes of this thesis.

The aims of development organisations such as the ones chosen for this study are externally directed to the public sphere rather than production or profits (Robinson et al., 2000). Consequently the focus of their work is on the quality of

people's lives (Robinson et al. 2000:3). Managers of any form of development are not only trying to accomplish co-ordination of activities and co-ordination between people, but they are confronted with complex external social environments. Coping with such multifaceted settings requires a common effort from all development stakeholders. Accordingly, the authors conclude that the management of interactions between different organisations, and between different types of organisations, is "the essence of how development takes place" (Robinson et al., 2000:3).

The three 'ideal types' introduced by Robinson et al. are helpful in understanding the complex realities involved in inter-organisational relationships and assists in exploring how different development contexts can be managed (Robinson et al., 2000:4). Hence, the following examination of various forms of organisational co-ordination and co-operation rely heavily on the theory presented by Robinson et al.

The role of the state

Co-ordination is a key form for organising development practice, with co-ordination existing between government, NPOs and donors. The purpose of co-ordination is to bring together various actors to make their efforts more attuned, and to avoid the risk of "lapsing into chaos and inefficiency" (Robinson et al., 2000:7). According to Bennett (2000:168) the frequent inability of stakeholders in the humanitarian and development sector to "act in a co-ordinated fashion" (Bennet, 2000:168) leads to duplication, fragmentation and wastage. A lack of co-ordination can also undermine the sustainability of interventions. These issues have been reviewed by authors such as Hanlon (1991), who has written extensively about aid and development in Mozambique. He cautions that duplication of services will occur when donors and NGOs are "unwilling to co-ordinate their activity" (Hanlon 1991:253). Hanlon has also described a situation where hundreds of small NGO projects which are not related to each other or to anything that the government is doing are introduced in an area. According to Hanlon (19991:253) such a system is bound to "collapse".

Development efforts are commonly expected to be co-ordinated from “above”. Robinson, Hewitt and Harriss have devoted an entire chapter of their book to the co-ordinating role of the state, written by Dorcas Robinson, a researcher at the Open University and NGO programme co-ordinator. Robinson (2000:143) lists various roles that states can take on in development. 1. In a welfare state, for instance, the state is expected to be the lead actor, funding, co-ordinating and implementing development. 2. A regulatory state model leaves more room for private enterprise and competition. 3. The more recent idea of the facilitative state expects the state to provide an ‘enabling’ environment for development that includes a range of actors.

Robinson argues that direct state co-ordination of basic social services may promote universal coverage and equity of access, objectives which the market and voluntary action alone are unlikely to achieve (Robinson, 2000:143). Here, co-ordination is the key, defined by Robinson (2000:145) as “bringing the parts into proper relations, to function together or in proper order” Hence, in a welfare state, the state is policy-maker, funder and direct provider of social services, managing the relationship between the ‘parts’ and also *providing* most of the parts itself. However, the state has frequently been perceived as more of a hindrance than a help, so that reform of various types has been suggested since the 1990s, in order to achieve ‘better’, ‘leaner and meaner’ management to ensure more efficient and effective services. Such reforms have generally attempted to reduce the role and size of state services and instead increase the involvement of for-profit and not-for-profit service provision (Robinson, 2000:144).

Such a change has implications for the *coordinative* functions of the state, for instance the co-ordination of for-profit businesses, NGOs and community groups that are now carrying out services that the state may previously have undertaken. Drawing from her own experiences of NGO work in the health sector of Tanzania Robinson (2000:149) cautions that where government policy and implementation frameworks are already weak, a lack of direct contact between large numbers of NGOs and government planning systems may contribute to the

disintegration of services and gaps within them. Hence, one challenge for states is to assess what NGOs *can* do and how the state can best relate to them. Robinson (2000:150) claims that while NGOs and government officials involved in various development sectors commonly report good informal relationships with each other, they also identify problems such as lack of information-sharing and dialogue, for which they tend to blame each other. Robinson agrees with Cannon (1996), who is critical of NGOs simply fitting into government-determined systems. Cannon claims that NGOs are often perceived as 'gap-fillers', actors who carry out somebody else's work, although they may also be perceived as 'partners' who are working "in their own right" (Robinson, 2000:150).

Based on the Tanzanian context Robinson argues that proper memorandums of understandings between organisations must be developed, and that governments must find ways of co-ordinating services. Further she recommends that NGOs, as a set of actors, could come together with the government to help ensure that action is co-ordinated, in order to avoid fragmentation (Robinson, 2000:152). In her view, NGOs are not merely 'gap fillers' in government systems, but such organisations have actually often been the forerunners in many development areas, carrying out activities which are later taken over by governments (Robinson, 2000:152).

Finally Robinson concludes that there are fundamental reasons why 'the state' exists as a co-ordinating agency in national contexts. First of all, the state, as the executive arm of government, has the legitimacy and the scope to implement national objectives. Secondly it can guide *actions* towards their achievement by co-ordinating various actors involved in service delivery (Robinson, 2000:161). However, the activities that the state undertakes in order to coordinate, regulate or facilitate, and ways in which it approaches these tasks, are not absolute givens, but vary across time and institutional contexts. A reforming state needs to review its activities and capacities, and take action to "clean itself up" by building administrative capacity and virtuous bureaucratic behaviour (Robinson, 2000:162). Robinson further explains that the type of coordinating framework

that the state provides will help to shape the incentives and agreements that control the settings in which this process takes place. This has implications for the ways that government managers perceive and manage their own roles, but also for how other actors perceive the role of government (Robinson, 2000:163). In this context, *meaning* in inter-organisational relationships could be examined, to find out how different parties construct their understanding of their roles in development. The author feels that whether the language used by different actors to describe inter-organisational relationships reflect actual practice or not, it is at least an important statement of intentions (Robinson, 2000:152).

When discussing the role of the state, Robinson also considers the responsibility of 'civil society', often perceived as a 'counterbalance' to the state. After all, civil society includes those actors for which the state is supposed to be providing "an enabling environment". Robinson asserts that there is consequently a fundamental interdependence between 'state' and 'civil society' (Robinson, 2000:163). However, Robinson acknowledges that the challenge of effectively co-ordinating in complex inter-organisational environments is to build on existing relationships in ways that encourage collaboration rather than resistance. The re-definition of coordinative frameworks and day-to-day management tends to lead to a sense of vulnerability and misunderstanding among many government and NGO managers. Robinson stresses that political will, genuine commitment to building the required mutual understanding, and essential management skills are vital to build effective inter-organisational relationships (Robinson, 2000:165).

The partnership mantra

One of the trends in contemporary 'ways of organising' that contrast the hierarchical co-ordination reviewed above highlights 'organisation-as-community' and building greater degrees of *co-operation* into formal, bureaucratic organisations (Harriss, 2000:225). *Co-operation* is broadly understood as "voluntarily working together based on consensus, solidarity, community or compromise" (Robinson et al., 2000:8). 'Partnership' and 'development co-operation' may not be particularly new concepts, but as

Robinson et al. (2000) point out, this type of language is becoming increasingly popular in the development sector worldwide. Relationships between governments, governments and civil society, northern NGOs and southern NGOs, NGOs and communities, central government and local government, and bodies within the UN system, have been essential parts of development since WWII (Robinson et al., 2000:9). Especially among northern development organisations, 'partnership' and 'network' have become popular catchwords, and are commonly used by development organisations, such as in the following example:

"Partnerships lie at the core of how Oxfam understands the world and our role in working for change."

(Oxfam, 2012)

Critics claim that this type of language is a "polite myth", which is often "inappropriately applied, masking relationships which would be better described using other terms" (Robinson et al., 2000:10). Generally, the jargon of 'co-operation' suggests that development agents and organisations should be working together more closely and with a "common purpose" (Robinson et al., 2000:13). However, this type of vocabulary can be interpreted and practiced in numerous ways, and Robinson et al. (2000:15) argue that it is rarely clear what development agencies actually mean by words like 'partnership', in what type of contexts and circumstances 'co-operation' is likely to be efficient, and how such inter-organisational relationships can be successfully implemented and managed.

In *Managing Development* (2000) John Harriss takes up this theme. He understands 'co-operation' as a form of organisation in which the control of the relationships involved depends on the existence of trust. Further, it entails 'self-organisation' as opposed to hierarchy, and the pursuit of a common goal (Harris, 2000:226). While co-operation *can* be established by the imposition of authority, in the development sector, 'co-operation' generally refers to people working together for their mutual benefit, on a voluntary basis (Harris, 2000:226).

The term 'partnership' has come to refer to almost any kind of relationship

between individuals or groups. Harriss has compared various definitions of 'partnership' and has found that it is generally depicted as a 'condition of mutual dependency' as well as 'some joint working.. towards a common goal', and based on 'self-organisation' and a 'set of ground rules' (Harriss, 2000:228).

'Network' is another common concept in the language of development. Many forms of organisations involve networks of relationships (Harriss, 2000:229) between actors who may for instance be involved in delivering certain services. Harriss has found that networks tend to have 'a division of labour', where work is shared between players, thus making participants in a network dependent on each other. Co-ordination of such work then takes place through 'interaction among actors in the network' (Harriss 2000:229), and there can be 'gains to be had by the pooling of resources'. Hence, networks also depend upon the existence of trust. Further, a critical reason for the increasing manifestation of forms of organisation that involve a strong element of co-operation is 'the value of exchange of commodities whose value is not easily measured', such as knowledge and skills (Harris, 2000:230). Such 'non-financial' resources are essential, especially for small non-profit organisations with limited capacities. Yet, even if the various players involved in development may aim to collaborate in order to reach their common goals, tensions can develop between organisations, donors and the state, as these stakeholders may also *compete* with each other.

"Us against them"

The theory and practice of public management is increasingly acknowledging the significance of *competition*, as service provision is very much shaped by market-like considerations such as efficiency, cost-saving, and rivalry (Robinson et al. 2000:89). Robinson et al. (2000) have chosen to define competition very broadly as "rivalry between two or more actors over a limited resources or reward". Such rivalry can take place in various different contexts (Robinson et al., 2000:92). They distinguish between different roles that may be performed in competitive processes. There are competitors, referees (who enforce the rule), judges (who rank the competitors) and prize donors (who determine the rewards for

success). Where there are effective referees, competition follows accepted rules, and is therefore to some degree “predictable and controllable” (Robinson et al. 2000:92). Some competitions only require competitors and referees, if the ranking of the competitors and means of determining the reward for success are fully regulated within the competitive process. In tender-competition in the public sector, for instance, the judge role is required, although the judge and referee role may be combined in practice (Robinson et al., 2000:93).

When considering competition, it must be recognised that competition does not only take place over various financial matters, but also over competent staff, good projects and ideas, and it can take place between non-governmental organisations (NGOs), government departments, regional administrations, and commercial organisations (Robinson et al., 2000:137). The type of competition most relevant for this thesis is NGO competition for funding. Robinson et al. also touch upon this type of competition, explaining that in many developing countries, NGOs are ‘replacing the state’, increasingly performing roles often thought to be the responsibility of the government: education, health care, and agricultural extension (Robinson et al., 2000:98). Such NGOs are publicly funded, either by national governments, such as is commonly the case in South Africa, or through official and unofficial aid agencies. Funders have to make some kind of conscious choice between (a) funding NGOs rather than state agencies, or (b) one NGO rather than another, which may obviously trigger inter-organisational competition, whether this is implicit or explicit (Robinson et al., 2000:98). They suggest that it is mainly implicit and informal. NGOs tend to embrace the values of co-operation and complementarity, and are rarely willing to enter into explicit competition for contracts. The authors also claim that NGOs are typically free of strong pressures to “practice efficient and transparent corporate governance”, and that collective self-regulation is uncommon. In other words, NPOs generally function rather differently compared a for-profit business, for example, partly as they are not expected to deliver a profit. Overall, Robinson et al. feel that the competition among NGOs is generally “weak and not very effective”. Ultimately, competition is about achieving goals, and the underlying rationale for competition is that it should lead to an efficient allocation of resources. Hence,

Robinson et al. assert that rules-based competition may in fact lead to more effective outcomes, and it may even encourage more constructive inter-organisational engagement (Robinson et al., 2000:138). For instance, competition could lead to improved organisational performance – organisations may “try a little harder”, attempt to reallocate resources available to improve overall performance, or even introduce a different technology to deal with problems (Robinson et al., 2000:102).

However, costs of competition are also evaluated. Competition may lead to wasting of resources (for instance when an NGO’s staff invests valuable time in competition for scarce resources), the distortion of rules (when corruption becomes involved), and the undermining of trust and co-operation. Robinson et al. explain that competition can stimulate jealousies and intensify bad relations between people, hence reducing the opportunities for future co-operation. Competition may also make an organisation reluctant to share ideas and ‘best practice’ models with other organisations if it is anticipated that the two organisations will become competitors (for funding, for example) (Robinson et al., 2000:105). Further, competition can “induce uncertainty where certainty is valuable” – if funding is very uncertain, for instance, organisations may not feel sufficiently secure to invest in developing their programmes and projects (Robinson et al., 2000:105).

Indeed, Robinson et al. admit that so called ‘tender-competition’ (when governments issue invitations to other agencies to bid to provide specific services) may lead to short-term self-interested behaviour in the public service, the demoralisation of public servants, high transaction costs, and an obsession with measurable performance indicators rather than underlying purposes (Robinson et al., 2000:106). NPOs may for example begin to prioritise the attainment of statistical ‘target figures’ set by the government over ensuring the delivery of high quality services. However, the extent to which such fears will be realised depends on local circumstances, the performance of the public service before the introduction of competition, and the degree of learning from experience (Robinson et al., 2000:106). Robinson et al. conclude that the useful

kinds of inter-organisational competition in the public sector of poor countries need to be developed, improved and extended, while the 'unruly' kinds must be suppressed (Robinson et al., 2000:112). Competition may be advantageous for beneficiaries if it motivates service providers such as NPOs to continuously improve their programmes holistically, ensuring that they are 'worthy' to receive the funding that they are competing for. However, 'unruly' competition can be counterproductive, for instance when organisations end up placing more energy on 'pleasing' funders, whose requirements may or may not be realistic and adapted for the situation in question, than acting in the best interest of the vulnerable groups that they are supporting.

Most importantly, no form of inter-organisational competition is a substitute for public sector management 'basics'. Governmental systems must be characterised by discipline, honesty, accountability, predictability, and coherence. As Robinson et al. (2000:113) realise, these are often absent in many developing economies. Establishing such basics may involve reducing inter-organisational competition, not extending it. Instead, more *incentives* may need to be introduced.

Connecting the dots

Hewitt and Robinson (2000:302) use the expression 'a drop in the ocean' to describe how many organisations feel when confronted with other organisations involved in their particular field of work. Consequently, many actors may wonder how they as an organisation can have any meaningful impact in the sector in which they are involved. Unquestionably, one actor or organisation alone is unlikely to 'change the world', hence co-operation is crucial. Accordingly, throughout *'Managing Development'* Robinson et al. convey that although building inter-organisational relationships is by no means without challenges, such connections *can* be successful and contribute to more accommodating and effective environments. As mentioned above, partnerships are indeed being promoted by large numbers of corporations, governments, international agencies and NGOs as the most effective way of working towards the achievement of sustainable social and economic development (Rein & Stott, 2009:79). Rein and Stott argue that the potential value of partnerships lies in

their ability to deliver substantial improvements in social services and the opportunities they can give to relatively weak or disadvantaged sections of the community. Also, partnerships can draw attention to a community's concerns and problems and build dialogues with other groups and institutions that may offer complementary objectives and resources. Partnerships may also provide models of collaboration that can encourage other groups to 'find a voice' and to seek innovative ways of working together to support their own (and mutual) development (Rein and Stott, 2009:86).

