

**A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE ROLES AND STRATEGIES OF  
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT: A CASE  
STUDY OF PLANACT IN JOHANNESBURG**

by

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## PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

I declare that the A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE ROLES AND STRATEGIES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF PLANACT IN JOHANNESBURG is my personal work and has never been submitted for any examination or used by any student in any university. All the sources used and quoted in this work have been acknowledged in full references and quotations.

This ...09<sup>th</sup> day of June...2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chisanga' or similar, written in a cursive style.

A K KAPUNDU

Student Number: 48571024

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my family

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is a dream come true to see this work come to an end. This has been a long journey and the completion of this work gives joy to my heart.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who supported me without getting annoyed as I received all kind of supports during the course of writing this dissertation:

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## **ABSTRACT**

The rise of civil society organisations in South Africa is crucial to development as it contributes to the bridging of the communication gap between civil society and local government organisations and municipalities and promotes access to resources. The contribution of civil society organisations to development has been widely acknowledged as they are involved in service delivery, advocacy, innovation and poverty reduction initiatives. In spite of the development work done by civil society organisations in developing countries, they still face challenges in promoting development as poverty, inequality and unemployment persist. This research focused on the social capital approach as a strategy for the development of local communities in South Africa. The social capital approach involves increasing social stability and enhancement of development issues. Social capital relies on the basic idea that “it is not what you know but who you know”. Social capital refers mostly to social cohesion, which makes a community more committed to better living conditions for all. People in communities have the capacity to improve the quality of their lives with the support of all sectors, civil society, the state and the market by letting the people in communities get involved in all the stages of the programmes because they know better from living in those communities.

Civil society organisations can meaningfully add value to economic and social development in any third world country through their work. The government, the market and civil society can complement each other and add value to the development of the country. This study employed a qualitative research design. It used in-depth interviews, direct observation and focus-group interviews to collect data, which was later transcribed and analysed thematically.

The main focus of this study was to critically evaluate the roles and strategies of civil society organisations in the development of South African communities, using Planact as a case study. The specific objectives were to: 1) To explore the role Planact plays in development in Johannesburg; 2) To evaluate how Planact uses social capital as a strategy in promoting development if at all; 3) To explore the challenges of civil society organisations, particularly that of Planact in the development process of poor communities and 4) To make possible recommendations in the light of the roles and strategies of civil societies identified in analysing Planact 's strategy in development process for the poor.

This study found that as a civil society organisation Planact is acting as a voice for the voiceless through its advocacy programme. It contributes to policy making, good governance and accountability. In addition, Planact promotes participation and assists in education and training. Planact uses different strategies to promote development in the community, such as mentoring, promoting integrated human settlement, using technology in networking, encouraging participation, community economic development and social organisation. Furthermore, the organisation uses forums, awareness campaigns and empowerment as strategies to promote development in the community. However, the study found that the organisation faces challenges because of limited funding. The community also encounters certain challenges as they engage with the organisation, for example, lack of accountability, unresponsiveness and inaccessibility. It was noted that civil society organisations should adopt a higher priority in development planning and practice and should allow the participation of poor people in the development process.

## **KEY WORDS:**

Development, Underdevelopment, Developing countries, Organisation, Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, Poverty, Poverty alleviation, Inequality, Unemployment, Planact, Community, Advocacy, Good governance, Accountability, Economic growth, Social capital, Participation, Empowerment.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organisation
<b>CIVICUS</b>	Global Civil Society Alliance
<b>CNES</b>	Citizen's Network on Essential Services
<b>CoGTA</b>	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
<b>COSATU</b>	Congress of South African Trade Unions
<b>CS</b>	Civil Society
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>GEAR</b>	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
<b>LPM</b>	Landless People's Movement
<b>NDA</b>	National Development Agency
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NPO</b>	Non-Profit Organisation

<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Program
<b>SWEAT</b>	Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Task Force
<b>TAI</b>	The Access Initiative
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational and Scientific Organisation
<b>WSSD</b>	World Summit on Sustainable Development

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction and Definitions

This chapter introduces the study by providing a brief background of civil society organisations (CSOs) and their roles. The chapter discusses the problem statement, research questions, aim and objectives guiding the study. The task of this research was to explore the roles and strategies of CSOs in development programs of the developing countries in general and Johannesburg, South Africa in particular. The research discusses the role and contribution of Planact in development programs in the city of Johannesburg where the organisation is based. The researcher describes how Planact practices social capital as a strategy in promoting development for the benefit of the people in need and economically disadvantaged. The research also discusses the challenges Planact faces as a civil society organisation, in promoting development in selected areas.

Civil society (CS) is defined in many ways according to the context and the way different fields understand it. However, even if there are different contexts and content many agree that civil society include institutions and organisations which can take different directions but for the benefit of the country's development. For this reason, civil society is in general an arena outside the state domain but not separated from the state. Government and civil society organisations are considered under civil society because every human being is a civilian. CSOs play an important role in meeting the needs of people who are not able to sustain themselves economically and socially. The rise of CSOs in South Africa is crucial because the work of CSOs play as the bridges of

communication between municipalities and local people; the work of CSOs also promotes access to resources from local and national government. The researcher is interested in knowing how CSOs play this crucial role in the development of communities and the facilitation of poverty reduction. Carroll (2006) states, that civil CSOs as agents of change often find themselves between government and the private sector in meeting development outcomes.

Development is a vast, dynamic and complex concept with diverse dimensions such as the economic, social, political, and institutional aspects. Kongolo (2012:2) defines development as having stable institutions such as the social, human, and financial in a country, city or community. For this study, the term “development” will include socio-economic structures and social relations, factors are summarized in the Millennium Development Goals, which focus more on eliminating poverty. CSOs often use several strategies in carrying out development to influence the process of development in poor areas. According to a World Bank report (2014), 2.5 billion people worldwide do not have access to sanitation and clean water, and over 1 billion live in extreme poverty. These problems have been identified by many scholars and developmental programs who study the way for reducing poverty to bring out and initiate programs and strategies that aim to address poverty, inequality and unemployment in many countries in the developing countries.

CSOs are involved in service delivery, advocacy, innovation and poverty reduction initiatives (Lewis, 2005; Carroll, 1992). However, as these organisations work with different people, organisations, and donors, they face challenges in promoting development. Development process is very challenging programs, and despite the development work that have done by many organisations in developing countries, poverty, inequality, and unemployment persist. One cannot attribute failures to a single cause. These organisations face multiple challenges that hinder them from achieving their goals and these problems vary from one organisation to another, from one

country or city to another. According to Edwards (2008), insufficient financing, litigation and tight regulations, lack of co-operation from government institutions have posed problems to many organisations. CSOs in South Africa came because of meeting the needs to reduce poverty which was created by the apartheid regime. The NDA (2008) points out that in South Africa access to financial resources is a significant limitation for many organisations. The capacity of staff to implement and achieve targets for the development is a big a problem for organisations as many staff wish for higher salaries and volunteers tend to leave at any time when they are offered a stable job somewhere else in South Africa or outside (NDA, 2008:27). Therefore, the evaluation of CSOs' roles together with an effective use of social capital approach can provide some answers to most of the challenges CSOs face in South Africa and in developing countries.

Without excluding other strategies, this research follows the social capital approach as a strategy used to promote development in selected communities in Johannesburg, South Africa. The social capital approach is all about increasing social stability through social cohesion and improving development issues. Social capital relies on the basic idea that “it is not what you know but who you know” (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000:2). Social capital refers mostly to social cohesion, which makes members of a community or any social groupings more committed to better living conditions for all (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). The research focused on the evaluation of the role of Planact in its three programs which are integrated human settlement, participatory governance and community economic development (Planact Annual Report 2013/2014:4).

This research investigated the roles and strategies of Planact organisation as one of CSOs in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Planact organisation was chosen because of its focus on expanding local development and improving the quality of life for persons living poverty. This organisation aims at eradicating poverty and expanding equality through encouraging and assisting

with human settlement, local government transformation and supporting community-based organisations. It was intended that an understanding of the operations and projects of Planact would help explain the roles and strategies of civil society organisations in development programmes. CSOs follow different theories and approaches in promoting development to end or eradicate poverty. These include modernisation, dependency, neoliberalism, sustainable development, human development and post-development (Todaro 2000). Post-development theory is best understood with the social capital and community empowerment approach to assisting people in poverty to lift themselves up. Preston, (Former President of the World Bank) argues that development Theory by itself has little value unless it is applied, unless it translates into results, and unless it improves people's lives (quoted in Todaro 2000: 77). Here the social capital approach is a great approach which helps to improve and process development in developing countries and this is the approach which was followed in this research. In short, social capital approach brings people together to achieve a common goal, such as socio-economic development (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). The social capital approach is well seen in the way people commit to working together for the common benefit with the assistance of local organisations or community-based organisations.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

A report by Statistics South Africa (2014) points to the fact that by 2011, 45.5% of South Africans were living in poverty. This figure consisted mainly of black South Africans who were living in both rural and urban areas. At least 27% of South Africans are unemployed and 56.8% of citizens live below the poverty line (Stats SA, 2016). About basic household services, only 73.4% of South African citizens have access to running water, 85.4% of electricity and 77.9% to sanitation. Only 77.7% of the nation lives in formal dwellings, while 23.3% of the nation live in

informal settlements and rural settings (Stats SA, 2016). These challenges persist despite efforts put in by both the government and CSOs to address them.