However, 'partnership' is not some kind of "magic bullet" capable of providing solutions to diverse development problems (Rein & Stott, 2009:80) and there is no 'one-size-fits-all' technique to building inter-organisational relationships, as authors such as Robinson et al. (2000) and Rein and Stott (2009) stress. What has proven effective in one context may be beneficial both as a learning resource and as an inspiration. Yet it cannot necessarily be transferred directly, in the same form, to a new context, without a thorough and locally informed analysis of the new environment (Rein & Scott, 2009:86). Hewitt and Robinson (2000) advise organisations to "gain an appreciation of other organisations" in order to understand the non-cash resource contributions that each part might make to a relationship. Understanding one's own and others' organisations is the important first step towards identifying and devising action points for building inter-organisational relationships, and also to plan and resource the situation at hand, in order to get the most out of partnerships with other organisations (Hewitt & Robinson, 2000:310).

Robinson et al. (2000:106) caution that actors involved in social development must not lose sight of the "underlying purpose" of development partnerships – serving and empowering communities and citizens in need and contributing to sustainable livelihoods. Co-ordinated actions and actors who are working together are obviously likely to be more effective than fragmented attempts by various disconnected individual organisations. Even in a context like South Africa, where the state is 'developmental' and takes a "leading role in social development" (Knijn & Patel, 2012:598), state departments are nonetheless

dependent on civil society organisations such as NGOs with their presumed unique capacities to act as partners in order to reach the objective of a more equal and prosperous South Africa.

Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated South Africa as a state that aims to be developmental and has created a pluralist approach to development, with NPOs in the role of core service providers. Children present a particularly vulnerable group that is in need of various social welfare services, both aimed at their protection and their ability to develop the *resilience* to become independent adults. However, although children have a constitutional right to social services, to alternative care, and to be protected from abuse and neglect, such services are weak. Currently, NPOs contracted by the government are the main suppliers of support for children, and the dynamic that has hence been created between the state and civil society is a complex one. The '3C' framework presented by Robinson et al. offers one way of understanding such relationships and can form a basis for improving such inter-organisational development cooperation.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to investigate how NPOs that provide after-school care in two Cape Town townships perceive the DSD's involvement in the co-ordination and funding of these services, and also to examine whether and how NPOs working in the same communities collaborate with each other. This chapter will present my research design, the context in which my study takes place, the research method used, the method of analysis, as well as discuss various considerations.

Research design

This research was conducted as a case study based on qualitative methods in an effort to explore and describe the inter-organisational relationships of NPOs that offer services to vulnerable children in two Cape Town townships. The phenomenon that is investigated in this research is inter-organisational relationships among social service providers, more specifically a group of selected NPOs supporting vulnerable children and the DSD in its function as a funder and legally responsible actor. The research questions for this thesis have emerged from observations of one such NPO that provides after-school care to vulnerable children. There appeared to be no efficient co-ordination of such services in the communities where this NPO is active, and the organisation does not engage in regular co-operation with other NPOs in the same sector. This lack of collaboration may be explained by NPOs' preoccupation with financial struggles, and potential competition for government funding among such NPOs. In order to increase the understanding of how such NPOs experience the role of the government in this pluralistic service environment and if the NPOs in these communities generally do co-operate with each other at all, a qualitative study of eight NPOs in the Cape Town townships of Philippi and Mfuleni was initiated.

Through this thesis I am to answer two primary research questions:

1. What support do NPOs that are providing after-school care for vulnerable children receive, or feel that they should receive, from the government to allow them to fulfil their mandates?
2. Do these NPOs engage in inter-organisational relationships with each other?

Case study framework

According to Yin (1984:23) a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. The boundaries between phenomenon and context are not necessarily clearly evident. Patton (1987:19) writes that case studies become particularly useful where one needs to understand some particular problem or situation in great depth, and where one can identify cases that are rich in information, so that much can be learned from just a few examples of the phenomenon.

Studying a few NPOs working in the same communities enables a detailed understanding of the issue at hand. In addition, since the particular case being studied is “not yet understood”, it is valuable to build an in-depth understanding of its “important features” (Punch, 2005:149). Through such a case study the researcher is able to develop a coherent image of the experiences and expectations of NPO staff regarding government support, as well as the ways in which these NPOs interact with each other. The NPOs studied for the purposes of this thesis are not identical. However, their common concern to provide services for vulnerable children means that they share many of the same challenges. Further, the townships of Philippi and Mfuleni are typical low-income communities in Cape Town. Thus it is likely that the NPOs in other, similar, communities function comparably, and experience similar challenges. The questions that this case study raises, then, may be useful starting points for

research into similar experiences elsewhere in the country.

This case study will be focusing on the following NPOs that are active in Philippi and Mfuleni, respectively: *Afrika Tikkun*, an International NPO that is partly funded by the DSD, *Yabonga*, a Cape Town NPO, partly funded by the DSD, *Wola Nani*, a Cape Town NGO partly funded by the DSD, *Sizakuyenza*, a Cape Town NGO partly funded by the DSD, *Bridges of Hope*, an International Christian NGO that relies on overseas funding, *Power Child*, a German NGO that is funded by overseas donors, *iThemba Labantu*, a Church based Cape Town NGO who receives funding from overseas, and *Rainbow Dreams Trust*, a Cape Town NGO that relies on overseas donors and private South African funders.

The table on the following pages provides a comprehensive overview of the examined NPOs. The table illuminates *the type of organisation, sources of funding, number of children served, the target criteria, the recruitment of children, the services and activities that the NPO provides, available support provided to youth above 18 years, the organisation's aim for the after-school programme, as well as the type of 'tracking system' that the NPO has in place.* Further it shows whether the NPO is currently co-operating with other *NPOs, Social Services, and schools.* While valuable data regarding these additional themes emerged from the interviews, the scope of this thesis does not allow for any closer analysis around most of these issues. Nonetheless, some of these matters would provide interesting topics for further research, for example the NPOs' 'tracking systems', which has implications for the monitoring and evaluation (or lack thereof) that these NPOs engage in.

	Type of organisation	Funding	Number of children	Criteria	Recruitment
Sizakuyenza	Cape Town NGO (Philippi)	Overseas funder Department of Social Development (for psychosocial support programme)	<i>Psychosocial support:</i> 50 children <i>'Informal' OVC:</i> 15 community mothers taking care of 2 child-headed households each	<i>Psychosocial support:</i> children who have lost a parent (or any other family member)	Referrals from community members
Wola Nani	Cape Town NGO (Philippi & Mfuleni)	Department of Social Development (<i>main funder</i>) South African Lottery	550 children (total for Philippi and Mfuleni) 6-18 years	any vulnerable child in the community (with focus on children affected by HIV/AIDS)	Through caregivers who attend NPO's support groups (referred by clinics) & word of mouth
Yabonga	Cape Town NPO (Mfuleni)	Department of Social Development South African corporates 50% international funders	50 children 6-25 years	school-going children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS (criteria to become more inclusive)	Through caregivers who attend NPO's support groups (referred by clinics), and referral from other clients and community stakeholders
Artika Tikkun	International NGO (Mfuleni)	Government Departments (ca. 40%) S.A. foundations, trusts, corporates	600 children 2-25 years	any child in the targeted community	Advertisement in the community, referrals through home based carers & word of mouth

Services	Youth programme	Aims	Tracking system	Co-operation NPOs	Co-operation social services	Co-operation schools
<p><i>Psychosocial support:</i> counselling, support in grieving process</p> <p><i>'Informal OVC':</i> women in the community provide children in child-headed households with nutritional and emotional support through visits, making sure that children attend school</p> <p>Youth: arts, music, drama</p>	<p>Youth programmes (Nyanda Network)</p>	<p><i>Psychosocial support:</i> to facilitate children's grieving process</p> <p><i>'Informal' OVC:</i> create a 'home away from home' for children living in child-headed households, provide nutritional and emotional support</p>	<p>Computerised database</p>	<p>No regular contact</p>	<p>Attempts to contact Social Services</p>	<p>Close co-operation with schools</p>
<p>nutritional and psychosocial support, life skills, HIV/AIDS education, counselling, homework support, adherence camps for HIV-positive children</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>To move children from vulnerability to resilience</p>	<p>Files</p>	<p>Some co-operation with <i>Afrika Tikuru & Yabonga</i> (no contact with <i>Philippi NPOs</i>)</p>	<p>Some contact with Social Services</p>	<p>Some contact with teachers</p>
<p>nutritional and psychosocial support, counselling, play therapy, life skills, soccer</p>	<p>Out-of-school youth programme</p>	<p>To create a space of trust for the children and ensure that youth complete school, and to create healthy families and communities</p>	<p>Files</p>	<p>Networking relationships with several other NPOs</p>	<p>Some contact with Social Services</p>	<p>Close contact with teachers</p>
<p>life skills, arts and culture, computer centres, libraries, learning support, sports, skills development</p>	<p>Youth development programme</p>	<p>To empower communities to develop new generations of productive citizens by educating and supporting children and youth who face various socio-economic challenges</p>	<p>Computerised data collection system</p>	<p>Partnering with various other NPOs in Mfuleni</p>	<p>Referral of statutory cases to Social Services</p>	<p>Contact teachers at local schools</p>

	Type of organisation	Funding	Number of children	Criteria	Recruitment
Rainbow Dreams Trust	Cape Town NGO (Philippi)	Overseas funding Private S. A. funders	30 children 7-18 years	any child in the targeted community (willing to comply with club rules)	Initially through local schools, now through word of mouth
Themba Labantu	Church based Cape Town NGO (Philippi)	Overseas funding	50 children 8-18 years	any child in the targeted community	Local schools & word of mouth
Power Child	German NGO (Mthleni)	Overseas companies, charities, churches, private donors	250 children (overall, including sports programmes) 6-25 years	any child in the targeted community	Originally children of community members working at the NPO's Community Centre (income generation), currently word of mouth
Bridges of Hope	International Christian NGO (Philippi)	American churches	50 children 6-18 years	mainly school-going maternal orphans	Through home visits in community, referrals by teachers & word of mouth

Services	Youth programme	Aims	Tracking system	Co-operation NPOs	Co-operation social services	Co-operation schools
nutritional support, homework support, sports, life skills, drama, choir	Older youth to be involved as 'assistant leaders'	To enable children to have hopes and dreams for the future, lead them onto the right path, and instill a sense of pride in the children	Folder system	No	No	Contact with teachers
arts, sports, life skills, environmental education	No	Shape young people to be able to make good choices, bring back young people onto the right track, empower them to escape poverty and to become independent adults	Files	Some co-operation with <i>Afrika Tikkuu, Yabonga, and Grassroots</i>	Some contact with Social Services	Regular contact with schools
arts, sports, education, skills development, family support	Youth programme	Attract children away from the street, provide children with emotional stability, to enable them to grow up healthy, as well as give them proper education	Folder system	Some co-operation with <i>Sizakuyenza and Beautiful Gate (Philippi)</i>	No	Drama programme in two local schools, contact with teachers and principals
training in computers, English literacy, life skills, Discipleship, support to caregivers and nutritional support	Mentorated youth volunteer as facilitators in OVC programme	To empower children to cope with their life situation, become independent adults, and to acquire an education	Attendance register	No	No	Some contact with teachers

Generalisation of the findings is not the primary objective, although patterns that are revealed may indicate how NPOs in the South African context typically participate in inter-organisational relationships. Hence, some “concepts or propositions for further testing” may very well be applicable on a larger scale, as expressed by Punch (2005:148), especially as certain patterns emerge that correspond with the theoretical background of the thesis.

While I had developed certain ‘hunches’ about the nature of inter-organisational relationships during my time at *Wola Nani* I was limited to the experiences and opinions of only one NPO. Any previous knowledge regarding inter-organisational relationships was solely based on casual conversations with the organisation’s OVC programme manager and the child carers in Philippi and Mfuleni. Hence it was subsequent literature research that established the ‘3Cs’ framework of Robinson, Hewitt and Harriss (2000) as the theoretical grounding of the study, and, over time, valuable knowledge regarding vulnerability, South African social service policies and the role of NPOs was collected.

While the research questions do not concern the challenges of vulnerable children per se, it is nonetheless important to consider the discourse on ‘vulnerability’ for the purpose of this thesis. As can be seen among the studied NPOs, such organisations are targeting various types of ‘vulnerable’ children. Some NPOs support HIV/AIDS orphans only, while others perceive *all* children as vulnerable. This heterogeneous service environment has implications for funding as well as policy development, as it may be more difficult to co-ordinate such services if the service providers are in disagreement on what type of children should be supported.

Research sites

The map below depicts the larger Cape Town area, where the field research was carried out.

Larger Cape Town area:



Source: City of Cape Town (<http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/Housing/Pages/Projects.aspx>)

The following brief profiles of the two communities that host the eight NPOs examined for this thesis are based on the 2001 South African Census, as the 2011 Census has not yet been released:

Philippi

Philippi is mainly an informal settlement established in 1974. The area has witnessed several phases of rapid population growth, with a large number of people from other townships moving into the area over the years. In 2001, Philippi had approximately 110,000 inhabitants. Residents are mainly black Africans (94%). Xhosa is the predominant language (91%), followed by Afrikaans (5%) and other African languages (2%). Over 80% of Philippi's households rely on an income of between R0-19,200/year (including social grants), and almost 60% of the 'economically active' population was unemployed in 2001. Approximately 35% of this community's residents are children and

young people under 18, and 40% are between 18 and 34 years old.

Mfuleni

Mfuleni is a relatively new township. In the late 1990's fires and flooding in neighbouring townships forced many people to re-locate to the area, so that the township had become home to around 25,000 people in 2001. Residents are predominantly black Africans (91%), and there is also a considerable coloured population. Xhosa is the most prevalent language (84%), followed by Afrikaans (9%) and English (2%). Over 75% of Mfuleni's households rely on an income of between R0-19,200/year (including social grants), and over 50% of the community was unemployed in 2001. Around 35% of Mfuleni's population is younger than 18 years, and 40% of residents are between 18 and 34 years old.

Research Methods

Data collection

Once my research questions had been established, I had to decide which organisations and what type of informants I was going to include in the case study. It was clear from the beginning that I did not want to merely focus on managers, but I was interested in the perceptions of NPO staff members who spend time in the townships on a daily basis, where the services are offered. Six out of the eight NPOs are represented by one staff member, respectively. Usually the NPO's programme co-ordinator who works on site, i.e. directly in the townships, was approached, as such employees are normally knowledgeable both regarding the programme as well as the administrative side of the NPO. However, when interviewing the two child carers at *Wola Nani* (who insisted on being interviewed together), certain information gaps emerged, especially regarding funding, so that an additional interview with the OVC programme manager was conducted. For similar reasons, the social worker at *Yabonga* was included in the study. She was able to provide valuable information regarding the organisation's funding, but also share her professional expertise as a social worker.

The interview with the key informant from the Children's Institute was helpful since she provided me with an overview of social services that are available for children and emphasised the responsibility of the government. The primary school teacher and high school principal were included in the study since NPOs strongly indicated the importance of schools as partners. While these interviews proved to be very fruitful, the scope of this thesis does not allow for an elaboration of the schools' role in supporting vulnerable children and referring them to Social Services or NPOs such as the ones studied. Nonetheless, these educators' input was very valuable as they increased my understanding of the 'big picture' and also emphasised the severity of many children's situations in areas like Philippi.

I had been surprised to learn that the child carers at *Wola Nani* were only able to pinpoint one or two other after-school programmes, even though they work 'on the ground' in these communities. Hence I intended to find out for myself how easily NPOs that run after-school care can be located. With the exception of *Wola Nani* that I was interning for, and *Yabonga* that was originally approached by e-mail, the selected NPOs were identified by 'word-of-mouth' and independent exploration. As a first step I wanted to study organisations that interact with *Wola Nani* on some level. Consequently, two of the NPOs were pointed out by *Wola Nani's* child carers. Throughout my internship I had built a relationship based on trust and friendship with the child carers at this organisation, which turned out to be helpful for my research. Not only were these women able to assist me regarding the locations of two of the NPOs and the two schools that were included in the study, but their company at the initial meetings with NPO staff proved to be advantageous. The first two (rather small) NPOs that I contacted accompanied by the carers were surprised to be approached by a stranger for the purpose of academic research. Thus the company of the women from *Wola Nani*, who are Xhosa and live in Philippi themselves, facilitated this contact by explaining the reason for our visit in their mother tongue and building preliminary 'rapport' with my potential interviewees. Although I can only speculate, the presence of the employees from *Wola Nani* may have had a positive impact on the informants' attitude towards the interviews that were

subsequently scheduled. Another effect of these women's involvement in my research was the contact that was consequently established between them and *Bridges of Hope*. This NPO's 'OVC co-ordinator' had never communicated with *Wola Nani* or any other OVC organisation before, and she was very eager to build a relationship with the *Wola Nani* carers.

The remaining NPOs were identified through 'hints' from the interviewees, such as "I think there is one [an OVC organisation] by those robots". It was not easy and took a lot of time to locate other NPOs. Nonetheless, the initial positive experiences with *Bridges of Hope*, facilitated by the carers, had boosted my confidence as a researcher, so that a friendly contact with the remaining NPOs was rather easily established once I had discovered their facilities.

Once initial contact with an NPO had been developed, a time for the interview was arranged. Although the majority of the interviewees were very co-operative, so that I was able to conduct the interviews as planned, on a few occasions the time for the interview had to be re-scheduled at short-notice. Other obstacles included an informant who was no longer available once I had arrived to conduct the interview, and another interviewee who was suddenly hospitalised. Such complications are to be expected when doing empirical social research, especially when one is dealing with people who have demanding occupations such as NPO staff and teachers. Also, the informants were aware that the NPOs were not to expect an immediate benefit from their participation in this study, so that taking time for such an interview was most likely not a priority for the interviewees who often seemed overwhelmed by their work load. Ultimately, such incidents placed a higher demand on my perseverance. One high school principal cancelled our meeting twice. He was very talkative and eager to discuss various topics related to vulnerable children once the interview was finally conducted, which indicates that lack of time rather than lack of interest was the reason for the initial delay.

Interviews

Qualitative studies are commonly based on various types of interviews. As Punch (2005) highlights, the interview is a good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality, and it is one of the most powerful ways that we have of understanding others. The aim of this thesis is to *understand* the inter-organisational relationships that exist between NPOs as well as between NPOs and the DSD, based on how NPO staff *perceive* and give meaning to such interactions. Consequently, the individual face-to-face interview was the choice of research tool. The data for this research was collected by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews. This type of interview is based on a standardised interview guide, according to an outline of topics to be covered, but it allows for flexibility regarding the sequence of the questions to be asked. Further, as Bryman (2008:438) explains, the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply to the questions. It also enables the researcher to ask additional questions, based on issues that surface during the interview and what the participant views as important.

Construction of interview guides

While a qualitative interview should ideally resemble a regular conversation, it needs to have a specific purpose. The research questions and the theoretical grounding of the research laid the foundation for the selection of topics to be addressed during the interviews. Although an interview guide for a semi-structured interview should not be too 'structured' or the questions too specific (Bryman, 2008:442), the topics and subsequent questions had to be carefully considered to ensure that no important angles were left out. The order of questions also required some serious thought, to allow for the interviews to flow reasonably well (Bryman, 2008:442). It was also important to adapt the language employed to the people who were being interviewed. Not all of the interviewees have English as their first language, and many of them have not obtained a higher education, so that I avoided the use of unnecessarily complicated or academic language. The questions were also constructed in a way that would *lead* the participant as little as possible (Bryman, 2008:442).

Separate interview guides were prepared for NPO staff and the key informant, and the primary school teacher and the high school principal. The NPO interview guide contains a few general questions regarding the interviewee's organisation, in order to build rapport with the informant, and also to develop a general understanding of the NPO at hand. The first topic relevant to the focus of this thesis concerns the NPO's *beneficiaries*, which was to enable an overview of what type of children attend the NPO's after-school programme, how these beneficiaries get in touch with the organisation, and the interviewee's estimation of the need for after-school care in the community. Next, the topic of *co-operation* was addressed, inquiring about the informant's awareness of other organisations in the area, whether the informant's NPO communicates with such organisations and how they feel about such inter-organisational co-operation. *Competition* was also carefully touched upon in this context. Thereafter, questions regarding *co-ordination* were integrated, to find out what type of support that the NPO receives from the DSD and what role that the informant believes that the DSD should assume with regards to vulnerable children. Lastly, the informant was encouraged to account for the NPO's main challenges, and to make recommendations regarding the improvement of services for vulnerable children.

The key informant from the UCT Children's Institute was asked general questions regarding services for vulnerable children, to develop an overview of the situation in Cape Town. Next, the '3Cs' were addressed, in order to explore how an expert in the field perceives the government's contracting of social services to NPOs, the general level of co-operation that takes place between NPOs, the benefits of such collaboration, and the potential for (constructive as well as negative) competition between contracted service providers. It was helpful that the key informant interview took place after all the NPOs had been interviewed. The interview guide that had been prepared for this informant was modified according to questions that had emerged during the interviews with NPO staff, and issues that needed clarification from a policy expert.

The interview guides for the teacher and the principal also concerned care for

vulnerable children, but with a focus on the perspective of the schools. Since schools are central institutions in the communities that encounter vulnerable children on a daily basis (and many NPOs rely on schools for assistance), I was interested in how a school typically approaches such children and youth, what type of routines that a school has in place to intervene when necessary, and if they ever contact local NPOs for support. Further, the educators were asked to describe the challenges that the schools in underprivileged areas face, and how they feel that assistance for vulnerable children could be improved.

Conducting interviews

For the convenience of the interviewees, the interviews were always scheduled to take place at the interviewee's place of work. Hence, with the exception of the Children's Institute informant, the social worker at *Yabonga* and the programme manager at *Wola Nani*, who were interviewed at their offices in the Southern Suburbs, all the interviews took place in either Philippi or Mfuleni. Before the beginning of the interview, the interviewee was briefed regarding the purpose of the study, as well as his / her right to withdraw from the study at any time, and the option to remain anonymous. Each informant was provided with a consent form that was read and signed. As I was only previously familiar with the interviewees from *Wola Nani* it was essential to 'build rapport' with the informants before the interview proceeded to questions concerning the focus of this thesis. This was accomplished by the rather general questions that were asked in the beginning, about the NPO in question, and regarding the informant's role in the organisation. Not only was such information important to enable an understanding of the organisation at hand, but it showed the interviewee that I was genuinely interested in learning about his / her work. While some of the interviewees were somewhat hesitant in the beginning, they appeared to relax while speaking about their day-to-day practices, so that it felt natural to move on to issues that were specifically relevant for this thesis.

While the interviews largely followed the structure of the interview guide to make sure that all the topics were covered, the order of the questions were

adapted to fit the flow of the individual interviews, to make them feel as 'conversational' as possible. In-between answers and questions, a brief response was provided by the researcher, and at times follow-up questions were asked. Such an approach that avoids a feeling of being 'interrogated' enables the informant to feel comfortable, which may be conducive to the building of trust between the researcher and the informant. Further it allows the informant to touch upon issues that the researcher may not have previously thought of and that go beyond the interview guide (Bryman, 2008:438). Yet, such an unstructured approach to interviewing may increase the risk of leading the interviewee (Bryman, 2008:442). I as the researcher had to be careful when responding to the interviewee's answers, as not to bias the informant in any direction, while still expressing interest in what he or she was saying. Also, some informants had trouble understanding some of the questions, so that they had to be spontaneously rephrased. Even if the original question was not leading, such rephrasing may risk influencing the interviewee positively or negatively. As a researcher I already had certain ideas and expectations regarding the '3Cs', based on the literature review, and hence I had to be very careful not to make my informants feel that a certain answer was expected of them. Overall I feel that I successfully managed to avoid any major preconceptions of this kind.

A few of the interviewees were contacted again a few weeks after the interview to clarify certain matters, and these respondents were very helpful. All the interviews were recorded using a voice recorder, and fully transcribed by the researcher. Although large parts of the interviews turned out not to be directly relevant to the research questions (while nonetheless often interesting), it was essential to transcribe the entire interviews. At times such presumable unrelated sections provided significant references to co-operation with other organisations or the attitude towards the DSD that were identified during analysis. Hence, valuable data would have been lost if the interviews had only been partially transcribed, although this process was time-consuming. Most of the interviews lasted for about 1.5 hours, somewhat longer than initially expected, mainly since the informants were very communicative and eager to share their experiences.

Participatory observations

According to Bryman (2008:401), ethnography and participant observation entail the extended involvement of the researcher in the social life of those he or she studies. While participatory observation does not *directly* contribute to the findings of this research, it has nonetheless served as a foundation for the research conducted through the qualitative interviews. My internship at *Wola Nani* allowed me to gain a unique insight into an NPO that provides services for vulnerable children, and build valuable relationships with staff members. Working closely with the programme manager and assisting staff at the NPO's office I developed an understanding for the administrative aspect of such an organisation. I also spent time at the two after-school centres, observing activities, assisting staff with evaluation processes and accompanying the carers during home visits to vulnerable children. These experiences in combination with frequent conversations with NPO staff opened my eyes to the precarious situations that many children in South Africa find themselves in, and the important function of after-school care. At the same time, the problems that such organisations face became obvious, especially in terms of financial and human resources. It was the discovery that staff at *Wola Nani* was barely familiar with other after-school programmes in the area, and the apparent lack of co-ordination of such services that motivated my choice of topic for this thesis. I became curious to examine if there are other similar organisations in the area, and if they operate in comparable ways. Further, as mentioned earlier, the support that I received from the child carers at *Wola Nani* with regards to my field research was invaluable. This relationship would not have been possible without the mutual trust that had been continuously developed throughout my internship. The fact that I was an intern for *Wola Nani* and thus familiar with after-school care and the townships that I conducted the research in, may also have positively influenced the interviewees' attitudes towards me as a researcher. I was not only an academic, but also someone who had been active 'on the ground' and was sympathetic concerning the challenges that they described during the interviews.

Method of analysis

Once all the interviews had been transcribed, the process of analysis began. First, I read through all the all the transcripts and took notes, to establish an overview of the data. As Bryman emphasises (2008:550), coding is the starting point for most forms of qualitative data analysis. First, the data was categorised according to rather general codes that were subsequently listed in an index of terms. Topics that re-appeared throughout the interviews and notable expressions and metaphors were highlighted. Later, some of these codes were divided into more specific codes, while other groups of codes were combined into one when necessary. Some sections of data were also coded in more than one way. During the interviews, many noteworthy topics that were not directly related to my research questions emerged, which were also included in the coding. However, due to the limited scope of this thesis, many of these issues are only mentioned briefly or merely recommended as topics for further research.

Once the data had been coded thoroughly, and cut and pasted into various Word documents, I began to relate the codes more closely to my theoretical foundation. Brief memos were written concerning prominent themes. As Bryman (2008:547) stresses, memos can help researchers to crystallise ideas and not lose track of their thinking on various topics. Various patterns were discovered in the various themes, and I was also searching the data for alternative and contradictory views. The findings were subsequently compared to and discussed according to the theoretical framework as well as relevant literature.

Considerations

Scope

Transferability represents a problem for qualitative researchers due to the tendency to employ case studies and small samples (Bryman, 2008:377). Accordingly, this research is mainly based on the experiences and opinions of a few selected NPOs. NPOs rendering services for vulnerable children in other Cape Town townships or other parts of South Africa may or may not share their

views. Yet, recommendations drawn from this study's finding *could* also apply to other social service contexts in South Africa, especially considering indications from the literature. This thesis should also generate questions that other researchers conducting similar studies may want to investigate.

Limitations

One limitation to this study is the 'one-sided' approach to the topic. Although the interviews were of an in-depth nature, mainly NPOs were examined regarding the co-ordination of services and the co-operation among service providers. A study of a larger scope could include representatives from the DSD, social workers from Social Services, more teachers and principals, as well as citizens in the communities at large, through community leaders. Creating such a holistic overview of the situation was not the aim of this thesis, but would be an important development of it.

The fact that the findings rely on the accounts of individuals is a further restriction, as the data merely expresses the world as seen by the interviewees. They interviewees may themselves be misinformed, biased, or perhaps exaggerate certain matters and leave out others with a certain agenda in mind. Especially considering the financial difficulties that many NPOs find themselves in, informants may have been tempted to overstate the situation, perhaps hoping that this study will be able to influence future funding policies. Also, the NPOs' descriptions of the current funding situation, for instance, correspond with Patel's (2012) conclusions concerning the South African NPO sector and social welfare policies.

Ethical considerations

Social research is about collecting data from people, and about people, and hence it involves ethical issues (Punch 2005:276). In this study, the first ethical issue that emerged was making use of the assistance of NPO child carers to find other NPOs. Although the programme manager at *Wola Nani* gave me permission to do so, and the carers themselves were glad to help me, I was aware that the carers may expect some kind of compensation for their trouble, or that they were

hoping that their programme would benefit from my research in some way. To avoid this, I carefully explained to them what I was interested in and why. Further, I treated the women to lunch at a township restaurant to show my appreciation.

The main ethical predicament that I encountered during this research was the matter of anonymity. The consent form that all the informants were asked to sign allowed the interviewees to decide whether they wanted to remain anonymous. All informants except for two were willing to let me disclose their names. Yet, as my research progressed, I realised that NPOs could potentially make themselves and their organisation vulnerable, especially when speaking about sensitive issues such as funding or the lack of support from the DSD. While many informants were very hesitant to openly criticise the government, others were rather outspoken regarding their dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs. After careful consideration I decided to reveal the names of the NPOs after all (as they had all agreed with), but to use pseudonyms for the informants themselves. By disclosing the names of the NPOs the research becomes more lively and representative. Further, since NPO staff from various organisations raise similar issues, and the accounts of the NPOs very much corresponds with facts presented by the Children's Institute informant as well as the literature (Patel, 2012, Budlender & Proudlock, 2010), the NPOs are not revealing any 'new' criticism, but merely confirming challenges that appear to be rather common in the NPO sector in general. Nonetheless, I had to be aware of the harm that the presentation of my data could potentially do. For example, I was rather selective regarding the quotes that I chose to include in the findings chapter of this thesis, in order not to expose any organisation to unnecessary condemnation from funders, without excluding significant outcomes. Notwithstanding, it is important to create spaces where criticism can be expressed regarding policies or systems that could be improved. This requires the preparedness and courage of actors involved in a particular sector to open up and truthfully convey their experiences and opinions, even it entails criticising 'authorities'. In a democratic state, this should not only be possible but also desirable.