CSOs are known to be agents of socio-economic change as they promote development through the work they do. CSOs also promote democracy and good governance and create safe spaces where those living in extreme poverty can make their voices heard (Lewis, 2005). However, the development process continues to face diverse challenges such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, which continue to increase. On the other one hand, skills development programs, education and internships continue to intensify creating opportunities for individuals to be employed and follow entrepreneurial ventures. In South Africa poverty, unemployment and inequality continue to increase not only in black communities but among white communities too. CSOs in South Africa, have assumed various roles as well as employ different strategies to tackle these development problems. However, the problems persist and continue to affect the development process. For the points above, the researcher would like to evaluate the strategies used by civil society to combat these problems of the development process in South Africa. Therefore, the focus of this study was to critically evaluate the roles and strategies of Planact organisation in the development as a case study. This is because the Planact organisation works directly with community-based organisations (CBOs), and the people at the grassroots to design and implement projects aimed at addressing some of the development challenges facing the community.

Planact, which is used as the research's case study, is one such organisation that works with local communities in providing skills development training, technical advice and other assistance and are committed to local development for the benefit of the poor people in the communities. A significant part of their operations entails research and advocacy at policy levels. At the local level,

Planact support and mobilize community processes that encourage good governance. Despite all these programs and initiatives implemented by Planact, unemployment, poverty and inequality continue to rise in communities where they operate. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the roles and strategies used by organisations in development by answering the questions below.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The main question of this study is “what are the roles and strategies of civil society organisations in aiding development in South Africa?”

To address the central question of this study, the following research questions guided the data collection:

- 1) What roles does Planact play in aiding development in the Johannesburg area?
- 2) How does Planact use social capital as a strategy in promoting development in Johannesburg?
- 3) What challenges does Planact face as a civil society organisation in promoting development?
- 4) What developmental lessons can we learn from Planact as a civil society organisation?

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were:

- To explore the roles Planact plays in aiding development in Johannesburg.
- To evaluate how Planact uses social capital as a strategy in promoting development if at all.

- To explore the challenges faced by civil society organisations, particularly that of Planact, when promoting development processes in poor communities.
- To make recommendations on the roles and strategies that civil societies can implement to assist with developmental processes in poor socioeconomic communities.

### **1.5 Motivation for the study**

There are numerous studies that have considered the role that CSOs playing in development in South Africa. Scholars have also looked into the strategies that CSOs used in the alleviation of poverty in developing countries (Brown & Kalegaonkar, 1999; NDA, 2008; Banks & Hulme, 2012; Lewis & Kanji, 2009). Despite their roles and strategies in development, South Africa and other developing countries suffer chronic poverty. South Africa is a country that is classified as an emerging economy or middle-class income country but many people living in townships and middle-income communities lack basic needs and live in poverty. The researcher carried out few studies that help understand how the use of the social capital approach in development can help organisations to better implement development initiatives. The researcher was motivated to study how social capital approach can be linked to the work of CSOs to improve the lives of those living in poverty. This study contributes in filling that gap.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

Many studies have sought to elaborate on strategies to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable segments of the population. However, this study, which seeks to evaluate the roles and strategies of CSOs in development, will enable ordinary citizens to understand the roles that CSOs play in the development of their communities and how they can engage with CSOs in an attempt to improve their living conditions.

To NGOs, social scientists, policymakers and development practitioners the study will give a clear and more profound understanding of the use of the social capital approach as an effective strategy in the development process among developing poor communities.

The study may also show the ability of CSOs to facilitate sustainable development and possibly shed light on the great responsibility they have towards the attainment of developmental objectives internationally as well as nationally. It was believed that the study could also add to the knowledge base of the good approaches suited to implementing community development programmes which would inform both the government and policymakers.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The study was limited to the roles and strategies employed by Planact in development in post-apartheid South Africa. An analysis of the roles and strategies of CSOs in development should account for the activities of all the groups or all types of CSOs in the developing countries. However, this research only focused on Planact's activities as one of many organisations. The study was carried out at the premises of Planact, which are based in Braamfontein and in Orlando East, part of the city of Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **1.8 Research methodology**

A qualitative research method design was used for the collection and the analysis of the data of this study. This design was preferred because it promoted a deeper understanding of Planact roles and strategies in development. It made it possible to explain the roles and strategies of CSOs in development. Furthermore, the research approach was flexible and allowed participants to express themselves in their own words (Babbie, 2011). To better investigate the subject, the

researcher has chosen a single case study method. In addition, the use of a single case study allows for costly doable resources and timely manner completion of this work. Therefore, the case study design method was found to be best suited for the study.

The respondents for the interviews of the study included the Planact five staff members and fifteen beneficiaries of Planact services. The group of respondents comprised of both females and males, and various age groups. The study employed the purposive sampling technique to select participants for the study. Marshall (1996:522) underlines that with the sampling technique the number of people interviewed is not important as the criteria used in selecting the interviewees. While I agree with Marshall's school of thought, which underscores the importance of the criteria used in selecting interviewees, it is crucial to note that the number of people selected for research is equality important.

The study used in depth interviews particularly employing semi-structured form of questions. Semi-structured interviews fit the context of the study because South African cultures are more verbal and nondirective. Because people in this context share more stories before they can a point, it was important for the researcher to create space for them not to feel controlled but at the same time to offer guidance. These interviews were conducted face-to-face, which afforded the researcher the opportunity to observe the body language of the respondents and probe follow up questions where necessary. In-depth interviews and observations were used because they allowed the researcher to obtain as much information as possible from participants in their natural settings. These interviews were recorded using a tape recorder and later transcribed for analysis.

In this research, the thematic analysis of data was used. According to Patton and Cochran (2002:23), add that, with the thematic analysis of data the researcher tries to find common themes

that come up repeatedly and then summarizes the different views to develop themes for the study. In order to maintain the rigor of the study, triangulation method of data sources was used, which include: literature review, observation and interviews. Patton and Cochran (2002:26) argued that the researcher creates a line of evidences that assists in strengthening the data by triangulating.

## **1.9 Ethical considerations**

I presented a clearance certificate and letter of introduction from the University of South Africa (UNISA) to the Planact organisation to assure them that I am a student from UNISA. Before I met with the participants at Planact I first submitted a formal letter requesting access to their organisation, which was granted. After receiving approval, a second informed consent in writing was provided to all participants which had a part for them to sign. I also verbally explained the purpose of my research to each individual participant and explained to them the use of the voice recording device and the procedure for the interview. They were informed of their right to withdrawal at any time they felt like doing so. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity as their names would not be linked to their responses. The study is not expected to cause harm to any of the participants.

## **1.10 Outline of chapters**

### **Chapter one: Introduction and overview of the research**

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the study, problem statement, rationale, research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study. The methodology followed in the study as well as ethical considerations are also explained.

### **Chapter two: Literature Review - Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)**

The second chapter discusses CSOs: their structures, strategies and challenges both locally and in the developing countries. Furthermore a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of CSOs will be outlined here. Finally, this chapter will examine the relationships between civil society organisations and other social service sectors, namely the government and private sectors.

### **Chapter three: Theoretical Framework - Social Capital Approach**

The third chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the social capital approach to development as used by CSOs. Here the researcher highlighted the importance of this approach as well as the way Planact organisation uses social capital approach to engage in development and assist people in different communities. The chapter surveys also social capital approach used in a selected group of countries.

### **Chapter four: Research Methodology**

This fourth chapter discusses the qualitative research design used in the study. The chapter further explains different methods of data collection as well as the means of ensuring credibility of data. Lastly, chapter four examines ethical issues.

### **Chapter five: Research Findings**

In this fifth chapter, the historical background and structure of Planact are explained. The challenges and achievements of the organisation during Planact's years of operation are highlighted. Chapter five further discusses Planact's roles and strategies used in development in the development of communities. At the end, this chapter will present the findings and analysis of the outcome of fieldwork conducted with the aim of answering the research questions.

### **Chapter six: Conclusion and Recommendations**

The sixth chapter gives a comprehensive summary of the study, outlines possible recommendations to policy, practice and theory in the field of civil society and development.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

To conclude the chapter, it is clear that this chapter one introduced the study by providing the problem statement, research questions and objectives, motivation and significance of the study. The chapter one further provided a brief description of the methodology followed in the study, explanation of the scope of the study and the chapter in the last part provided the outline of the dissertation's chapters. The next chapter will discuss literature review that is related to the role and strategies of CSOs in aiding development.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW – CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOS)**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter one introduced the study by providing the problem statement, research questions and objectives, motivation for the study, methodology, and significance of the study as well as the chapter outline of the dissertation. This chapter will discuss relevant literatures on the roles and strategies of CSOs in development. For one to understand what CSOs are and the work they do, it is important to look the definition and give a brief historical understanding of civil society in general before we can define CSOs.