Significance

As mentioned above, children belong to the most vulnerable groups in society. Especially when they grow up in communities that are shaped by unemployment and poverty, children are often in need of support that their caregivers cannot offer them. After-school programmes may have the potential to improve the lives of such children, by providing a 'second home' (as several informants describe their centres) with nutritional, educational and psychosocial support.

Social services that are provided to vulnerable children need to be properly funded and co-ordinated in order to avoid fragmentation and ensure maximum impact. Ultimately, all actors involved should be aiming to limit the number of vulnerable children who fall 'through the cracks' of the system. As O'Grady et al. (2008) have concluded, there is still insufficient documentation of the strategies deployed to support orphans and vulnerable children, despite the magnitude and consequences of the growing number of orphans and vulnerable children. Especially in a country like South Africa, where the government is constitutionally responsible to provide social development initiatives, and NPOs are at the same time contracted / subsidised to *carry out* such services, it is of importance to study the inter-organisational relationships between and among such actors. The potential role of civil society needs to be examined in order to understand the responsibility of NPOs and communities to improve services and the lives of vulnerable children, despite the increasingly heavy dependence on the government.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explained and justified the methodology employed for this thesis. The following chapter will contain the presentation and analysis of data that emerged from the in-depth interviews.

Chapter 4 Findings and Analysis

Introduction

In this chapter I will present my main research findings and provide an analysis of co-ordination, co-operation and competition in the context of this case study, based on the data collected through the interviews with NPO staff. The NPOs studied for the purposes of this thesis are all supporting vulnerable children. While their objectives appear to be similar, these organisations employ different target criteria and ‘models’ for their programmes. Currently, the DSD does not provide any detailed ‘best practice’ requirements for after-school care, so that individual NPOs structure their programmes as they see fit, particularly those organisations that are not funded by the government. Thus, the NPOs’ understanding of vulnerable children and how they support them, as well as their funding situations will be examined in this chapter. Subsequently, these NPOs will be studied according to the theoretical framework created by Robinson et al. (2000).

Children and vulnerability

“Because ultimately we are all serving the community, serving children. We have a similar goal in mind.”

(Sarah*², Yabonga)

Although all the studied NPOs provide some kind of after-school care for vulnerable children and they acknowledge that they are working towards a ‘common goal’, their target criteria are very heterogeneous, varying from ‘maternal orphans only’ (*Bridges of Hope*) to ‘any child in the community’ (*Afrika Tikkun*). Three organisations primarily focus on children that are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, although other vulnerable children are also considered to some extent.³ As the literature has revealed, ‘vulnerability’ is a disputed term, and hence it is not surprising that NPOs select children according to different

² pseudonym

³ see table above

criteria. Often, these determinants (such as ‘children affected by HIV/AIDS’) are set by the NPOs’ funders. The DSD, however, does not appear to be making strict requirements with regards to ‘what kind’ of children are supposed to be targeted, as long as the required service (such as psychosocial support) is provided. Some of the organisations claimed to have become less rigid in their selection process over time. The social worker at *Yabonga* demonstrates the complexity of ‘vulnerability’:

We are also being a little bit more relaxed around that criteria now. There are some [other] children who are actually worse off than a child who’s living with HIV, who is living with a family that is completely dysfunctional, there is no food, there is nothing at home, whereas, yah, we do have children living with HIV who have parents who are working, and who are.. So we are looking a little bit more at that ‘orphaned and vulnerable child’ as in a child who is needy in the community and who we are aware of, put it that way.

(Sarah*, Yabonga)

The NPOs also support a varying *numbers* of children, not only depending on the availability of space, but some organisations have a strict limit in terms of how many children can be part of the programme at one time. *iThemba Labantu*, for example, has chosen a ‘quality over quantity’ approach, and strictly works according to a waiting list.

We want to really empower these kids properly. Because the thing you mustn’t forget.. Whoever you invest in.. That child is going to make an impact in another person’s life. So they’re.. They’re the facilitators. I invest in one person properly, but it means, if they are going to assist their siblings with their homework, they’re hopefully going to be better parents, more responsible parents, to train another generation, you know. They’re going to have a proper job, therefore they’re going to contribute to the economy of South Africa, be sustainable, not depending on social grants. We want to get them out of poverty. We don’t believe, you know.. We don’t want to make poverty a bit nicer. People need to get out of it.

(Victoria*, iThemba Labantu)

This strong statement by the organisation’s youth programme co-ordinator

demonstrates that the NPO is aware of its financial (and physical) limitations, and realises the importance of making a *sustainable* impact on the children that are fortunate enough to be part of their programme. *Rainbow Dreams* shares this philosophy. Other NPOs are more liberal in terms of numbers, and *Wola Nani* even has a policy of “not turning any child away”, resulting in rather high attendance rates.

Sizakuyenza stands out from the other organisations as it not only runs an after-school support programme for children who have lost a family member, but the NPO is also administering an informal project focused on child-headed households. Fifteen women in various communities around Cape Town care for children living in child-headed households, providing them with material as well as emotional support. While *Sizakuyenza* is not able to support these women financially, the NPO staff offers advice, provides small donations at times, and organises regular meetings at the NPO office for these ‘community mothers’.

All the organisations employ both administrative and ‘programme’ staff. While the former are in charge of managing, planning and fundraising, staff members ‘on the ground’ run the actual programmes for vulnerable children in the townships. Many of the NPOs can only afford to compensate these child carers with a ‘stipend’ for their efforts. Further, the after-school programmes vary in size and various other features⁴. Four NPOs have their own properties where they run their various programmes, while two of them are mainly operating from containers at government clinics. One organisation uses space made available by a Philippi church, and another one runs its programme in a small building which functions as a crèche during school hours.

Despite the NPOs’ differences, their accounts of the challenges faced by children in township areas and the significance of after-school care is strikingly similar.

*And basically through the areas of arts, sports and education again,
and the aim is to attract the kids from the street, from the negative*

⁴ see table in the Appendix

street influences, build up relationships with them, get their trust, give them something to do, and then while they're here for a while they will open up and we get access to the social problems happening at home. The basic idea is to give them something like a second home, because we say we can't change the community over night, there are a lot of challenges out there, but we still want them to grow up as healthy as possible.

(Victoria*, iThemba Labantu)

You know, children nowadays, especially here in Cape Town, they have many challenges. You know... they are being raped, all other issues.. but they still manage to.. they still manage to go on with life, to go to school, irrespective of what they are going through, interact with other children, irrespective of what they're going through, knowing that they do have the support.

(Precious*, Yabonga)

All the informants expressed similar sentiments regarding the role that after-school programmes play in vulnerable children's lives. Although it is clear that children in townships such as Philippi and Mfuleni face inconceivable challenges that place them at a great disadvantage compared to their middle- and upper-class peers, these NPOs aim to increase these children's *resilience* to cope with this environment and to become independent, healthy adults "despite the odds". Particularly the emotional support that these after-school programmes provide was emphasised by NPO staff members. Yet, many informants mentioned that they struggle to ensure that their programmes are sustainable and actually able to empower children to become self-reliant, as opposed to only "making poverty a bit nicer", as articulated by Victoria* above.

How do you make sure there is no dependency for those kids? Because at the end of the day, we do create that. We.. create those dependent kids and then.. The thing that you're an orphan to me, orphan is just like anyone else. If you know that you're an orphan just like anyone else, you have a parent, my parent is your parent. So, why are you feeling pity? Get up, get up, and do something! Skills development, empowering people to stand up for themselves.

(Zola*, Sizakuyenza)

As the OVC co-ordinator at *Sizakuyenza* describes, such programmes could risk

creating a certain dependency, unless programmes are able to take a holistic and 'developmental' approach to caring for these children. Ideally such after-school initiatives should not only provide nutrition and a safe place to spend the afternoon, but also actively enforce educational development and psychosocial strength that will provide children with the resilience and self-confidence to take charge of their own lives. Ultimately, it is an NPO's *capacity* that determines to what extent that this vision is realised, as even a rather resource-rich NPO like *Afrika Tikkun* admits:

So we can't do as much as we want to do, because of capacity, we need to employ staff, there are certain issues.. So it becomes.. ehh, you know, it also becomes a Rand and Dollar issue again, where it's about money. Do we have adequate funds to serve the whole of Mfuleni? No, we don't have, we don't have the adequate personnel to do the work!

(Modikwe*, Afrika Tikkun)

An after-school programme's impact is thus very much dependent on financial means that allow NPOs to employ qualified staff and provide a physical environment that is conducive to learning and personal development.

Funding

"If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys."

(Maureen*, Wola Nani)

The after-school programmes of the eight NPOs that have been selected for this study don't only vary in size and target criteria, but they currently receive funding from various different sources. Four organisations are funded / subsidised by the DSD, but to varying degrees. All of these organisations rely on other funders at the same time, such as foundations, corporations, the South African Lottery, or international funders. The four organisations that are not being funded by the government are supported by overseas churches, foundations, charities, and private donors, as well as private and corporate South African funders.

As already discussed, the South African state is thus obliged to allocate adequate resources for the delivery of services that are needed (Budlender & Proudlock, 2010). However, as noted by Budlender and Proudlock (2010), South African NPOs are only being 'partially subsidised' for the services that they are contracted to provide, in the hope that donors and communities will contribute with the rest in order to ensure high quality services. Accounts by the four organisations that do receive funding from the DSD confirm the situation described by these scholars. All of these rather well-established NPOs claim to be struggling financially, despite being recipients of government funding. Further, it is clear that the objectives of these organisations are partly being controlled by their donors. *Afrika Tikkun* contrasts the government's funding strategy with that of corporates, who in their experience appear to be willing to fund all the essential expenses of an NPO, including salaries and telephone bills, not just specific programmes, "to make sure that the work is being done". *Yabonga* is also trying to make their programmes "holistically work", as their funders, both the government and others, prefer to fund very *specific* activities, leaving the organisation with "other things that need to be funded". Interestingly, *Wola Nani* presently actually cares for more children than they are 'paid' to take care of. Admitting more children than the organisation can actually afford into the programme has the consequence that each child can only come to *Wola Nani's* after-school centre in Philippi one day a week, as there are not enough child carers (or physical space) to work with all the age-groups *every* day. Other organisations have solved this 'problem' by setting a strict limit to the number of children that can join their programme, and creating a waiting list. This raises the issue of target criteria – how do NPOs decide which children are 'eligible' for after-school care? If resources are scarce, one might expect an NPO to focus on those children who are the *most* vulnerable. However, as outlined above, the definition of vulnerability is disputed, not only academically, but not even these eight organisations working in the same communities agree on what 'type' of vulnerable children should be targeted for after-school care. In a sense, as Modikwe* from *Afrika Tikkun* explains, *all* children are exposed to various vulnerabilities, especially in informal settlement areas, and it can be very difficult to decide that a child is not 'sufficiently vulnerable'. Nevertheless, no

matter which 'approach' is more advisable and sustainable, *Wola Nani's* numbers certainly indicate that there is an immense need for such programmes in these communities, with children being left on their own, without any after-school activities or adults who are able to supervise homework. Moreover, the meal that they receive at *Wola Nani* after school is essential for many children, as an internal assessment by the organisation has shown. In order to cater for this demand, existing organisations would have to expand their current programmes, or more NPOs would have to move into the communities. Both alternatives would ultimately implicate more funding, unless government stepped in.

Yet, as scholars such as Knijn and Patel (2012) and Warshawsky (2012) have validated, the non-profit sector is currently experiencing a general financial crisis. All the NPOs express concern regarding the funding *instability* that they are continuously experiencing. As *Yabonga's* social worker pointed out, funders only tend to commit to funding one financial year at a time, leaving NPOs concerned about their programmes' sustainability. *Yabonga* has hence ensured that they are obtaining funding from a variety of sources, which 'secures' their survival to some extent. Yet, such an approach also involves a lot of work for the NPOs, as they continuously have to prepare budgets and individual reports for their different funders. Further, as a result of this funding insecurity, some organisations may not feel confident to plan ahead and invest in their programmes, such as employing new staff or initiating new projects, a potential consequence also described by Robinson et al. (2000). As the programme manager *Wola Nani* explains, the organisation is forced to "rethink every time, because you have just so much money to do the programme".

Two of the organisations that *have* been contracted by the DSD express their disappointment regarding the reliability of government funding, as the following statement by the *Yabonga* social worker demonstrates:

Ehmm, it's not very positive, to be brutally honest [laughing nervously]. You know, an example, we were supposed to have gotten funding in April and it's now June, and we got it two weeks ago. And it's just through.. sheer incompetence, and not being able to organise

properly. We submitted proposals in October last year, so it's like nine months later that they can give you an answer if you're going to get funding or not, and then it's late, and they're incredibly late on the payments. So from that funding sort of side, they're just completely incompetent.. or just unreliable, which is really unfortunate.

(Sarah*, Yabonga)

Wola Nani has had a similar experience, as their funding for 2012 was only approved by the end of May, with the report of the first quarter being due in the beginning of June. Such delays in funding can obviously affect a NPOs ability to operate properly and sign contracts with staff, unless the organisation can rely on other funding or it has resources from the previous year to fall back on in the mean time. Based on such frustrations, these NPOs perceive the DSD as “unorganised” and “incompetent”. Harriss (2000) has identified trust as an essential component of partnerships that are based on ‘mutual dependency’, and such occurrences are likely to affect the level of *trust* that these organisations assign to this type of relationship with the government.

Smaller, less stable NPOs that are relying on one or two funders are much more vulnerable to such a fragile funding environment. They all emphasised that funding is the main challenge that they are currently facing:

With the American money going down... It's kind of difficult to provide things that we used to provide... So we do need funding, locally.... I was wondering if you could help us find... if you know someone you can connect us to, that we can maybe try to apply through them.

(Tuleka*, Bridges of Hope)

Bridges of Hope, a small Christian NGO funded by American churches, has been affected by the global recession, and is clearly concerned about its survival. However, the OVC co-ordinator does not appear to be aware of how local funding such as government subsidies can be accessed, indicating that a certain barrier may exist for less ‘professional’ organisations to apply for government resources.

Power Child, another smaller organisation, has applied for funding from the DSD, but so far unsuccessfully. *iThemba Labantu* is also considering to apply for funding from the DSD, although their situation is currently still fairly secured by overseas donors. *Rainbow Dreams* has not yet attempted to get DSD funding. This NPO's director has various plans for her organisation, but also realises that she will need "official" funding to realise these ideas, as the organisation's current private funding from various sources is unlikely to be sufficient. She appears rather confident regarding such an application, as her programme has "proved sustainability", presumably making the NPO eligible for government funding. Yet, not even organisations that have been receiving DSD funding for several years seem to be completely aware of the government's 'criteria':

I do wonder how they select [NGOs for funding], and we do also worry. We've gotten e-mails saying "you haven't submitted this, you haven't done this, you haven't done this", meanwhile we have, and it's just gotten lost in the system, or lost in someone's paper file on a desk. And I worry, that "oh my word, they're gonna see this and it's gonna reflect badly on us", meanwhile it was just an admin that didn't happen on their side, or something.