#### **2.2 The concept of civil society**

Like with every human attempt to improve the quality and condition of people in societies, the term civil society has come into play to improving lives. Civil society as a concept can be traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, Kaldor (2003) states that, the term gained popularity later in the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. This popularity can be attributed to social agreements and the theories of individual rights, human equality, as well as political concerns (Kaldor, 2003:6). Kaldor (2003) argues that Aristotle explained political community and society as a place where free citizens are governed by the rule of law of that society; a place in which the rulers of that time had to put the public interest before theirs to exemplify the meaning of the concept civil society.

Generally civil society is composed of three sectors: government, public (which is known to have CSOs), and businesses sector; this last sector is after their own interest rather than the interest of the people in society. According to Bruyn (2005:29), civil society is defined as the “Third

Sector.” Social scientists define civil society as the private sector taking on qualities of the public sector but maintaining its original rights and privacy. It is considered a new culture taking root as divisions such as “public vs. private,” and “individual vs. community” are resolved (Bruyn, 2005:29). However, individuals are human being living in communities with those private and public need and these are the people who will choose to join or create organisations to support other human being in communities against political and administrative work that tend to delay and decentralize measures to develop local communities. Civil societies were there to remove dishonest conducts mainly from politicians. Gray, et al (2006) points out that civil society was a public gathering for people to meet and talk about their problems and try to find solutions. These solutions found expression in the rule of law as there was a desire to ensure equality among all citizens since under the law, everybody should be equal (Rousseau, 1984).

With the need to find solutions to the problem many communities were facing came the idea of creating proper and focused organisations to assist people in different needs through recognizable membership and networks. Edwards (2014) highlights that these networks and voluntary memberships associations includes all different kinds of organisations such as community based-organisations, unions, labor unions, professionals’ associations, church institutions or associations, social movements and many more (Edwards, 2014:20). In the early days the creation of civil society organisations was mainly to cater for the needs of community members, but it has now extended to advocacy and holding the government accountable democratically.

After surveying various perspectives civil society, it is equally important to differentiate civil society from civil society organisations. While there are many ways differences can be established, for the purpose of this research it suffices to note that, on the one hand, civil society

refers mostly to social domain different from the state or the market where citizens come together to negotiate their relations with the state, with each other, and with the private sectors and international institutions. Civil society organisations, on the other hand comprise of a vast range of organisations of different sizes and forms. These organisations can be identified by their identities, values, which maybe formal or informal voluntary organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In addition, these organisations may be industrial, commercial and professional associations, not-for profit academic, health and cultural institutions, unions, faith based communities, social movements, and self-help and community groups. It is important to mention that this list is not exhaustive.

### **2.3 The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)**

CSOs are under the CS umbrella and are voluntary associations that come together for the benefit of the people struggling in communities. These are organisations are created by community members or volunteers who may or may not be part of that community. According to Ibrahim and Hulme (2010:3) CSOs are a combination of many organisations and associations such as faith-based, religious and community, media and academic groups, non-governmental organisations, recreational and cooperative groups, and trade unions. The World Bank puts civil society organisations to be a variety of collection of non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations that are formed to represent the interests and values of their members or others, based on a common view point which could either be religious, ethical, political, cultural, scientific, or philanthropic in consideration” (World Economic Forum, 2013: 8).

In other words, CSOs are believed to be groups that people form to promote their rights and voice their concerns through mediation and negotiation and ultimately, reach out where

government has failed and solve intractable problems in their communities such as environmental degradation, poor education, and access to housing, sanitation and clean water. The formation of these organisations takes the form of associations, community-based organisations, unions, networks, social movements, faith-based organisations and social organisations with such special and unique features as voluntary, self-managed and non-profit organisations.

Shaw and Izumi (2014) define CSOs as associations and collections of NGOs and institutions designed to have an interest in citizens. Brown and Kalegaonkar (1999:2) state that CSOs encompass the values, norms, structures of voluntary associations and different methods of communication as they provide information that allows citizen consciousness and activity. Most often, CSOs in conversations is taken differently from government sector and private sector. The government organisations focus on providing public goods and putting together resources, while the private sector focuses on producing goods and services as well as organizing funds over market discussion. CSOs look at providing the goods that belong to the community as identified by a communal group as well as attempt to put resources together through social distributions and values.

Lewis (2002:570) and Putnam (1993) share the same sentiments when describing CSOs as groups of a people formed for communal determinations which are separated from the private and the public sectors. It is usually regarded as being situated beyond the household. In addition to the above views, CSOs is more of people's concerns focusing on giving people a voice, which is not heard by government and the business sector. CSOs focuses on encouraging participation of all people in public work (UNDP, 2001:12). CSOs are made up but not limited to registered charities, welfare organisations, development Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), community groups, trade unions, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, and self-help groups. The

UNDP further classifies them as non-state actors whose main objective is not to generate profits, neither to pursue the governing power of the state. But CSOs seek to mobilize people to promote common goals and interests (UNDP, 2001:12). Ranchod (2007:2) highlights that CSOs could be any institution or organisation which is not of government. CSOs are institutions which are considered very important agents in the development process.

These organisations often work with the state, private sector and local communities to implement development programs. CSOs have diversity of financial resources that help them to sustain. The financial resources of CSOs may comprise of aid donated by outside donors and the government, or contributions from individuals. Such diversity of sources of income demonstrates that although independent from the state, CSOs may receive funds from the state as subsidies (Cööðng, 2008:15-16). These finances sources assist all organisations to pay salaries of those working in the organisations and contribute to the assistance needed in community. For example, if there is need of building a community center in the community, the organisation in question, will have to work on finding funds to build the community center through donors or government funds.

#### **2.4 The role of civil society organisations**

A discussion about the roles of CSOs should account for all informal and formal organisations, associations; faith based organisations, the media, academics as well as cultural groups as they promote development in one way or another. Many scholars have written on the roles of CSOs. For instance, Igbuzor (2010:3) notes that CSOs have two main functions, namely a precautionary function against the State to balance, rebuild and democratize it as well as advocacy. In the same light, CSOs are increasingly calling for accountability through more

efficient service delivery and by exerting pressure on politicians. Thus, they promote participation and empowerment by giving a voice to the voiceless to express themselves (Igbuzor, 2010:3). For Mkhwanazi (2013:3) CSOs are promoters of economic development and can be regarded as having the solution to poverty globally. The importance of their role is demonstrated by their inclusion in world forums such as the World Economic Forum and World Social Forum and by being acknowledged through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the development partners sought for to assist in the fight against poverty. This shows that CSOs are grasping opportunities to participate in development activities as development partners (Nzimakwe, 2008:91).

According to Ibrahim and Hulme (2010:3), the role of CSOs here aims at correcting what the private and government sector are not able to do for the people in the society. However, CSOs focus more on collective relationships of an associational nature. This gives CSOs values on which to carry their agenda as the associational characteristic expresses the power of people within community groups. Some organisations with determination assist small groups of people to organize themselves in meeting their needs. CSOs create some microfinance groups to assist groups of people especially women with financial needs (Ibrahim and Hulme, 2010:5). Furthermore, CSOs are vital to push for economic reforms, promote accountability, transparency, and human rights. In addition, CSOs are for delivery of basic services fighting for poverty and inequalities in societies. CSOs oversee “building constituencies for poverty-reduction, sustainable development and international cooperation” (Oakley, 2003:33). However, Whitfield (2009) argues that most CSOs in developing countries spend most of their time responding to donor initiatives and trying to make their priorities fit the donor’s agenda in an attempt to secure funds rather than being responsive to their members.

Furthermore, CSOs are vital to push for good governance, participation in politics and democracy, they held the state accountable to promote human rights and freedom of speech. They also develop a way of growing democracy and making people aware of their right. CSOs ensure that people living in poverty are the first ones to benefit from democracy (Diamond, 1991: 7). Through CSOs activities, NGOs take on different responsibilities such healthcare, reliefs, education, micro credit provision, housing provisions, and many more, they help with lots of campaigns and they train people in different spheres (Ibrahim and Hulme, 2010:8). Advocacy involves lobbying as well as mobilizing the public to raise awareness and campaigning around particular issues that affect members of society (Ibrahim and Hulme, 2010:8). In addition, there are several activities which NGOs carry out such as monitoring government compliance with the conventions of international bodies, for example, in human rights, conflict resolution and reconciliation (Kaldor, 2003:13). According to Mafunisa (2004:492) CSOs are formed to strengthen democracy, especially in countries with unstable governments.

Different NGOs are working to promote democracy at national and global levels by supporting groups that are involved in influencing policy decisions on provision of basic service needed by many people such as education, clean water, health care, and electricity. When a government chooses to be democratic there is assurance of effective governance and the expectation to address poverty reduction, sustainable development, and social justice for everyone to benefit. Igbuzor (2010:13) states that CSOs are there with the objective of creating awareness and raising people's consciousness. CSOs build and organize the capability of rights holders as well as advocate for pro-poor policies. The role of CSOs is also to effectively participate in the designing, the preparation, the implementation, as well as the monitoring of anti-poverty activities, even though the key activities done by many NGOs are capacity building and training; provisions

of project management and microfinance as well as advocacy (Igbuzor, 2010:13). CSOs have the role of empowering citizens to know their rights. CSOs also lobby the government to be accountable to its people and work transparently, especially in the administration and financial departments (Noyoo 2007:14). For example, The Access Initiative known as TAI is said to be the largest network of civil society organisations in the world committed to making sure that citizens have the right and ability to influence decisions about issues that affect them. TAI organisation evaluates government performance on accountability, transparency and inclusiveness. This organisation uses the feedback of such assessments to open dialogue with governments in legal and institutional reforms that aim to promote citizens' right to get the information, increase community participation, and have access to justice (Carr and Norman, 2008:371). However, Lind (1997) notes that community based organisations (CBOs) do not provide an automatic route to empowerment of their members always as it is sometimes not clear if they look after the interests of each member of the communities.

## **2.5 Civil Society Organisations in the developing countries**

The perception of civil society may be understood in diverse traditions according to the area of study and environment in the developing countries. However, for this study, the concept civil society organisations are referred to a comprehensive collection of non-governmental organisations that work in the public domain with the main aim to express the interests and values of citizens. CSOs emphasize the struggle for democracy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Different organisations of all kinds such as voluntary organisations and NGOs, social movements, unions, faith communities, cultural, professional and commercial associations, have benefited from and contributed to the democratic achievements of countries in the developing world. CSOs have helped to reform authoritarian national governments, and have promoted citizens'

participation in local governments and in numerous community activities. In the developing countries CSOs have been working effectively with governments to promote human rights and security on issues such as landmines and have challenged government policies on development trade and environment.

For Noyoo, Patel and Loffell (2006:12), the rise of civil society organisations in Latin America came as a result of struggles for the fall of dictatorship regimes in the 1960s and 1970s. In most of the Sub-Saharan countries in Africa, the formation of civil society organisations was initiated by the need for democracy and equality. While in South Africa in the early 1990s, the rise of CSOs was as a result of fighting for democracy, participation and solidarity among people in society (Lewis 2005). Today, the rise of CSOs in developing countries has broadened to include engagement in dialogue, negotiating with governments as well as with international and local non-profit organisations for the best interests of the community or its members. These organisations play different roles in the process of reducing problems in societies and increasing welfare. In other words, they play a key role in reducing poverty in poor communities. But what is poverty reduction? Morris (1998) argues that poverty reduction comes with economic growth, which implies more jobs and of course more income for people to sustain themselves.

According to the UNDP report (2015:1), a good strategy that CSOs are adopting is influencing the development of policies and ensuring that these policies are implemented for the benefit of all people, especially the poor. CSOs create platform where people meet to create awareness of issues they face according to Lewis (2005), CSOs organize consultations with all parties, namely communities, government institutions and international donors for sustainable actions. Pansegrouw (2005:4), states that the strategies for development include activities such as networking, participation, communication and monitoring of outcomes as well as commitment

from all parties involved. Many CSOs which have adopted the social capital approach puts a great deal of focus on public participation, which not only builds capacity but also encourages citizens to take responsibility and participate in processes of individual and community development (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

People's needs and expectations in developing countries are high, as they need more than the basics requirements and their need extend to infrastructure and development of social and human capital are needed at the same time. CSOs operate all over in developing countries by participating in comprehensive issues like protection of the environment, reduction of pollution in the cities, fight against HIV and AIDS, fight for human rights, and the cancelling of debts in many developing countries (World Economic Forum, 2013:10). With the emergence of new technology which connects people from different part of the world to fight for common benefits, the role of CSOs is broadening. Börzel and Risse (2005, 8-10) state that it is important to encourage organisations in developing countries to create international partnerships, which enable NGOs and government to create a larger capacity for problem solving and impact on sustainable development.

In developing countries from Latin America, Asia, to North and Sub-Saharan African countries, CSOs play pivotal roles in helping communities improve their living conditions, especially where government services are ineffective (Wagle, 1999:540). For example, in kota bharu, kelantan, Malaysia, The Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak Yatim dan Asnaf Kelantan (PERKAYA) is an assisting NGO that works to provide education to children in need. This organisation has created schools that assist children up to 12 years old who are facing difficulties in their life with studies. Some of these children's parents are in imprisons and are unable to support their children, some parents have financial, health or personal problems that hinder them for taking care of their children. Some parents are single mothers with no support at all. These

children have different problems as they grow and many of them are not able to school. Because of trauma, not having identity cards, not being able to read or even recognize letter at the age of 12, they find it difficult to attend normal school. The organisation help these children to break all the problems they face. The organisation create safer spaces for children to get involved and learn. This kind of work is appreciated by parents and help children to improve in their educational journey.

In India the CARE organisation has been working for over 65 years, focusing on alleviating poverty and social exclusion which they do through well-planned and comprehensive programs in health, education, livelihoods and disaster preparedness and response. Their overall goal is the empowerment of women and girls from poor and marginalized communities. The organisation lead to improvement in the lives and livelihoods of the poor people. In Nigeria, Angola and Congo DR, the UNICEF organisation is assisting a lot with the primary health care, they provide hospitals and clinics to treat those who are suffering. Many governments are not able to provide immunizations and it is thanks to NGOs that they provide these kinds of services. In Angola due to wars that have been going on for decades, NGOs are assisting a lot in feeding, healing the population. NGOs are clearing the minefields and provide counselling and support to the population. In many countries in the developing world, governments are somewhat unable or unwilling to assist people who are suffering and NGOs are providing important support to many millions of people and their contribution should be acknowledged regardless of their challenges and problems they face as organisations.

Fatton (1999:4) has the opinion that, in Sub-Saharan countries, CSOs played a great role in reconciliation after years of civil wars, in countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Sudan. In addition, CSOs participated in negotiations

to end civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia. They also played an important role in removing the dictatorship regime in Togo and end ethnicity problems in Burundi and Rwanda (Fatton, 1999:4). According to the World Economic Forum (2013:5) CSOs are acting more and more activist, service providers and watchdogs. The CSOs' role as an advocate is about creating awareness of problems that need change in society. In most developing countries, their work as a service provider is considered to be about meeting the people's basic needs. The role as watchdog is about making sure that accountability and transparency are encouraged in government and other institutions (Lewis, 2005).

The above mentioned are the principal roles CSOs play in community development. However, in some countries CSOs have minor influence on the effectiveness of change in the development process. Ibrahim and Hulme (2010:6) argue that Vietnam and China, have had great improvements in reducing poverty in their countries, just with the work done by the government itself through the promotion of economic and social growth and restraining CSOs' work. This does not mean there is no NGOs in these Asian countries but here governments are doing more than in other developing countries. The rise of NGOs is lower compare to countries like Nigeria, India, and South Africa. In Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Senegal and Ghana, the experience of CSOs is very different. CSOs in these countries have very low memberships as they are constantly under threat from the government. Some governments argue that an organisation with many members is often formed with the intension of opposing the ruling party. Thus, many CSOs' engagements with the state is mixed.

In few African countries, CSOs forms opposition parties mainly in the interest of pushing a democratic agenda (Cheema and Popovski 2010:273). Robinson and Friedman (2005:21) argue that most of these organisations in Africa focus on welfare provision and service delivery instead

of advocacy. This means that NGOs in the above mentioned African states pays more attention to issues that deal with service delivery. Various NGOs in Africa are due to poor socio-economic situations in many countries. Here, the rise of CSOs was mostly introduced through political and academic discourse in the early 1980s. According to Cheema and Popovski (2010:265) the history of CSOs in Africa started in the pre-colonial period with the interest of promoting stable and developed societies however, it became more prominent in the post-colonial era where many donors were showing interest to become part of the great development to stop colonial manipulations. International agencies were there to encourage democracy therefore, it became natural to develop and create movements of civil services in Africa. Many donors in Africa provided the funds to encourage democratic systems of governance. The post-independence era in Africa came with the growing demands for political liberalization. This period was also the moment when CSOs from Eastern Europe began partnering with opposition groups in Africa (Edwards, 2011:183). Civil society organisations became not only a vehicle for ideological clarity and coherence, but also a space of sociability outside the reach of a traditionally overbearing state.