(Sarah*, Yabonga)

The statement above reinforces the perception of the DSD as 'unorganised', and the interviewee admits to the presence of uncertainty regarding the government's criteria and expectations for contracting NPOs. It appears as though this seemingly well-run organisation constantly has to be concerned about the stability of their funding. This suggests a *hierarchy* as opposed to a 'partnering' relationship, with the government in the role of the 'controller and coercer', as defined by Robinson et al. (2000). Zola* from *Sizakuyenza*, an NPO has only recently begun to receive some funding from the DSD, confirms this image:

They [the government] have control and power over everything. They have money, they have.. they have the final say on who gets the money, who gets what. You know, I hate to admit it, but the money makes the world go around.

(Zola*, Sizakuyenza)

Wola Nani's programme manager also feels rather strongly about the current level of funding:

But then fund us, fund us, so we can do a proper job! You know, we don't have the money to top up salaries. You know, there is a saying that says "if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys". A silly thing I'm saying now, but what I'm trying to say is that if you don't pay people decent salaries, you won't get decent services. And I'm not talking about extravagant salaries, but at least the cost of living is expensive these days, we can't afford to give increases to our staff, but the cost of living is going up.

(Maureen*, *Wola Nani*)

Correspondingly, *Sizakuyenza* does not feel that the government is taking the matter of orphans and vulnerable children "seriously". The NPO's OVC co-ordinator stresses that they DSD needs to take "more ownership" of programmes for vulnerable children. These rather strong statements reveal that NPOs indeed battle "to do a proper job" with the limited resources currently available to them, and they are waiting for the government to be more involved. Interestingly, none of the organisation placed a similar expectation on foreign donors, emphasising the strong reliance on the South African government.

Several of the NPOs can't afford to pay salaries that would attract social auxiliary workers or social workers. *Wola Nani's* child carers live in the same underprivileged communities that the organisation serves, and only receive a meagre stipend for their efforts. Only this year has the organisation been able to employ a social worker who can support the child carers in their challenging work on the ground. At the same time, there are advantages to employing child carers from the local communities. These women are familiar with the children's immediate environment; they belong to the same culture and are mothers themselves, so that they are able to fulfil many of these children's needs. Yet, their work involves challenging situations where skills that they do not necessarily have are needed to effectively support these vulnerable children. More training would enable these women to assist these children even further, and possibly make these child carers feel empowered to approach other

stakeholders such as Social Services with more confidence. This lack of adequately trained staff may ultimately affect the level of *quality* that such after-school care programmes are able to provide, especially with regards to the rather complex matter of psychosocial support, which is an aspect that many NPOs such as *Wola Nani* specifically claim to focus on.

The picture created by these NPOs corresponds to accounts by scholars such as Budlender and Proudlock (2012) regarding the negative consequences of this 'partial funding approach'. Poorly funded organisations are unlikely to sustainably offer high-quality programmes, and as a result vulnerable children will not receive the support that they *could* benefit from if service providers *had* access to sufficient resources. Adequately skilled staff is an essential precondition for any service. Budlender and Proudlock (2012) stress that an increase in NPO funding will enable the employment of properly trained service provider practitioners who can cater for vulnerable children's needs. Regarding such quality standards, Smith et al. advocate that policymakers must allocate funding for timely and effective programme *evaluation* to ensure that funds are used properly and reach all intended beneficiaries, but also to gain a better understanding of programmes that demonstrate improved outcomes among vulnerable children (Smith et al. 2001:1409)⁵. At the same time, one could question why the DSD has not chosen the alternative approach of training an extensive cadre of social workers who operate under the department at base level to provide the services that are currently carried out by a range of contracted NPOs. While this would require adequate resources and government *capacity*, such a model could avoid the fragmentation that is apparently created by the 'pluralist' model of service delivery. Whether such a system would be feasible presents a topic for further research.

Yet, as the next section will illustrate, funding is not the only requirement for successful social service delivery. Contracted service providers rely on

⁵ This study acknowledges the importance of monitoring and evaluation of social services, but the scope of this thesis does not allow for a more detailed examination of this matter in relation to the selected after-school programmes.

government's leadership and management to secure the implementation of the 'developmental approach' and to co-ordinate the "complex relations and interests" (Patel 2012) between the various actors involved in social service delivery.

Co-ordination

"The man of the family is supposed to be responsible for everything. In the same way, the government has the responsibility. The NGOs are like a wife. The husband and wife supplement each other and work together, sharing, complementing each other. The government is the overall co-ordinator, and it is accountable, but the wife is, too."

(Official of a Ugandan NGO, in Cannon 1996)

As illuminated in the literature review, the South African government is dependent on "the support of all actors to meet its social development goals, to address the immense backlogs in service delivery and to build consent for its vision of a more just and caring society that was to be reflected in its welfare system" (Patel, 2012:611). According to Patel (2012:613), a critical success factor in achieving the social development goals of post-apartheid society is the need for competent, coherent public bureaucracies that have "the organisational capacity to develop policies, manage implementation and work effectively with NPO partners". Inherently, social service provision needs to be capably and holistically *co-ordinated*. This is a very demanding objective that currently faces various challenges.

The purpose of co-ordination is to bring together various actors to make their efforts more attuned, as defined by Robinson et al. (Robinson et al., 2000:7). Since states tend to have the legitimacy and the scope to define national objectives, and they are generally well suited to guide *actions* towards their achievement by co-ordinating various actors involved in service delivery (Robinson, 2000:161), it is not surprising that government departments are commonly expected to 'be in charge' of synchronising the social service arena. Since the South African government heavily relies on the assistance of external service providers such as NPOs (Patel, 2012:615), the government may indeed

be depicted as a 'regulator' of such organisations and the services that they are providing (Robinson et al., 2000:7).

Although only half of the NPOs in this study are funded by the government, *all* these organisations work alongside each other in the same communities, they face similar challenges and the after-school care that they provide should rationally be co-ordinated in ways that prove to be the most efficient and beneficial for children in need, regardless of their source of funding. However, as revealed by Patel (2012:614) above, various "inefficiencies in leadership and management of contracts with NPOs" have been identified in South Africa's social development sector. Patel's findings regarding the government's managing abilities in the social service context are largely confirmed by the interviewees in this study, as will be demonstrated below.

"It's all over the place"

In order to co-ordinate services, the co-ordinating body must be aware of where all the service providers in a community are located, and what type of services that they are offering. A government department such as the DSD should hence identify all NPOs that run after-school programmes before a complete assessment regarding the management strategy of after-school care in a particular area is meaningful. The NPO Act of 1997 is helpful in this regard, as most NPOs tend to be registered with the government, although such registration is voluntary.

However, not all such registered organisations are necessarily interacting with government departments. For example, *Rainbow Dreams Trust* is a registered NPO, yet the organisation is not in contact with any government departments regarding their work at the moment. The social worker at *Yabonga* mentions this lack of awareness with regards to the NPOs in the communities:

I just think that being more present is what they could improve on, so that people are more aware of where they are, what they are doing, that there are people who are going around in the communities supporting, if they have care workers, or auxiliary

social workers, people doing family business... Yah, and also being more present in terms of visiting the organisations that are in the communities that they serve. I don't know if they even know everyone who is in the community. It shouldn't just be organisations that are being funded by the Department of Social Development that they know about or they interact with.

(Sarah*, Yabonga)

This study indicates that interaction with the government is largely linked to funding, so that there are NPOs that are barely in touch with any government departments. *Yabonga* is able to benefit from their own social worker's skills and expertise, making this organisation less dependent on support from the DSD. At the same time, as an NPO social worker she does not have any statutory power, so that the organisation is still reliant on the support of social workers from Social Services. Hence, although this employee has the relevant know-how, she is not always able to make use of it.

The *Yabonga* social worker further communicates that she is unsatisfied with the department's "inconsistent ways of interaction". The NPO claims to feel uncertain about what the DSD "wants" from them. Apparently the DSD does not clearly clarify their requirements, leaving the organisation with inconsistent messages regarding what the DSD needs from them in terms of reports, for example.

But I can imagine that if you are not being funded by the Department, you have no idea what they do, and you have no idea what they want. Because you would receive even less interaction with them than what I receive.

(Sarah*, Yabonga)

Perhaps the DSD assumes that a recognised organisation such as *Yabonga* is only in need of minimum supervision, so that communication with such an NPO is not prioritised. Yet, despite the skilled staff that *Yabonga* employs, it is evident that they would nonetheless appreciate a closer relationship with the DSD, in order to understand "what it is they're doing" and "what they want" from an NPO such as

themselves. However, apparently, less established organisations that are not involved in a funding relationship with any government departments do not interact with the DSD at all, which means that they will not be included in attempts from the government to co-ordinate after-school services. *Bridges of Hope* is an example of such an organisation. When being asked about the DSD, the OVC co-ordinator displayed no awareness of how a relationship with government departments could be initiated:

Are they supposed to contact us, or are we supposed to contact them?

(Tuleka*, Brides of Hope)

In fact, it appeared as if the OVC co-ordinator at *Bridges of Hope* had never previously considered that a relationship with the government could be developed. This lack of communication not only affects the DSD's ability to holistically oversee the after-school care activities that are available in Philippi, but an NPO that is not part of the larger service provision 'framework' is likely to find itself rather isolated and may miss out on potential assistance and guidance that a government department could offer. Especially a smaller organisation like *Bridges of Hope* that does not employ a social worker might benefit from the DSD's know-how and resources.

The programme manager at *Wola Nani* points out one way in which co-ordination of services can take place, based on her experiences with the Department of Health, that funds one of this NPO's other programmes:

And what I like that the Department of Health did, was to divide organisations in various areas, so if you know that you're responsible for this section of Athlone, then it's just Wola Nani working in that section, and Wola Nani is funded for that piece of work. So that we're not all over the show. ... It's all over the place [with DSD].

(Maureen*, Wola Nani)

"All over the place" stands in direct contrast to "efficiently co-ordinated", which should be the goal of the legally responsible service provider, the government.

Indeed, even NPOs that are currently being funded by the DSD express that they expect more support from this department than 'just' funding. The general manager at *Afrika Tikkun* implies that the government perceives its main responsibility as "dishing out money" to NPOs that are then left to do "the real work". Other interviewees were, at least at first, reluctant to reveal their opinions regarding the work of the DSD, but overall, the NPOs express that they are not entirely satisfied with the support that they receive from the government. For example, *Power Child* feels that the DSD "needs to do more work than it is right now".

Evidently, the NPOs do not only need the government as a funder, but also as a guide and advisor. As already described, many NPOs cannot afford to employ staff members that are satisfactorily qualified to handle all the various challenges that frequently arise when caring for vulnerable children, so that they need to consult external expertise. Social Services are thus a significant partner for such NPOs. Irrespective, NPOs are not authorised to take *legal* action if required (for instance in abuse cases), so that they are all dependent on the support from the DSD and Social Services⁶. Further, it is difficult for one individual organisation to assess the need that exists in a community and to know exactly how many children they are supposed to be caring for, and where they fit into the 'big picture'. Hence some kind of co-ordination of services is essential.

Taking the lead

The interviewed representatives of the eight NPOs all assume the government to take on a co-ordinating responsibility, and to work together with the organisations that are providing services in the communities:

⁶ While informants spoke extensively about the relationship with Social Services, the purpose of this thesis does not allow for an elaboration on these findings.

Ehmm, I think they should really take the lead. We're doing as much as we can, but they also need to take the lead, and particularly make sure that they work hand-in-hand with NGOs that are doing the work. Because we're out here, we're on the ground, and we're really, really trying to do it.

(Sylvia*, Power Child)

This statement by the site manager of *Power Child* creates the image of NPOs that are struggling on the ground, desperately awaiting backing 'from above', which represents the reality that some NPOs face. *Yabonga* is more self-reliant and financially solid than other, smaller, NPOs. The organisation does not only offer continuous in-house training for its staff, but it is also able to employ various qualified individuals. Apart from their social worker who is based at the NPO office, their OVC co-ordinator who works 'on the ground' is in the process of becoming a social worker. Even so, the organisation recognises that the NPO sector is in need of a more efficient "co-ordinating body". *Yabonga's* social worker believes that the DSD should take on a "co-ordinating responsibility" in their relationship with NPOs, by initiating forums and meetings, and identifying organisations that are working in an area. She states that this should not be "up to the organisations".

Better co-ordination would not only create a more structured environment for all stakeholders to work in, which can ultimately be expected to be advantageous for the beneficiaries, but inclusive and regular meetings could also facilitate *co-operation* between the various NPOs in the communities, a matter that will be studied in detail below. As Sue* from *Rainbow Dreams* mentions, somebody needs to "drive" such meetings, "to get all the NPOs under one roof ... to share and swap ideas". *iThemba Labantu* presents similar ideas about co-ordination as a prerequisite for co-operation, suggesting that workshops could be used as a "network basis" between various stakeholders. According to Victoria* from *iThemba Labantu*, workshops, possibly organised by the government, don't only have the potential to provide NPO staff with valuable new skills and information, but they present an opportunity for exchange and co-operation between NPOs. Moreover, she feels that the government is the most likely actor to be aware of all the NPOs that are active in a community, partly due to their registration

system. The director of *Rainbow Dreams* is not aware of the role of the government in social service provision – it indicates that there is a significant communication gap between such a service provider (the NPO) and the presumed service *co-ordinator*. Further, this informant suggests that the government should find out where all the NPOs in a community are located, which could enable strategic planning of social services. This matter of NPO location is also discussed by scholars such as Kareithi and Flisher (2009). A proper geographical overview of the non-profit sector facilitates the identification of potential partners in order to foster strategic partnerships and relationships (Kareithi & Flisher 2009:12). As no individual organisation has access to all the resources required for development, a variety of agencies must be involved, as Kareithi and Flisher stress (Kareithi & Flisher 2009:12).

The identification of NPO's locations relates to the comparison with the Department of Health made by Maureen* from *Wola Nani* above, where an area is divided and organisations become responsible for one 'section each', backed by funding from the government. Perhaps this would also be a viable solution for after-school programmes, although such programmes may have to become somewhat more homogenous in terms of target criteria. Such an approach would be counteracting duplication of services. Indeed, the organisations are presently not able to control if a child is part of two after-school programmes at the same time, for example, as there is no systematic tracking of children by a co-ordinating body. Here, schools might be able to play a more prominent role, as vulnerable children can be identified by teachers.

Even more concerning is the fact that some organisations are not even aware of each other's existence, which hinders communication. It is hence likely that there are children who attend several such programmes, or randomly switch from one programme to another. If the location of NPOs was systematically organised, one would not only guarantee that all areas in need have access to services (as opposed to having several organisations clustered in one particular area), but people in the communities would know which NPOs to approach, depending on their area of residence. This may eventually lead to less children in need 'falling

through the cracks', as it would be easier for an NPO to identify children in need if they are solely responsible for a designated area, instead of receiving children from various ends of a large community. Eliminating duplication is also likely to save valuable resources, and ultimately, more beneficiaries would receive support, as services won't be unnecessarily 'doubled'. This matter was spontaneously mentioned by several of the NPOs, indicating that this is a concern that needs to be addressed.