In developing countries, CSOs in rural areas are mostly established as community-based groups that look for the improvement of good living conditions for their members. These community-based groups often changed to self-help associations which sometimes aid to agricultural as well as non-agricultural activities. In urban economies, CSOs is more dynamic and varied according to the population which is often involved in the activities of communities. CSOs in most developing countries have offered effective solutions to the challenges that poor people face. It was found that various CSOs such as youth organisations, women's organisations, recreational club groups, community-based groups, ethnic clubs, and housing cooperatives groups, which are a feature of the post-colonial era are more prominent in rural areas. Cheema and

Popovski (2010:268) discovered that in Africa, people create lots of NGOs and many of these organisations have been created; some find stability and others die, giving way to the creation of new organisations. Some of these organisations are church associations and organisations that deal with present situations such as the expansion of HIV and AIDS and rapid urbanization but are unable to sustain themselves.

The relationship between the state and CSOs in many countries of Africa has been changing and becoming more positive toward one another. States are allowing ample financial support to CSOs and locally based institutions for the development support. Cheema and Popovski (2010:272) made a comparison between Uganda and South Africa. They argue that Uganda is primarily rural and mostly based on agriculture and has only one slightly big urban city; however, South Africa is mostly urbanized. For example, the presence of COSATU is because of unionized labor force based in industries and mines in South Africa, which Uganda does not have.

## **2.6 Civil Society Organisations in South Africa**

The rise of CSOs in South Africa is very much bound up with the anti-apartheid regime which came with the struggle to gain power from an oppressive, racist and illegitimate minority regime (Friedman, 1991; Noyoo, 2000). Many studies have explored the correlation phenomenon between the fight against apartheid and the rise of CSOs in South Africa. Thus, various progressive forces with the same vision of liberating South Africa inevitably gravitated under the anti-apartheid umbrella. The relationship between the CSOs and the state went through significant change with the idea that the state was unable to deliver development agendas to South African living in poverty either on time or successfully. Instead the apartheid regime made sure that people living in poverty remained as such. Consequently, the focus on reconstruction and development was accompanied

by the recognition that the state cannot delivery all services correctly but few of the services were well established such as the constructions of primary schools and clinics in urban areas. This discovery necessitated a re-examination of the role of the state in relation to CSOs. CSOs in South Africa had to make development a priority, prioritising programs especially where the market/private sector fails to meet people's socio-economic needs.

As South Africans began to experience a sense of a hopeful society after 1994, it was the political transition that began to shape the new newly emerging South Africa. Not only was South Africa experiencing internal hope, foreign donors' flooded foreign aid to several organisations in order to support the young democracy. However, the enormous financial resources CSOs were receiving helped them to compete with the government in the service providing. Heller's work points to the fact that the government of South Africa felt threatened by the CSOs in service providing (Heller 2001). Similar to what I have seen in the DRC, the government of South Africa began recruiting leaders from the CSOs thereby weakening the overall leadership of the successful CSOs. As a consequence, the dual relationships between leaders of CSOs who were involved in the government raised questions of conflict of interests.

Nyalunga (2006:40) added that after 1994, CSOs became very significant in supporting the areas that the government was not able to reach. The different organisations under CSOs did not only assist with the delivery of basic services, but also play a progressive part in advocacy and monitoring. Robinson and Friedman (2005:19) highlight some of these CSOs found in different provinces around South Africa. These include the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU); the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO); the Women's National Coalition (WNC); the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services (FABCS); the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDSA). Some of these organisations no longer exist and

some have progressively become very much involved in assisting communities toward the goal of poverty reduction.

CSOs in South Africa have become effective agents of service delivery. These organisations have managed to work together with institutions that have greater market orientation and which have greater communication system, they have good operation system and technical skill to support people in communities. The CSOs perform development programs well because of their sound financial management, project management skills, and public accountability which are more required. For their sound work, Cashdan (2000) points that CSOs progressively have been acknowledged to have important and successful growth in development and the poverty reduction processes in South African communities. Before 1994 apartheid which was the period of dominant form of government did not allow many organisations under CSOs to reach out to people living in poverty (Habib, 2003:4).

Scholars such as Noyoo note that black South Africans during the apartheid era continued to live in poverty and were exploited with very little pay by the apartheid regime (Noyoo, 2007:10). While one may question the fact that such mistreatment went on for so long, from my personal experiences in my home country, the Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly known as Zaire, during the time of Mobutu's oppressive regime, many Congolese were more preoccupied with basic needs than challenging the government to improve the lives of those living in extreme poverty. Nevertheless, in the case of South Africa one notices that with the instauration of a democratic system, and the work of CSOs, most South Africans, including blacks, began to hope for a better life and the alleviation of poverty. Nevertheless, the fall of apartheid and the beginning of a democratic society and CSOs brought hope for an improved life to millions of South Africans living in poverty.

The role of CSOs in South Africa in the period since 1994 has not been static. Instead it has been influenced and changed in major ways by the contradictions of the political transition in South Africa. Because of the regime change CSOs have had significant impacts on societies in South Africa. CSOs have been playing a major role in public accountability and good governance. This is evident in South Africa where the transition to democracy and globalization has fundamentally transformed the society. According to Habib (2003), one of the most obvious outcomes of the improved process has been the evolution of CSOs into three distinct blocs that are: (1) Formal NGOs, many of whom have moved into a collaborative relationship with the state. (2) A growing number of informal survivalist Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), networks and associations, largely detached from the state, whose main role is to assist poor and marginalized communities in their struggle for daily survival. (3) A growing number of social movements, some nationally based (such as the Treatment Action Campaign) and some locally based (such as the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee). These are more formal community-based organisations, which have a distinct leadership and membership, often supported by a middle class activist base.

These organisations have been largely established with the explicit political aim of organizing and mobilising the poor and marginalized to contest or engage the state on key social and economic issues. This three-fold division in many ways reflects the ANC Government's contradictory development agenda contained in its RDP (The Reconstruction and Development Programme - RDP) and GEAR policies (The Growth, Employment and Redistribution – GEAR). These policies were the need to create employment and a better life for people in South Africa and was the central objective of the economic policy of the government. The Government's 1994 White Paper on the RDP accorded the state "the leading and enabling role" in collaboration with

“a thriving private sector and active involvement by all sectors of society” (Visser, 2004). The government worked together with CSOs in meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, and implementing the RDP. The RDP was intended to provide an integrated and sustainable framework to guide the work of all government departments and other key role players in meeting the objectives of “freedom and an improved standard of living and quality of life for all South Africans within a peaceful and stable society characterized by equitable economic growth”(RDP White Paper, 1994). The RDP was based on a new and constructive relationship between the people, their organisations in society.

In the 1996 the government proposed to work together with the locals and the CSOs. Accordingly a strong emphasis was placed on the role of NGOs and community organisations, working in partnership with Government to advance the processes of reconstruction and development with the introduction of the Government’s Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) (Visser, 2004). However, the relationship between the state and CSOs became more complex, they failed to work according and that was the failure of GEAR to meet its growth and employment targets. This failure led to a significant unemployment and a widening of wealth gap between classes. At the same time, the determination to reduce the fiscal deficit (perhaps the main success of GEAR) has placed serious financial constraints on most government departments, both national and provincial (Visser, 2004). This has had a negative impact on service delivery at the same time as unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS and other social problems have been increasing.

The failure that the government encountered gave birth to the contradictory relationship between the state and CSOs in many provinces and there became a growing need for NGOs. NGOs had to

collaborate more closely with government to address the socio-economic problems facing the country so that no one can be blamed for the failures. Habib (2003), shows that, there has been high rise of social movements, as well as trade union opposition, contesting the trajectory of the Government's GEAR neo-liberal agenda. After these attempts to alleviate poverty, the government has been able to collaborate with CSOs in supporting few NGOs financially to do the work of alleviating poverty in communities working together on different projects.

Because of this failure, CSOs, manly NGOs have become more popular during this last decade and are regarded as more reliable agencies through which poverty and development can be addressed and discussed. CSOs have become a bridge to access areas where the state cannot provide sufficient services to its citizens, such as water, electricity and housing. According to the NDA (2008:3) in South Africa CSOs play an important role that contributes to development in communities in carrying out development programs and practicing good governance accountability, transparency in a democratic space. CSOs are considered middle agents between communities, government and the private sector because they are vital for improving poor people's lives for better while at the same time creating pressure for change in government policy and service delivery (Kim, et al., 2005).

CSOs in South Africa have become essential actors in the design, delivery and evaluation of development policies and programs. Their work covers every sector and is not limited to traditional social-service-delivery roles only as mentioned above. These CSOs interact locally, nationally, and internationally to be part of policymaking, as analysts, advocates and innovators. While CSOs are regarded as partners working with the government on development, such relationship becomes complex when CSOs continue to depend more and more on donors from overseas and government agencies funding. This affiliation further complicates and in some ways hinders the role of CSOs'

watchdog vis-à-vis the government agencies. The problem is that as CSOs rely more on donor's funds they become vulnerable to funder conditions or demands, and with this, there is a real danger such as dependency may affect their efficient functioning in discharging their duties (Mkhwanazi, 2013:4). Therefore, despite their achievements CSOs face challenges. These challenges vary from one organisation to another and from one context to another. Nhlapo (2012:97) points out that these challenges include many organisational weaknesses, lack of management capacity, and issues of basic visibility and legitimacy. In addition, they struggle with issues of sustainability, effectiveness, and inability to create workable partnerships with other sectors and other organisations locally and internationally.

## **2.7 Types of civil society organisations**

The list of CSOs is not limited to some certain groups of organisations as seen above, but for the purpose of this study, the researcher has chosen to focus of one type of CSOs to support the study. Thus, more emphasis will be on NGOs because the case study, Planact, is an NGO.

NGOs are known to be part of CSOs in a society. NGOs are non-profit groups outside of government. NGOs are organised by community's members or individuals from the community or from outside the community to respond to people's basic needs that either the government or the market have failed to meet for the people. NGOs are created with different objectives. Some NGOs are to develop a project or produce goods, and some NGOs are there to bring the goods to the people, so they render services to different communities. At the same time we also have NGOs that do both developing projects and delivering goods to communities (Nzimakwe, 2008:91). NGOs can are not limited to local development but they can be regional, national, or even international depending of the type of work they do and where they have to reach to assist people.

Because of socioeconomic issues today we found out that we have more than 10 million NGOs around the world all with different agendas. However, there is a central goal that all NGOs focus on and these include to improve the lives of people living in poverty as they provide free services following what is needed in that community (Nzimakwe, 2008:91). NGOs work on different types of services including humanitarian aid, healthcare, legal support, human rights, and informative proceedings as well as on many socio-economic related concerns that occur.

Swanepoel & De Beer (2006:18) argue that, a non-government organisation is not controlled by either the government or the private sector and is not inspired by profit generation. Banks and Hulme (2012:3) state that many NGOs were developed due to the government failure of rendering services and meeting their promises to communities. The massive failure in development approaches during the 1970s and 1980s led NGOs to begin to act as a development alternative. NGOs started to offer innovative and people-centered approaches to service delivery, advocacy and empowerment. Vakil (1997) argues that scholars have found it challenging in classifying NGOs because as part of CSOs although NGOs work and position within the development sector and have risen intensely. Lewis and Kanji (2009) add that, NGOs vary extensively from their starting point or origin and levels of formality and services they provide

Vakil (1997) categorizes NGOs according to what their work and provision, where they are based, what they are, and how they relate to poor populations and to activities of development relief. As with CSOs, NGOs have been considered as the key agents for both the state and alternative development, with its focus on people-centered and empowering solutions (Tandon, 1997). Because of higher level of poverty, important needs tend to be activities that promote employment and sustainable livelihood. The poverty levels can be reduced immensely while the standard of living for the people is also improving (Swanepoel & De Beer; 2006: 18). Swanepoel

& De Beer (2006) argue that usually NGOs come into existence because of the need in specific community that need to address specific problems such as infrastructure, health, education and housing. Usually NGOs addresses a number of problems in the field of development. Many organisations are involved in agricultural, health and hygiene, human resource development as they exert significant work taking place in rural development. In this way Swanepoel & De Beer (2006:20) emphasize the essence of ownership of the development by stressing that as long as the communities are not allowed to take centre stage to own the development, the success of the development efforts shall never materialize.

NGOs are independent by definition, they are known as neutral agencies that provide relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development assistance. According to Suharko (2007:3) many anticipate to say that NGOs have the institutional capacity to reduce poverty and enhance the standard of living for the people. Suharko (2007:3) argues that NGOs have been very comparative because of the advantages they have when compared them to the government institutions. These include: they have the ability to deliver relief services at low costs; NGOs have the ability to reach out to many people even in remote areas; NGOs have rapid, innovative and flexible responses to emerging financial and technical assistance needs at the grass roots level; NGOs have been long standing with social sector development and poverty alleviation; their experience with the small scale development projects as well as those requiring a high degree of involvement, by and familiarity with the concerned target groups have been noticed (Suharko, 2007:3).

For now NGOs work hand in hand with the state in many occasions. Their role gradually changed moving from simple gap fillers in service delivery to important agents of development. Therefore, a change in their role mean a change in the way they collaborate with the state. Both

the state and the NGOs are involved in development projects but at different levels. However, even if the state institutions work together with NGOs, in most cases NGOs are viewed by the state as an obstacle to progress (Tandon, 1997). Again because the state does not trust NGOs and this has made it difficult for the state and the NGOs to work together effectively.

Because many people in the developing countries live in poverty, people find themselves depending more on NGOs assistance. Thousands of NGOs work in various isolated areas in African countries. The NGOs aims range from providing relief services, conserving the environment, contributing to development projects or simply battling with governments over human rights issues.

In Kasama, Zambia, the Project called OSCAR which stands for Organic Solutions for Conservation and Agricultural Results is a community service society formed for the purpose of making a difference in the lives of vulnerable members of society in Northern Zambia. The planting of exotic fruits and fast-growing trees for fuel is only a short to medium term solution. Ongoing strategic and practical support is given, geared to strengthening communities at grassroots level, and improving living conditions, education and family livelihoods (<http://thebestofzambia.com/orgs/project-oscar/>)

The Village Water in Lusaka, Zambia, is an organisation which is believed to work with people. Village Water believes everyone should have access to clean water. This local and international charity provides hygiene, education and sustainable water for villages in Western Zambia installing protected shallow wells with manual water pumps. For the Village Water, reliable source of water means small scale village farmers can harvest crops throughout the year instead of just

rainy season. Because of the water being available, there is more or enough food for household and surplus food can be sold at local markets (<https://villagewater.org/>)

## **2.8 Civil society organisations and the approach to development**

CSOs have been able to approach development in many different ways. Many organisations still use the hardware approach to achieve development. This approach is done through providing basic services such as water, electricity, and more, through construction of different infrastructures such as roads, recreational centers, public libraries, public clinics etc. other organisations use the software approach to meet development. Through this approach CSOs empower people with trainings which teach them small business, how to manage CBO, how to become a valuable breadwinner of the household; how to generate income for example through renting some of the rooms in the backyard; some people learn how to provide consultancy; some people learn how to trade under their name or with locally made products. Some organisation use self-dependent approach interventions to achieve development. Community members learn how to support for each other and enabling environment to pursue their own development. Some organisations use the effectiveness of right's based approach and some use welfare approach with some charity organisations to cater for the people in community.

According to Veltmeyer (2008) development is understood as a combination of improvements in the quality of people's lives marked by a reduction or alleviation of poverty, an increased capacity to meet the basic needs of society's members and the sustainability of livelihoods and the empowerment and the changes in institutionalised practices or structures needed to bring about these improvements. The idea of development can be traced back to an 18th

century project which was based on the need for possibilities and necessities to change society for better from poverty to social equality in different countries (Veltmeyer, 2008).

From an economic point of view, development can be attained on a major scale only through economic growth. However, Binger (2004:1) points out that, poverty reduction in developing countries cannot be attributed to economic growth only but also to the social welfare system and transfer of income. Initiatives aimed at employment and income creation should be a top priority for CSOs in the fight against poverty. But in order to facilitate such programs, the causes of unemployment and lack of income, which are lack of education and skills need to be addressed as they can be a pitfall for any person who seeks work (NDA, 2016). It is necessary to consider skills development and training programs to initiate job and income creation and ultimately facilitate economic growth and poverty reduction.

Economic growth is a very important factor in the development of every country. But this is not the only element to consider for a country to meet its development needs. According to Lange, Wallevik and Kiondo (2000:2), development has been agreed to be a multidimensional practice that is recognized and oriented by the social and economic systems in a specific country. This combination leads to improvements in the institutional, social, and administrative structures and the attitudes of the citizens. In many cases development is linked to the national context. However, the work of development is often realized worldwide in modifying the social and economic systems of the world. Brown and Kalegaonkar (1999: 1) point out that theorists in the 1950s and early 1960s regarded the practice of development as a sequence of consecutive phases of economic growth that every country should adopt and practice.

For many years CSOs have been important players on the international scene of development. The different CSOs have been presumed to initiate and contribute to, human development and to change the reality, possibly for the better (Anheier, 2004; Edwards, 2009; Kaldor, 2003). CSOs have progressively become players of important role as development providers such as creation of hospitals for good health, schools for great education; agricultures for sufficient foods for people living with no foods. CSOs have assisted in ending civil wars in some countries. CSOs help in emergency relief in disasters. Veltmeyer (2008), states that from the end of the 1990s, their increasing impact, have made academics, and local and international NGOs have created a trust of being the organisations and people who play as actors in development work. CSOs have succeeded in the waves of democratization, beginning in Latin America and Eastern Europe, and spreading across the developing countries. CSOs have been widely seen as a crucial agent for limiting authoritarian government, empowering a popular movement, reducing the socially atomizing and unsettling effects of market forces, enforcing political accountability, and improving the quality and inclusiveness of governance.