The government could certainly play an important role in reducing duplication and encouraging synchronisation, at least according to the model of the state as a "legitimate controller and coercer", as described by Robinson et al. (2000). Yet, although these NPOs clearly want the government to take the *lead*, they expressed a desire for their voices to be heard at the same time. Two of the NPOs explicitly articulated that the government should consult organisations working on the ground, as opposed to just telling them "what to do". *iThemba Labantu* states that NPOs should feel inclined to complement government with their knowledge, as they come from "a different point". This organisation's youth programme co-ordinator feels that unlike the government, NPOs are not "relying on being re-elected", which may allow them to be more objective and stand up for the most vulnerable⁷.

While a more active contribution from NPOs could definitely be beneficial to create a more holistic approach to service delivery, this requires NPOs to be motivated and capable to approach the government with ideas and concerns. This subject will be touched upon in the context of *co-operation*. It also raises the question whether government is *responsive* to the expertise and opinions of NPOs, a matter which could be further investigated.

The lack of information sharing and dialogue with the government observed among several of the NPOs in this study is among the concerns discussed by

⁷ At the same time, as mentioned in the 'funding' section of this chapter, NPOs often have to comply with their funders vision, which may also limit their leeway to 'make a difference' in the way that the NPO sees fit.

Robinson (2000). From her own experience, Robinson (2000:149) claims that a lack of direct contact between large numbers of NGOs and government planning systems may contribute to disintegration, especially where government policy and implementation frameworks are already weak. She further recalls that NPOs and the government tend to “blame each other” for this lack of communication (Robinson, 2000:150). While the NPOs in this study are not explicitly “blaming” the government for a lack of interaction, they certainly appear to have high expectations on the government in this regard. Only one interviewee describes attempts by their NPO to build a relationship with the DSD:

I've started, in my own way, to engage with the [DSD] office by building that relationship, because I've seen what worked with the Department of Health. You go to the office, you know who your programme manager is, and you build that relationship. And that's the same route that I'm going now with Social Development. You have to also.. You can't sit in your office, we have to engage with them. If they don't engage with you, you'll have to engage with them. To keep them up do date.. Because at the end of the day, we want the money.

(Maureen*, Wola Nani)

Although the motivation to engage with the DSD may primarily be based on the fear to lose government funding, this type of relationship building is nonetheless a step in the right direction. Further, this informant reports that the communication with the Department of Health, which this NPO is working with on a different programme, appears to be functioning much more effectively. This programme manager genuinely appreciates and *needs* the support that she receives from the Department of Health, which she claims to differ from the dealings with the DSD. The engagement between this NPO and the Department of Health appears to be based on reciprocity and trust. The interviewee also touched upon the subject of monitoring and evaluation that takes place regularly under the Department of Health. Such assessments are crucial for ensuring the *quality* of services. Yet, such activities can only take place if the government and NPOs are in regular contact with each other.

The type of relationship between a government department and an NPO

described by *Wola Nani* appears to be what all the NPOs are envisaging. Yet, the DSD itself believes that it is not only the responsibility of the state to create an enabling environment for non-profit organisations to flourish. The private sector, the general donor community and other stakeholders including NPOs may also have an important role to play to create an enabling environment for non-profit organisations (DSD, 2011b:19). This suggests that NGO should come together with the government to help ensure that action is co-ordinated, in order to avoid fragmentation. There is interdependence between 'state' and 'civil society', and existing relationships must be built on to encourage *collaboration* rather than resistance (Robinson, 2000:165). This will be reviewed in the next section.

Co-operation

As Robinson et al. (2000) conclude through their work on managing development, co-operation between organisations is fundamental for the realisation of cohesive and sustainable development. Learning about inter-organisational relationships that exist among NPOs that provide after-school care for vulnerable children was one of the objectives of this study.

In South Africa the government is principally dependent on the support from NPOs to deliver the services that it is legally responsible to provide. One NPO seldom has the capacity to serve an entire community on its own – consequently NPOs rely on other organisations and the government to work alongside them. NPOs providing services for vulnerable children in Philippi and Mfuleni are presumed to engage in various relationships with other actors, both with other NPOs, with government departments, with Social Services and local schools. Some partnerships that are formed between such actors are rather formal and regulated, while others are more casual and sporadic. For the purposes of this thesis, the relationships that NPOs engage in with *each other* are the focus of analysis.

Even though the NPOs that were interviewed for this study have different target criteria and work according to their individual models, they all have a “common purpose” (Robinson et al., 2000:13) – to provide support to vulnerable children after school hours. However, the extent and type of co-operation that takes place between such NPOs varies. Particularly the larger and most established out of the eight NPOs emphasise their multifaceted co-operation with other organisations. *Afrika Tikkun*, *Yabonga* and *Wola Nani* are all subsidised by the DSD, and their after-school programmes have been running for several years. These three organisations are aware of other NPOs in their areas, and there is some level of co-operation with such organisations. As *Yabonga*’s social worker stresses, “one organisation cannot do everything themselves”, implying that there is a certain dependency on other organisations that may perhaps be offering complementary services, as Modikwe* from *Afrika Tikkun* mentions as well. He highlights that his NPO is interested in services that “they could offer that we don’t offer”. Such organisations also come together to run holiday programmes, for example. The co-operation with government clinics as well as with the schools is also praised by one informant. Schools appear to be a significant partner for all the organisations, a relationship that would be worthy of further research.

When it comes to the awareness of other organisations and inter-organisational relationships there is a noticeable discrepancy between these three organisations and the smaller NPOs whose after-school programmes are currently not being funded by the government. As one NPO informant admits:

Never, it doesn't happen [getting in touch with other NPOs]. How sad is that.

(Sue*, Rainbow Dreams)

Rainbow Dreams has only been present in Philippi for two years, and Sue*, the director, is not co-operating with any other NPOs at the moment. Similarly, *Bridges of Hope* also finds itself rather disconnected from the rest of the organisations in Philippi. *Bridges of Hope* is a rather small church-based NPO that

is not currently in touch with any other organisations that provide support to vulnerable children in Philippi. The fact that the OVC-coordinator at *Bridges of Hope* did not know of *Wola Nani*, although the organisation is based not very far from their own premises, is evidence of this lack of communication. At least the organisation does demonstrate a certain *vague awareness* of other NPOs in the area, but no contact has been initiated between the two after-school programmes. *iThemba Labantu* is in touch with a few organisations, although the interaction does not appear to be as intense or structured as the relationships that the three larger organisations engage in. The NPO's youth programme co-ordinator explains that it is part of a group of similar organisations that are "assisting each other". Other organisations are at times invited to *iThemba Labantu* to take part in their programmes, and vice versa. *iThemba Labantu* is also in touch with other organisations such as *Sizakuyenza* and *Beautiful Gate* (a children's home in Philippi) to access services that they are not able to provide themselves, such as the assistance of other organisations' social workers. Such inter-organisational support indicates certain reciprocity, although it seems to be rather informal in nature. *Sizakuyenza* is rather unique in the sense that the organisation hosts other organisations on their premises, such as *Child Welfare*. This type of arrangement also points to a mutual benefit, as *Sizakuyenza* can rely on these organisations for assistance. However, *Sizakuyenza* is mainly cooperating with organisations that offer complementary services, or are connected to their youth programmes. Currently the NPO is not partnering with other organisations that provide assistance to vulnerable children. However, at the time of the interview with *Sizakuyenza*, the OVC co-ordinator was about to attend a meeting for organisations that are being funded by the DSD. This was the first time that this organisation was invited to such a meeting. When *Sizakuyenza* was approached again a few weeks later to follow up on this meeting, the OVC co-ordinator explained that the meeting did provide certain opportunities for networking among NPOs that are delivering services for OVC. However, she only encountered organisations that are active in other communities, the closest one being Khayelitsha. Further she emphasised that the meeting focused mainly on the provision of information regarding the guidelines of the DSD and reporting processes. She nonetheless felt that this meeting was a

step in the right direction.

Power Child is another organisation that does not receive any funding from the government. This organisation is known for hosting workshops and providing trainings, mainly in the context of Early Childhood Development (EDC) on their premises. Similar to *Afrika Tikkun* and *Yabonga*, *Power Child* partners with other organisations on a reciprocal basis, with these organisations benefitting from other organisation's programmes, and even arranging events together. However, such co-operation mainly takes place around sports and holiday activities. Thus, only the three 'larger' organisations appear to be involved in sporadic exchanges of "knowledge and skills" with other organisations as described by Harriss in Robinson et al. (2000), for example through occasional stakeholder meetings.

Perceived advantages of co-operation

Although only three of the NPOs engage in regular and comprehensive co-operation with other organisations, all the staff members interviewed revealed affirmative attitudes towards co-operation with other organisations. The NPO informants clearly have an idea about what kind of co-operation would be beneficial, both for themselves and for others, even if such collaboration is not always practiced at the moment.

Some of the NPOs mentioned so called 'stakeholder meetings' that take place in the communities from time to time. The programme manager at *Afrika Tikkun* lists two advantages of collaborating with other stakeholders: avoiding duplication and improving efficiency by organising events or programmes together. NPOs could for instance compare databases, to ensure that children aren't part of two similar programmes at the same time, thus potentially preventing other children in need from receiving support. Here the involvement of the DSD as a stakeholder and possible facilitator could be worthwhile. Further, the efficiency aspect plays a role, for example in the sense that carrying out trainings collectively not only saves resources, but it also provides a space for an exchange of ideas and challenges. The OVC co-ordinator at *Yabonga* agrees with

this perspective:

I think we're easy to.. to work with. You know, the fact that we're working with different stakeholders, it nurtures ehh.. it nurtures the relationship with other NGOs ... We cannot work alone. Collectively, we can do what we do best.

(Precious*, Yabonga)

The choice of the word 'nurture' indicates that this informant strongly values the co-operation with other stakeholders, and the strong statement of "Collectively we can do what we do best" very much concurs with the message highlighted in Robinson et al.'s (2000) work. She continues as follows:

...to keep records, to visit them, to speak to them, how can we work to-.. what are you doing? Between this as an organisation.. Yabonga is doing this, what are you doing as an organisation? How can we work together?

(Precious*, Yabonga)

Here the issue of complementary services is once again raised – an NPO can benefit from working with other organisations that offer services that they cannot carry out themselves. Victoria* from *iThemba Labantu* shares this view, acknowledging that "as an organisation, you can't do everything". This would technically make co-operation among organisations unavoidable. In this spirit, the OVC programme co-ordinator at *Wola Nani* presents a give-and-take attitude towards such co-operation:

So when you interact with other organisations it's like "so how can I also benefit from you", because I'm not the expert on that, but it's something that I'd like my organisation to get training for. So, I think yes, it's very important to network with other organisations, because each organisation has got its own expertise, and that's the resources that I believe that we have to share with one another, to make it work. We cannot live on an island.

(Maureen*, Wola Nani)

"Sharing expertise" appeared to be a reoccurring theme among the NPOs, indicating that benefitting from co-operation with other organisations is crucial.

However, although it is obvious that this informant is very conscious of the “gains” of such collaboration, she emphasises the reciprocal nature of such assistance, explaining that such resources should be “shared with one another”. The expression “living on an island” is a suitable metaphor for the situation that many of these NPOs appear to find themselves in, despite their outwardly positive attitude towards co-operation. The OVC Co-ordinator at *Bridges of Hope* also emphasised the exchange of services among NPOs as an argument for co-operation, such as organising camps together.

The social worker at *Yabonga* mentions that the identification of vulnerable children can be facilitated by interacting with other stakeholders in the community. As there is no official ‘referral system’ of vulnerable children to NPOs that provide after-school care, it is inevitable that organisations often get in touch with such children through ‘partners’ in the community. Clinics and schools are evidently important actors as they can identify children in need and refer them to various NPOs. At the same time, other NPOs can also be helpful in this regard. Organisations in the community that are dealing with other matters may come across destitute children and refer them to an NPO’s after-school programme, where psychosocial support will be provided. Further, an after-school programme that has reached its capacity in terms of number of children may contact another programme and ask for assistance.

One of the child carers at *Wola Nani*, sees another advantage in the collaboration of organisations:

Yes, is okay [partnering with other NPOs], because sometimes we’ve got share what they do, and then we can improve.. our programme. Okay, they will do like this, and then we can share our views.

(Nombolelo*, Wola Nani)

This informant asserts that the exchange of ideas and ‘best practice’ for after-school programmes would be helpful. The Director at *Rainbow Dreams* also touches upon this aspect of co-operation, emphasising that NPOs cannot have

“egos”, indicating that such organisations must be willing to share their ideas and ‘models’ with their peers in the community, for “the common good”. Victoria*, the programme co-ordinator at *iThemba Labantu* refers to a further objective of co-operation among NPOs – developing an increasing capacity to enforce change. This informant feels that NPOs such as *iThemba Labantu* are “basically doing the job for government”. She highlights the lack of “voice” that these service providers experience, implying that the government does not acknowledge the crucial role that such organisations play. According to Victoria*, NPOs should “unite”, as “the more people you have, the more power you have to change systems or policies”.

The principal at Sinethemba High School (Philippi) is another interviewee who feels strongly about the ability or even *responsibility* of NPOs/NGOs to continue to play a role in public action today:

You know, when you we are creating a society where.. “when I do something, I expect something”. I expect to be compensated. And that is where part of our problem lies. That is why you get people who don’t see the value of NGOs. Part of how our society got to be changed, NGOs played a role. Because if ‘Black Sash’ and all the others had kept quiet, if they had kept quiet, we wouldn’t be where we are.

(Mr. Tyelo*, Sinethemba High School)

The idea that NPOs as a collaborating force could “change systems” may not be an unrealistic ambition. However, when NPOs are becoming dependent (and competing for) government resources, such organisations may be reluctant to criticise government policies at all, even if they did feel a need for policies to change. Still, approaching the government as a collaborating group of NPOs would probably be less ‘risky’ and most likely more successful than if one individual organisation alone openly disapproves of government’s way of carrying out or co-ordinating services. Naturally, such ‘activist’ collaboration would require a motivated and resourceful initiator among these NPOs, something that presently appears to be missing.

What stands in the way of co-operation?

During the interviews, the informants shared their thoughts regarding the currently rather limited communication and co-operation between NPOs that are working with vulnerable children in Philippi and Mfuleni. Primarily, the staff members interviewed perceive NPOs to be too preoccupied with “doing their own thing” to actively engage in partnering with other organisations. Even ‘larger’ organisations such as *Wola Nani* that are in contact with other NPOs acknowledge that there is potential for stronger co-operation. *Wola Nani*’s programme manager feels that “everybody is so focused on making it work for themselves”, which prevents interaction between NPOs. She recognises that there could be more co-operation, but she justifies the current state of disengagement by stressing that “everyone is just trying to survive out there”. This testimony indicates that NPOs such as *Wola Nani* are struggling at the moment. Consequently, organisations may not perceive collaboration as a priority. The youth programme co-ordinator at *iThema Labantu* agrees:

Because in general there is a lack of NGOs, you know, everybody is doing their own thing. We also do that.