It is agreed that strengthened CSOs adds value to the important conditions for the development of the state. Governments often require an active and dynamic CSOs to function well. This is so because a strong CSOs are believed to be a great player in the democratization process of any country (Robinson and Friedman, 2005). There has been an increase in the numbers of NGOs over the last few decades in South Africa. With all these reforms happening, CSOs are expected to contribute significantly in the service delivery around communities and the development arena.

Brown and Kalegaonkar (1999: 1) argue that CSOs play a significant role in the social, political, and economic development activities of any nation. CSOs actors play a key role in

leading development in a country and are vigorously involved in promoting and implementing development worldwide. They bring the people's issues to the attention of public authorities, monitor that policies and implementation of programs are successful and act as watchdogs. They also contribute to the achievement of transparency and accountability in the country (Lange, Wallevik and Kiondo, 2000:2). They set up forums, trainings, seminars, and workshops at different levels; producing and publishing information materials to ease the development process (NDA, 2008:13). They engage in dialogues and debates with government officials on the development and implementation of socio-cultural policies.

The National Development Agency (NDA) (2008) points out that irrespective of how the sector is viewed, civil society plays a significant role in creating a space for the poor and voiceless in society and promotes the building of social cohesion. CSOs is also vital for creating a space for the building of identity in a community. Sometimes people feel that they have little or no control over their conditions, especially where the state becomes too big for them to voice their views (NDA, 2008). The NDA argues that CSOs have been in existence for a very long time. Nevertheless, the current political, social, and economic climate of insecurity and uncertainty has promoted the growth of CSOs across the world. This sector is frequently decorated in radiant colours, especially where cultural identity is under threat. Community organisations are possibly going to increase as the community look to them as a space in which to express how they feel (NDA, 2008).

The approach used by CSOs in development is mainly based on the role of service provision and advocacy for the poor. Banks and Hulme (2012:8) agree with Lewis and Kanji (2009), who state that CSOs as service providers, especially NGOs, offer a wide-range of services to different fields of communities starting with health, livelihood interventions, and education services to

targeted areas. They offer services such as emergency responses, conflict resolution, democracy building, finance, environmental management, human rights awareness, as well as policy analysis. In addition to the two roles associated with CSOs in development, Van Rooy and Robinson (1998:43) say that CSOs have two other roles, namely building democracy and improving development. They argue that the first role is about addressing the politics of reducing poverty and the latter about addressing the direction of poverty reduction. CSOs facilitate a conducive space for democracy through their advocacy and they help foster strong institutions thereby ensuring that society's democratic institutions consider the challenges of the persons less privileged and those living in poverty (Van Rooy and Robinson, 1998:44)

In South Africa, Noyoo (2007) argues that the role of CSOs in the development discourse of poverty reduction and development in a post-apartheid South Africa began when they became close to the state, which was searching for solutions to end poverty and promote development. There are many NGOs in South Africa which are involved in community development projects to reduce poverty in communities, for example the Landless People's Movement (LPM), CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Planact among others.

Most CSOs target their activities towards local development in villages, cities, provinces, and regions. It is therefore important to recognize how CSOs express themselves and plays the roles of both provider and recipient of local development. Civil society as a provider of community development creates spaces where communities and individuals address challenges that they encounter every day. For example, the self-help voluntary organisations that exist in both rural and urban areas work with other non-governmental organisations to provide and advocate for services they need (Cheema and Popovski, 2010:274). As recipients of development aid CSOs are targeted

by other sectors to push local government programs, private initiatives of different sectors and programs proposed by donor programs.

There is considerable evidence that CSOs engaging in service delivery initiatives (water, electricity and skills development) in developing countries can contribute positively to the development of these countries. For example, the Danish NGO Impact Study conducted in 1998 with 45 projects in Asia, Africa, and Latin America supplying social services to the poor; aimed to evaluate the impact that Danish NGO-supported interventions had on the development of poor communities (Clayton, Oakley, and Taylor, 2000:8). The study reveals considerable proof that CSOs engaging in service delivery projects such as the provision of basic education, health care, water and electricity supply in poor communities have a positive impact on the development of these communities. However, the study shows that the positive impact from service delivery projects is not a long-term solution to development issues but a short-term one (Oakley, 1999 cited in Clayton, Oakley, and Taylor, 2000:8).

In 2002 in Cape Town and Johannesburg, there was a reconnection of water and electricity campaign initiated by community-based organisations (Ranchod 2007) this initiative had as the main objective to force the government to provide water and electricity to poor communities. In Soweto, the SECC (Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee) continues to protest against the state idea of privatizing electricity supply and unannounced electricity cut-offs. In June 2003, the Durban City Council wrote off payment arrears of seventeen million because more than 5,000 citizens and groups of CSOs such as the Durban-based Concerned Citizens Forum marched to their offices complaining about poor services (Ranchod, 2007:9-10). These examples show how social movements in South Africa struggle for the poor to have full access to public goods. However,

studies show that CSOs through protest actions have not yet been able to change government's policies to address their demands.

Suharko ( 2007) points that a study done in 2007 in Indonesia reviewed the roles and strategies of Bina Swadaya, which is one of the most active development NGOs in Indonesia. In their work as an organisation, Bina Swadaya is involved in development activities such as agriculture, environmental protection, sanitation and human development; this in order to empower communities so that they can be able to take charge of their own future (Suharko, 2007:6). They have established training centers for research and education in consultation with local communities and other institutions. Further, they have developed microfinance institutions to assist the poor who cannot have access to financial institutions such as banks (Suharko, 2007). Elsewhere, Bina Swadaya assists communities in the formation of local institutions such as the "Self-Help Groups consisting of 20 to 30 members" in order to empower communities to be the solution to their own development issues (Suharko, 2007). These initiatives show how CSOs work among Indonesian poor communities.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the development of CSOs globally, nationally, and locally in order to provide a clear understanding of what civil society is about and what organisations do to promote development in South Africa and around the world. The literature clearly explains that CSOs are part of society and that CSOs belong and formed by the people in communities with the aim of finding responses and solutions to the problems communities encounter. CSOs have become central to the processes of making local governments work all over the world. However, CSOs have been viewed as usurping the work of the state. Some actors in government do not see CSOs

as supporting them but opposing their work (Lewis, 2005). In conclusion, CSOs are created for different reasons. Some advocate for the needs of their members, provide much needed services, while others push for economic development, promote human rights, and combat social exclusion. They call for transparency and accountability, push for international cooperation, deliver services and combat inequality. The next chapter will discuss social capital theory as an approach used by CSOs Ranchod (2007) demonstrates that in development.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - SOCIAL CAPITAL APPROACH**

#### **3.1 Introduction and background**

The previous chapter discussed literature relevant to the roles and strategies of civil society in the world, Africa and South Africa. This chapter will explore the use of the social capital approach by CSOs in development. Social capital is defined as the rules and linkages that allow people to act together (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000:2). Since the 1990s the use of the social capital approach has gained prominence in social science discourse. Some scholars like Robert Putnam view social capital from a communal perspective, referring to the connections among individuals who collaborate with a level of reciprocity and trustworthiness as a result of their connections for the purpose of collective actions (Putnam, 1995). Others like Nan Lin underscores the understanding of social capital from a more individualistic perspective which points to the investment one makes in social relations with the expectation of getting returns in the market place (Lin, 2001). For this study, I use the communal understanding because South Africa, like many non-western communities, emphasizes the common good and communal assessment to the human reality.

The civil society sector in South Africa is a great platform to assess the practicality of social capital. Firstly, this is because of the strong ethnic and racial groups that are present in South Africa. Secondly, compared to other African countries or in developing countries at large, South Africa is continuously interacting and creating different CSOs (Julie, 2009). This provides a great framework from which to learn how CSOs employ social capital to improve development in the different communities in South Africa. The focus will be on the way Planact organisation uses

social capital approach to promoting development around issues of human settlement, community development and good governance (Planact Annual Report 2006/2007).

Surveying the landscape from empirical literature, an effort will be made to incorporate the communal and organisational understanding of social capital in development discourse and its implications for the reduction of poverty. A clear definition of the concept social capital is imperative in order to link the work of development practitioners and policymakers the common idiom says, “It is not what you know but who you know” is crucial in understanding the social capital concept. This means that relationships that people build are vital when it comes to mobilizing around a common goal to bring about positive social change in the community. It is the relationship with different people such as friends, families, people living in the same street or suburb that makes them rely on each other, for example during hard times or for security reasons or in ensuring a bright future for all in the community or neighborhood (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000:2).