(Victoria*, *iThema Labantu*)

This participant suggests that there are not enough NPOs to satisfy all the needs of the community, indicating that such organisations are therefore simply too busy to add the task of ‘partnering’ to their to-do list. She further raised the matter of “effective partnership”, highlighting that partnerships should not exist merely for ‘the sake of partnership’. Instead it should actually assist the NPOs in their work and aim for an “outcome”. While this informant did not provide any suggestions regarding *how* such ‘effective partnerships’ could be developed, she indicated that NPOs may feel that co-operation amongst each other is not worth the effort and time that it takes to organise and attend meetings. This may be due to a lack of understanding of what ‘partnership’ means and how it can be valuable, but it may also indicate that there is a lack of leadership. Inherently someone needs to *initiate* such co-operation among the NPOs in a community.

Zola* from *Sizakuyenza* is also concerned about the lack of comprehension around co-operation. This interviewee believes that NPOs are not aware of what 'networking' means, and "what is in it" for them. Further, she cites that there is a need for a 'space' where this can be clarified. Remarkably, the representative from this NPO believes that organisations fear that networking will lead to their own ideas being 'copied' by other NPOs, leading to a 'loss of ownership' of their work. This would indicate a rather worrying atmosphere of competition among such organisations, which are normally perceived to be working towards "the common good" in the spirit of altruism. If such sentiments do in fact exist among NPOs, it may perhaps originate from leading staff members' egos, as another informant mentioned above, or be based on a genuine concern about the limited availability for funding. Consequently an NPO may be worried that their current (government) funding could be compromised if other organisations begin to implement the same "superior" ideas/model as themselves. Such notions of competition will be examined later on.

As discovered above, *Bridges of Hope* is currently not in touch with any other NPOs in Philippi. For this organisation, the lack of awareness about other organisations in the area is the main obstacle to networking. An awareness of other NPOs is the first step towards future co-operation. A stakeholder meeting that *all* NPOs in a particular area are invited to would for instance give all organisations an opportunity to learn about 'who else is out there'. Whether a NPO chooses to attend such an occasion will of course be up to the organisation's management.

The OVC co-ordinator at *Yabonga* presents a different view on this matter:

I think they [other organisations] haven't made it their own business to find other NGOs that are working in the same community that they are working. It is their responsibility as an organisation to find other organisations and make that relationship work, you know.

(Precious*, Yabonga)

This informant believes that every organisation needs to make a conscious effort

to reach out to other NPOs in the community. This was the only NPO that explicitly recognised that NPOs themselves may need to contribute to more communication and co-operation amongst service providers. Such an approach obviously requires motivated staff members who are in fact interested in communicating with other NPOs. NPO staff's attitude towards co-operation is likely to be based on the level of knowledge about the benefits of partnership, previous experiences with such co-operation and the willingness to share experiences and ideas (or the level of 'competitive' thinking), as mentioned by other informants above.

The vision of co-operation

Despite the financial challenges that individual NPOs are currently facing and the irregular co-operation patterns that have been observed among organisations providing after-school care to vulnerable children, all the interviewees conveyed an affirmative approach towards co-operation among NPOs, and some even offered some suggestions of how such collaboration could be developed. Generally, the interviewees claimed that they would welcome more co-operation. For example, the programme co-ordinator from *iThemba Labantu* feels that services could become more "effective" if NPOs could be more "linked". Similarly, the director from *Rainbow Dreams* believes that "together, [NPOs] can be so much stronger and so much more effective". This presumed correlation between co-operation and increased effectiveness that was indicated by several NPOs is noteworthy, since it presents a contradiction to the fact that most of the NPOs mainly participate in rather superficial inter-organisational relationships. However, as the section above has illustrated, the NPOs appear to be conscious of some of the obstacles to more in-depth co-operation with other organisations.

The interviewees all seem to have a *vision* of how they would like to interact with other organisations in the community. The pooling of resources is one way that the organisations picture potential co-operation. *Wola Nani*, *Power Child* and *Sizakuyenza* brought up this idea of financial collaboration, by suggesting that NPOs could apply for funding together, and / or share collective funds, in order to work towards that 'common goal' that has previously been touched upon.

Indeed, such a co-operation could allow for larger investments and fresh possibilities, especially for the smaller and less established organisations. One can expect that such teamwork would also entail the sharing of ideas and plans, so that NPOs might subsequently become somewhat more homogenous in their operations and perhaps also better synchronised than they are at the moment. Yet, the question of who would be responsible for initiating and managing such partnerships is raised.

Several NPOs talked about networks as one potential way to increase co-operation. For example, *Sizakuyenza* drew from their experiences. *Sizakuyenza* has brought together numerous youth groups in the area into a large network. The NPO centre acts as a hub for these youth groups, and the network assists children's programmes and organises events. *Sizakuyenza* suggests that a similar concept could be created for programmes that support vulnerable children. *iThemba Labantu* once again emphasised the 'win-win' situation of combining a workshop that everyone gets "an immediate need out of" with networking. Organisations may become more inclined to attend a meeting and hence start networking if the objective of such a meeting is based on a practical need, ensuring that they are not "wasting their time", as this NPO's informant stated earlier. Evidently, these NPOs are envisaging a structured space where inter-organisational relationships can be developed, such as a 'network' or a 'workshop' Although meetings among some of these NPOs as well as other stakeholders do take place occasionally, not all organisations within the same field tend to be invited, especially not smaller organisations that are not funded by the government. As recognised by O'Grady et al. (2008), networking is crucial to the success of OVC programmes because it can identify complementary service points and promote the development of referral systems. Further it has the potential to detect duplication of efforts across NPOs and serve as a crucial step to strengthening partnerships, thus offering a full array of services to communities and vulnerable groups.

If an increase in networking practices is established as beneficial, it generates the question of *who* should be responsible to initiate and maintain such a network.

The director at *Rainbow Dreams* was one informant who considered the role that government should play. She suggests that a conference that would bring all relevant NPOs and government representatives together should take place, and government departments should become more present more aware of the work that NPOs are actually doing. She hopes that this may lead to a realisation that “proper funding” is needed in order for these organisations to provide support to vulnerable children. However, not everyone feels that the government should necessarily be taking on this role:

But I don't think that the government should run it [a network] themselves, I don't think they would cope effectively, and they also don't understand enough of how NGOs operate. But there should be a support unit from the government, to get the relevant support and the relevant access, you know.

(Victoria*, iThemba Labantu)

While some organisations clearly believe that the government should generally be in charge of co-ordination of community services, as discussed in the section on ‘co-ordination’, it is not necessarily inevitable that this system would be helpful when it comes to NPO networks. If Victoria’s* doubts about the government’s ability to “cope effectively” are accurate, NPOs may have to take charge of networking themselves. However, as proposed by this participant, government could take on a supporting role and provide “access”, for instance by presenting the actors in charge of such a network with a database of all the NPOs that are active in a certain area, or by making a space available for organisations to meet. The absence of government representatives in such a space might also facilitate ‘public action’, in the sense that organisations may feel safe to join forces and subsequently approach the government collectively regarding issues that require change.

One must remember that organisations can benefit from networking in ways that do not involve money or practicalities. As the following quote illustrates, constructive inter-organisational relationships can also generate “emotional support” and prevent the feeling of existing “on an island”, as an informant articulated above.

...we all think that we're on our own, which is tough sometimes. Ehmm, and it can be encouraging to work with other people, you know, because you work very much out of your heart and your passion, so it's also important to get that emotional support, you know. Ehmm, and then on a bigger scale.. we work together and say, for example, how can you get a voice in government, you know.

(Victoria*, iThemba Labantu)

This type of mutual support may be underestimated by NPOs, especially during difficult financial times where the struggle for survival is at the forefront of NPO managers' concerns. If NPOs feel less "on their own", a more cohesive NPO sector may be possible. Consequently, NPOs may feel more inclined to unite, both to increase resources and to affect policies. The development of harmful types of competition for funding may also be undermined.

Competition

"... we're all competing for the same piece of cake, and the cake is getting smaller by the day."

(Maureen*, Wola Nani)

Competition for funding was one of the topics raised during the interviews in relation to government support. During a time when international development aid is fading (Knijn & Patel, 2012), and many NPOs are forced to cut down on staff or even close down, non-profit organisations in South Africa are increasingly relying on government resources for their survival, as seen above. Accordingly, as suggested by Hanlon (2000:125), NGO managers have goals not dissimilar to those of any business manager: competing to win contracts and fulfil them as profitably as possible. Conceivably, such organisations may begin to perceive other organisations that are providing similar services in the same area as 'competitors'. Such a mind-set could accordingly have an impact on such organisations' motivation and ability to cooperate, share ideas, or ask for advice amongst each other.

All the NPOs studied divulged that they did experience some extent of

competition for government funding. The site manager at *Power Child* describes the situation that many organisations experience rather accurately:

Yes there is [competition]. Quite a lot. The competition is there, because everybody needs to be assisted, and in actual fact, these are the readily available sectors or departments that are giving funds. And therefore everybody wants to go and apply for funding from the Social Development, everyone wants to.. You understand what I mean. And therefore.. at least there are people [funders] that are visible and that are there, that are, you know, calling people to come and submit, yes.

(Sylvia*, Power Child)

This informant feels that fact that such funding is “readily” available from the government inevitably motivates many NPOs to apply for such resources. The programme manager at *Wola Nani* uses the metaphor of a cake that is “getting smaller by the day”, explaining that “every year you just hope that you’ll get a piece of that cake”. However, some respondents do not feel quite as strongly about the element of competition among NPOs. For example, *iThemba Labantu* the problem rather lays with ‘organisations doing their own thing’, an issue that has been discussed above (*co-operation*). Further the interviewee implies that competition for *ideas* is more dominant than rivalry over government funding among such NPOs, which once again implies that programme managers may in fact feel very protective over ‘their’ programmes, as discussed above. Such a mentality resembles a for-profit business rather than an NPO that is providing social services for vulnerable populations. Another NPOs expresses a comparable view regarding organisations wanting to protect their own programmes:

Now, when you come across to the organisation that does the same thing as you, you wanna work as a team, but at the same time you wanna grow your own organisation. That you cannot run away from. ... and “okay let’s work as a team because we’re doing the same” thing, but I also wanna grow my programmes, and you also wanna grow your programmes. So, somewhere somehow there will be conflict of interests although we (...), we’ve got one idea, one destination, but.. now, working together...

(Zola*, Sizakuyenza)

Most of the interviewees emphasised that their organisation nonetheless *does* attempt to share information and ideas with colleagues from other NPOs. While not sounding defensive per se, it was clear that no organisation wanted to make the impression of being 'greedy' or 'selfish'. Instead there was an emphasis on the fact that they are all ultimately supporting the same communities.

I think so, and I definitely think it can become a bit tight, especially when everyone is applying for such a limited amount. That there definitely is a bit of competition, and you can see that organisations don't necessarily want to pass on, you know, how they got funding, or who they got funding with. Ehmm, but I also do think that NGOs are all serving communities, we're trying to help people.. So we're not going to try go keep this person [a potential funder] all to ourselves...

(Sarah*, Yabonga)

While the respondent above admits to competition being existent, despite their own organisation's best intentions, statements by other informants could even be described as extraordinarily principled and 'selfless':

So even if we don't get it, if we don't get it, it won't necessarily mean that we're not doing a good job, but it will mean that there is another organisation that needs the funding more than us.

(Zola*, Sizakuyenza)

Whether this kind of attitude is actually practiced by the organisations in question or if it is perhaps overly optimistic is difficult to determine.

The expression 'need' is interesting, as one can question if NPOs are 'entitled' to exist regardless, whether they are able to receive funding or not, or whether they are 'needed' in a community or not – just for the sake of the NPO's 'survival'. Notwithstanding, it can be devastating for a community when a service that has been provided by an NPO for many years is suddenly withdrawn due to financial shortcomings. In such a case, when there is an evident need for the service (and it is included in the Children's Act), the government would legally have a responsibility to step in. Understandably, NPOs are also concerned about their

staff, whose jobs are at risk when a NPOs experiences financial problems. Finally, an organisation must be able to 'prove' to a funder, whether the government or any donor, that their services are in fact required, and that their programmes live up to certain defined quality standards.

Consequently organisations will try to live up to the funder's criteria, and knowing that there are countless similar organisations applying for the same resources, the funders' selection process was one concern that was mentioned. Especially organisations that are not yet being subsidised by the government appeared to be unsure about what would be required of them in order to qualify for government funding, or even how they should go about applying for funding. How such information is made available by the DSD and to what extent NPOs make an effort to access it could be investigated in more detail.

The NPOs not only felt that competition for funding would motivate organisations to 'step up their game', but they seemed to feel rather strongly about the government's duty to make sure that the organisations that receive funding actually live up to the government's criteria.

Because I mean, more competition for the same resources should actually result in the people giving out the money checking more who they give the money to, which means improved service delivery, and at the end of the day we all work for the people, you know. And if you have more guidelines as an NGO.. it wouldn't harm anybody, to work more effectively.

(Victoria*, iThemba Labantu)

A funder who receives countless applications for funding should be thorough about inspecting these NPOs in order to determine which organisations are the most qualified and 'worthy'. As one of the *Wola Nani* child carers stressed, "the funder is supposed to visit the site". She believes that "if you do right, you're gonna pass". The NPOs further presented conflicting accounts of the extent to which their funders assess the work that they are doing. For example, both *Wola Nani* and *Yabonga* claim that the DSD rarely visit their programmes for

inspection, meaning that they mainly rely on the statistical reports that the NPOs provide them with. *Afrika Tikkun* on the other hand explained that the DSD visit their premises regularly. Monitoring and evaluation by funders is hence a further issue that is in need of more research.

Some of the NPOs occasionally provide certain services in local schools, such as education about topics such as HIV/AIDS and abuse, or extracurricular activities such as drama. One such organisation suggested that there is potential competition between the government and NPOs when it comes to services that are provided in connection with the schools:

For example, the government doesn't see it, they see it [NPOs delivering programmes in schools] as a competition, but not something that helps them, actually, to reach their learning targets, their pass rates.

(Victoria*, iThemba Labantu)

Further, the high school principal who was interviewed for this study indicated that NPOs working in schools sometimes duplicate services, and that competition among NPOs may arise in such situations. This was not discussed in detail with these respondents, but this subject would potentially present an interesting opportunity for further research.

Developing relationships

One unpremeditated outcome that was registered as a result of this research was the initiation of communication between some of the NPOs that participated in this study. For example, carers at *Wola Nani* and *Bridges of Hope*, organisations that were previously not in touch, have begun to interact with each other, at least informally. During one such meeting, that I was able to attend, the two NPOs (by coincidence) identified two children who were attending both organisations' programmes at the same time, indicating that duplication of services does occur.

Also, inspired by the topic of this research, the programme manager at *Wola Nani* organised an 'open day' at this organisation's after-school care centre in October 2012, to which various NPOs as well as the DSD were invited. During the planning phase of this event it became clear that this NPO is not aware of all the organisations that work with children in the same community, so that I had to assist with the identification of such NPOs. Several organisations that were invited did not appear at this event that was imagined to provide an opportunity to meet other organisations and to 'network'. During the event the NPOs appeared to be keeping a 'polite distance' to each other, and only few of the NPO staff present chose to stay and connect with other organisations once the official event had ended. Thus, despite the positive sentiments that NPO staff members expressed towards collaborating with other organisations during the interviews, this event did not demonstrate a strong drive to put words into action. Alternatively, some NPOs may have felt insecure or even intimidated, as this event may have been their first meeting of this kind. Moreover, NPOs might indeed be too preoccupied with their own struggles, or they are wary of 'sharing ideas' with other organisations. The presence of DSD representatives was also interesting to observe. These DSD employees expressed only minimal enthusiasm for answering questions posed by the attending NPOs, and only few NPO staff approached them with queries. Consequently, the DSD's 'question-and-answer' session was rather brief. Considering the NPOs' accounts during this research, one would have expected a stronger interest in learning about funding opportunities and issues related to Social Services. These observations suggest that most of these NPOs are currently not engaging in close relationships of 'mutual trust', as described by Harriss (2000), neither with each other nor with the DSD. Overall, this event did not prove very fruitful with regards to increased co-ordination or co-operation of services for vulnerable children.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented and discussed the research findings regarding co-ordination of after-school care, the co-operation that takes place among NPOs,

and how the interview informants perceive competition that may arise among these service providers.

The data indicates that contact with the DSD mainly takes place through funding. NPOs that are not being subsidised by the government only engage in very limited communication with government departments such as the DSD. Thus, a holistic overview and co-operation of after-school care is compromised. Also, less established NPOs appear to be experiencing various barriers to accessing such government funding. According to NPOs that do receive DSD funding the department could be more present, organised and committed to coordinating services. For instance, a proper geographical overview and subsequent division of a geographical area amongst all the NPOs may improve efficiency and counteract duplication of services. Generally NPOs appear to expect the DSD to “take the lead”, although a few informants recognise that NPOs also need to take responsibility to build a relationship with the government. Further, NPOs feel that government is currently not receptive to the voices of the non-profit sector. Yet, inclusion in policy-making also requires motivation and action from the NPOs, who must themselves ensure that their opinions and expertise is being considered.

All the NPOs express positive feelings towards inter-organisational co-operation. Most of the NPOs engage in systematic and well functioning collaboration with local schools, while co-operation between NPOs themselves is less consistent. Larger, more established NPOs regularly co-operate with other organisations, mainly to complement their own capacities but also to exchange information. By contrast, two of the smaller NPOs are not in contact with any other organisations in the community. Even the larger NPOs illustrate that they are too overwhelmed with their own (financial) problems to prioritise inter-organisational relationships. The financial crisis that many NPOs find themselves in may also intensify competition between such organisations, as staff members may be inclined protect their own programmes (as opposed to sharing ideas) in order to survive. At the same time, many NPOs believe that competition for funding may ultimately enhance programme quality and accountability.

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

This thesis has examined what type of support that NPOs providing after-school care for vulnerable children in two Cape Town townships receive from the government, whether such organisations co-operate with each other, and how they perceive the element of competition that may arise among NPOs.

As the literature demonstrates, South Africa's pluralist model of service delivery requires co-ordination as well as co-operation between the various stakeholders involved. Yet, based on initial observations in the townships of Philippi and Mfuleni, co-ordination of after-school care appeared to be limited, and it was not clear whether NPOs providing support to vulnerable children were co-operating with each other in meaningful ways that would ultimately optimise services delivered to their beneficiaries. As a result, the question of the government's assumed *responsibility* to co-ordinate and ensure that NPOs are aware of each other's existence was raised.

Arising from the research are several conclusions. Contracted service providers tend to expect government to take leadership and develop management strategies to co-ordinate the complex relations and interests between the various actors involved in social service delivery. However, NPOs themselves may also have to take responsibility for identifying other organisations that are working towards the same development goal in their community and make an effort to collaborate in order to maximise the overall outcome of after-school care. Such co-operation may take place in the form of exchanging skills and resources, or even the pooling of funds. Further, NPOs, as a set of actors, could come together with the government to help ensure that action is co-ordinated, in order to limit fragmentation.

This thesis has further demonstrated that the examined after-school programmes vary greatly both with regards to target criteria and activities that are offered. Outcomes are not always confirmed, as many of these NPOs do not

have any rigorous monitoring and evaluation routines in place. Thorough evaluations of such programmes and their outcomes must be conducted in order to assess the value of these services, and also determine what type of programme is most likely to have a sustainable impact on the future of vulnerable children. While privately funded NPOs cannot be prevented to run programmes as they see fit, organisations could perhaps be provided with incentives to homogenise such services by deciding on collective target criteria and essential elements that must be included in such services, based on recognised 'best-practice'. A co-ordinating body that oversees the provision of such services may indeed be required for such purposes, either led by the government or by a group of NPOs.

Funding is expected to be a continuous challenge for NPOs in South Africa, and there is presently a strong reliance on the government. If the DSD continues to fund NPOs that provide after-school care, it could consider following the example of the Department of Health more closely by being more present and efficiently assigning NPOs that are able to provide high-quality services to particular areas, fund them and act as a dependable guide to such NPOs. Also, funding will possibly have to be increased in order to enable NPOs to offer their 'on the ground' staff an appropriate salary and provide them with the necessary training. Yet, NPOs may have to face the reality that their survival is only supportable if their services are in fact needed in a community, in line with the objectives of the Children's Act, and if their programmes live up to established quality standards. Ultimately such organisations were founded to provide services to vulnerable populations, a purpose that may at times be somewhat overshadowed by NPO staff's concern for their employment. While securing jobs is desirable and important, especially considering South Africa's high unemployment rates, an NPO cannot expect government funding merely for the sake of its survival. Further, NPOs must be cautious when introducing services into communities, ensuring that their programmes' sustainability is secured. A sudden withdrawal of services can cause vulnerable children more harm than if the support had never been introduced in the first place.

Whether NPOs such as the ones examined in this study will increase co-operation with each other in the future and to what extent such partnerships will be consequential for social development in South Africa remains to be seen. If such collaboration would in fact sustainably improve service delivery would be another topic for research. It must also be remembered that co-operation does not only take place among NPOs themselves, but also between NPOs and schools, as well as Social Services. Although the scope of this thesis does not allow for an analysis of collected data regarding such relationships, this study has found that increased co-operation with Social Services would facilitate the work of these NPOs, and strengthen their ability to have an impact. It is also evident that schools are already significant partners for these NPOs, and that this relationship could even be intensified. For example, as a result of the interview with a teacher from a primary school that was conducted for this research, an opportunity for *Wola Nani* to make use of this school's facilities for their after-school programme arose. This new arrangement will solve the infrastructure problem that the organisation has been struggling with in Philippi. Partnerships of this kind benefit everyone; the NPOs that experience a lack of funding and space; the schools that are concerned about the well-being of their learners after school hours, and most of all the children, who have access to a safe and stimulating environment after the school day. The fact that such a collaboration with a school only emerged due to the contact established by the researcher implies that NPOs may need to show more initiative and creatively search for solutions to their problems during difficult financial times, instead of mainly relying on funding from the government.

Finally, it is undisputable that the precarious situation that many South African children find themselves in calls for maximum efforts by both government and civil society, as not only the wellbeing of individuals, but also the future of the nation is at stake. South Africa relies on well-balanced and educated human resources across the demographic spectrum for continuous social and economic development, a goal that will continue to be undermined if the majority of the young generation, especially from previously disadvantaged groups, are not given the opportunity to develop the resilience (Swartz et al., 2010 & Mueller et

al., 2011) that will allow them to reach their full potential. Thus, interventions that address behavioural and social capacities of disadvantaged and vulnerable children and youth (Swartz et al., 2010), such as after-school care, are essential, and must be adequately funded, staffed, and implemented. The foundation for such undertakings has been set by the Children's Act, and the government, in co-operation with the non-profit sector, is already conducting much valuable work. However, the management problems in the social service sector, portrayed by Patel (2012), require a closer investigation, in order to identify existing gaps in co-ordination and co-operation between the various actors and to realise how strong inter-organisational relationships (that are effective in the South African context) can be developed.

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Appendix A: Interview guide for OVC co-ordinators at NPOs

General

- Can you tell me a bit about your organisation and the work that your organisation does?
- I would be interested in hearing more about the work that you do. What are your responsibilities at the organisation?
- From where does your organisation get its funding?
- Can you describe the outcomes that your programme is aiming for?

Beneficiaries

- Who are the children who attend your organisation's programme?
- What kind of guidelines do you have in order to define which children get to attend your programmes?
- How do children and their caregivers usually get in touch with your organisation?
- Do the children in your programme mainly live in a specific part of Philippi/Mfuleni or do they come from all over the area?
- How do you go about tracking the children in your programme?
- In what way do you feel that the OVC who have attended your programme are better off by participating in your programme? How does your programme improve their lives?
- What do you do if a child suddenly stops attending the programme?
- Do you know of any children in your programme who have previously attended other, similar programmes in the area?
- Do you feel that there are many OVC in this area who are in need but who don't get support from programmes like yours?

Co-operation

- How much do you know about other NPOs or churches in the area that are providing services for OVC?
- Do you ever get in contact with other NPOs who are providing services for

OVC?

- Do you ever refer children to other organisations who support children?
- How would you feel about more co-operation between different NPOs?
- How is your co-operation with the schools in the area?
- In your opinion, what should the role of the schools be when it comes to OVC?
- In what ways do you work together with government clinics?
- What are your experiences with social services in the area?

Competition

- What do you feel that your organisation does differently than other NPOs working with OVC?
- Do you feel that other organisations are interested in working together with your organisation? (Why / why not?)
- Do you feel that there is competition over government funds between organisations working with OVC?
- What do you feel stands in the way of co-operation between different organisations who are dealing with OVC?

Co-ordination

- Does your organisation receive guidelines from your funders, such as the DSD, that your programme must follow?
- Does the DSD specify any criteria with regards to the children who are to attend your programmes / do they have to fulfil any criteria to be eligible to attend the programme?
- Do your funders ever visit your programme here in Philippi/Mfuleni, to see what you are doing and to evaluate your programme?
- What is your experience of the Department of Social Development, who is a main funder of many OVC programmes?
- In your opinion, what *should* the role of the DSD be concerning OVC programmes?

Challenges & suggestions

- What are the main challenges that you face in your work with your organisation?
- What would you change or improve if you had the power and resources to do so?
- In your opinion, is there anything that the DSD could do to facilitate the work of organisations like _____?
- Do you feel that there is anything in general that the DSD could do to improve the situation for OVC?

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Appendix B: Interview guide for Principals

General

- Can you tell me about your main responsibilities as a principal at this school?
- What are the main challenges that you and your school are facing?

OVC

- What are your experiences of dealing with orphans and vulnerable children at this school?
- How severe do you estimate that the situation is at this school when it comes to children who are vulnerable?
- Does the school differentiate between children who have been orphaned or made vulnerable because of HIV/AIDS, and children who are 'vulnerable' due to other factors?
- What are your thoughts on putting specific emphasis on children who have been orphaned and made vulnerable by *HIV/AIDS*?
- What kind of stories do you hear from the teachers regarding OVC?
- What do you feel are the main challenges that this school faces when it comes to vulnerable children?
- What kind of routines does the school have in place for cases where you suspect that a child lives in extremely precarious circumstances or where a child is considered 'vulnerable'?
- Do you have any particular staff members that are in charge of dealing with children who need help because they are vulnerable?

Co-operation and co-ordination

- Are there any external resources that you would normally contact in cases where a child is in need?
- Are you working together with any NPOs or churches that might be able to offer support to vulnerable children?
- What are your instructions from 'above' regarding interventions for children who have been orphaned or made vulnerable?

- In your opinion, what should the school's responsibility be regarding OVC?
- How does your co-operation with social services work?
- How do you feel about the school social workers, is this resource sufficient to provide help to the children who are in need?
- Who do you feel should ultimately be responsible to help children who are particularly vulnerable due to various factors, if they don't receive the help and care that they need in their homes?
- What do you think that schools can be expected to do in order to help such children?
- What kind of support would you as a principal need from external sources to improve the situation of vulnerable children?
- If you had the resources that are required, what would you do to improve the assistance for children who need help because of their vulnerable status?

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Appendix C: Interview guide for Teachers

General

- Can you tell me a bit about your work at this school?
- Can you tell me about the main challenges that you face on a day-to-day basis when teaching at this school?

OVC

- As a teacher you are in contact with many children from precarious backgrounds and who live in underprivileged households. What is your experience with such children, especially children who have been orphaned or are vulnerable due to factors such as HIV/AIDS?
- Does the school differentiate between children who have been orphaned or made vulnerable because of HIV/AIDS, and children who are 'vulnerable' due to other factors?
- As a teacher, how do you approach a child that you feel is 'vulnerable'?
- How do you determine if something needs to be done to help a child?
- Do you have any particular staff members who are in charge of dealing with children who need help because they are vulnerable due to reasons such as HIV/AIDS?
- Who do you contact when you have a case that urgently needs attention?
- Does your school have routines in place for intervening when you suspect that a child lives in a particularly precarious situation?

Co-operation and co-ordination

- Do you know of any NPOs or churches in the area who provide services for OVC?
- Do you know if your school co-operates with any NPOs who provide services for OVC?
- Does your school work with any churches that provide services for OVC?
- What is your experience with social services?

- Do you know what typically happens once the school social worker has been contacted?
- Are there any other external resources that you would normally contact in a case where a child is in need?
- Do you know if the school receives any direction from somewhere about how to deal with cases of vulnerable children?

Challenges and suggestions

- *Who* do you feel should be responsible for helping such children?
- *What* should be done for these children?
- In your opinion, what *should* the school's responsibility be when it comes to helping children who have been orphaned or made vulnerable?
- In your opinion, are school social workers able to do enough to help these children?
- How do you feel that the school would benefit from more co-operation with NPOs, clinics and churches when it comes to helping children in need?
- What other interventions do you believe would be necessary to help such children?

Appendix D: Interview guide for Key informant

General

- Can you tell me a little bit about what you know about services that are available for orphans and vulnerable children in Cape Town?
- What does government policy around vulnerable children seek to achieve?
- What kind of services do you feel are the most valuable for children who are growing up in vulnerable circumstances?

Co-ordination

- What is your general impression of the delegation of services from the government to NPOs?
- Are the government's expectations of what NPOs should be doing for vulnerable children realistic?
- What additional support would be appropriate for the government to offer the NPOs they are funding?
- To what extent do you feel like government departments holds NPOs accountable for the funding that they receive? Is the government thorough enough when it comes to quality checks?
- Is it viable to expect the government to co-ordinate the work of the NPOs that they are funding?

Co-operation

- To what extent do you feel that NPOs in Cape Town are generally co-operating and networking with each other?
- How common is duplication of services for OVC, according to your knowledge?
- What do you feel stands in the way of co-operation between NPOs?
- In your experience, does improved co-operation between NPOs allow for more effective and efficient service delivery?
- What is your impression of the co-operation between NPOs with other stakeholders, such as social services and schools?

Competition

- Does the government funding of NGOs in South Africa increase the competition (for funding) between such organisations?
- What potential consequences could arise from such competition?

Recommendations

- In your opinion, could more be done for vulnerable children with the resources that are available today?
- What kind of system do you feel would ensure that less children 'fall through the cracks'?
- What are your thoughts on the role of civil society in protecting vulnerable children? How much can be expected of the state vs. civil society?

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