Woolcock and Narayan (2000) point out the importance of communal understanding in creating opportunities to address conflict and improve lives of community members. Most communities have a diverse social network. Personally, as a child of a pastor and a university educator most of my family social networks have been created within religious and educational settings with students and church people. These relationships have shaped my worldview and the means I use to mobilize to bring about positive social change. People create the link because they spend most of their times with other people rather than alone; such as in religious gatherings or volunteering to do something for the community or even in sharing a meal or meeting for sports or activities that bring people together. Most communities are gifted with a diversity of social networks and associations which help all individuals to gain from the relationship. When there is

communal understanding, there will be a strength to combat vulnerability and poverty, find solutions to any disagreements and giving opportunities for everyone to improve their lives (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

This research is an attempt to answer a few questions concerning the roles and strategies of CSOs in the development and linking their role to the social capital approach is very important in understanding the strategies used by CSOs. The pertinent questions are: What is social capital? How does it affect development in communities? What are the implications of this theory for CSOs? To assist in answering these questions different definitions of social capital will be presented as well as an overview or a comprehensive understanding of social capital from different perspectives. This will be followed by an exploration of the basic manifestations of social capital in people's lives. Its importance in development discourse will then be highlighted with the different perspectives in relation to development and civil society. Different surveys will help show how social capital has been useful or not useful in community development and what is needed to maintain the great development outcomes that CSOs are working for.

### **3.2 Understanding and defining social capital**

Defining social capital is a challenging issue as it can mean different things to different people according to context. However, a simple definition of social capital is that it is a combination of networks and norms that help people in communities to act together as one (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000:2). This is the definition which is applied throughout this research because this definition has a few implications worth considering. First, it refers to the positive foundations of social capital approach rather than the negative values it can bring. Second, the definition highlights the trust relationship created when there is interaction among members of a

community. It also allows people to view social capital from the angle of different levels of life in community, allowing access to all assets. This definition of social capital helps to show that there is a building relationships into communities which is good in promoting development. Below are a few definitions which are worth considering.

Social capital is defined as the collection of real and possible resources connected to control a solid network of more or less institutionalized relationships of common association and acknowledgement (Bourdieu, 1986:248). Putnam (1995:2) states that as with the understanding of physical and human capital, which are tools that provide individual efficiency, social capital refers to the structures of social organisations which include norms, networks and social trust that enable the management of collaborations for common benefit and use. Portes (1998:8) considers social capital to be the skill or talent that protects all public benefits and social structures for members in a network or association. Fukuyama (2000:3) states that social capital is an informal norm that encourages collaboration among two or more persons. This definition includes networks and trust, which are all associated with CSOs. Jones, Nyland, and Pollitt (2001: 2) define social capital as the system, networks and mutual conducts which symbolize a social group. Here in Johannesburg, people have created a way of socializing and assisting each other by creating a system called “stockvel” this simply means people put money each month in groups and a group can have twelve people or more and each money that they put together is given to one person and that person can be able to do more things such as start a small business or buy furniture for her or his house. Social capital here create good attitudes, relationship and add values to individuals in different communities. Social capital refers to beliefs and values used in the lives of people in their everyday interactions. The relationship they create is cumulative socio-economic development.

According to the above points social capital is about creating relationships in a way of interacting with one another with the objective developing something important for everyone. The degree and the nature of relationships in communities, as well as the roles played by these relationships, can change when the economy changes (Woolcock, 1998). Social capital in many communities have different level following the needs in each communities, some connections are created in small groups and others include every members in community. This means that these connections relate differently to each other following the efficiency of the state and society. In addition, Woolcock (1998:168), argues that, these connections could be in the form of bridging, linking and bonding of social capital. The linking of social capital relates to state-society connections, the bonding to intra-community connections, and the bridging aspect to extra-community connections. This means that the stronger the connections, the more people act in the interest of the community. For example, in Soweto some community's young people create a group to address the issues of unemployment and academic underachievement of youth in their communities. They start this journey with a connection of socialization to create a path that help them to find solutions to their group and the generation to come. They meet together creating programs that work toward their respective goals.

Putnam (2000:23) explains the bridging, linking and bonding characteristics of social capital by showing that they can be understood in a very different way. Bonding in social capital is more common in a group of people with similar relationships, such as by profession, gender, race or even by their socio-economic position. For example, the ecumenical religious organisations or women-based groups are connected because of similarities in their relationships and their daily needs. Bridging in social capital relates to relations between people or individuals who are not related to each other by the similarity in race or career (Putnam, 2000). The bridging aspect of

social capital assists people to progress above their basic needs. However, Putnam also recognizes that not all groups of people are connected by bonding and bridging. Sometimes organisations bond with similar interest groups and bridge across different geographical locations. A good example here is that of online social groups. People in these kinds of associations do not live in one location but can connect with others anywhere around the world (Putnam, 2000).

Linking in social capital is similar to bridging in that people do not connect because they have similarities, but more because of the power that is found in group networks and their relationship. Linking in social capital is more about trust, norms, and respect between people who interact clearly with a formal power in their societal relationship (Putnam, 2000). For example in the municipal ward committees in South Africa, counsellors who are members of the community and have been voted in by the people to represent their interest are recognised and respected as such by the community (Kwan Lau, 2014:6). They are both members of the committee and members of the community. Miguel (2003:195) agrees with Routledge and Von Amsberg (2003) as well as with Putnam (1993) that a society with high social capital is characterized by increased cooperation, trust, and adherence to social norms. In addition, such societies work well with local institutions to promote development. Thus, social capital has come to be viewed as an important contribution to the development and economic growth. On the other hand, some authors argue that in a growing society, there is a big danger of shock that generates pressure for labour mobility. This could destroy or limit the impact of social capital in development (Miguel, 2003).

However, despite all these different understanding of social capital approach, one should recognize that social capital theory is broad because of the early existing unclear definitions of social capital by many scholars. Portes (1998:5) explains that social capital has been spreading as a concept which is ambiguous and difficult to adapt too many situations and fields in society. But

then again no matter the difficulties, there are communities that make use of the social capital approach and it has been discovered to be more effective in fighting poverty and enhancing development.

### **3.3 Social capital approach for development through (CSOs)**

Community members are becoming more aware of their problem in their areas and they are willing to pursue development according to their own understanding with the help of organisations or on their own instead of waiting for government or private assistance. Communities have assets and they have skills they can use through labour, time, and wisdom. They invest to build their own community with whatever tools they have. NGOs assist local people with planning, implementing and evaluating their own development programmes. The adoption of the social capital approach by CSOs has been on the rise recently. Social capital today has become a concept with significant implications that gives value and increases the sustainability and efficiency of communities (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). Social capital is seen as the casual trust and relations that help people to come together to combat and act in a positive way for the development of any given society. Social capital approach is very important to CSOs as it helps many NGOs to succeed. Through social capital approach, CSOs are able to give a voice to people and opportunities to participate in formal or informal gatherings that bring change to communities.

Social capital approach is an essential technic used by many NGOs to form individual groups with relations and trust among internal or external people to promote different benefits for everybody. An effective CSOs link and help the poor and marginalised people in the society by giving them a platform through which their voices could be heard (Lewis, 2005). For example, Trade Union organisations brings workers together to table their mutual problems in order to avoid

the rejection that is likely to happen when each acts on his or her own. There is a link and connection of people coming together for their own benefit and this shows a social capital approach at work.

Development does not come from government organisations but rather from local communities and associations. Community awareness and participation have come to be more important in the development discourse leading to social capital (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). According to Morris (1998:3) development has progressed from being just a blueprint to more participatory approaches post the World War II era. Now there is inclusion and a focus on the people-centered development approach. People are becoming more involved and becoming part of the development process. Some studies have linked social capital to economic development, thereby highlighting the importance of social capital bringing and linking that is created in society. Studies done by Helliwell and Putnam (1995), Putterman (1995), as well as Keefer and Knack (1997) all, concentrate on culture and the economy and show the success of the economy through social influences. To address the issues of development, these scholars used different social capital conceptions, approaches and measures to find solutions from problems in different communities.

Putterman (1995) cited by Morris (1998: 4) in his work on ‘Social capital and development capacity’ in Tanzania, asks questions such as, When and how can conditions on culture allow economic development? Is there a precondition to the culture of development? Putterman (1995) demonstrates that when there is change in practice, attitudes, and knowledge, even if it is not related to economic development, these changes will contribute to possible development. Putterman (1995) perceives social capital as being an addition to human capital to meet development, hence his analysis of rural Tanzania, where he considers the cultural and social dimensions. Thus, he concludes that social capital supplements human capital, which enables

economic development. However, Rose (1996) argues that social capital is more prevalent in informal networks dealing with problems in society.

Rose (1996) examines Russian data to identify the uses of social capital by asking questions such as, When you are in trouble or having a problem, who do you call first to come and help you? This was to measure how people cope during economic transitions. To determine the social protection level, social capital was measured by asking if a friend could give one a loan of a week's pay when your household was in trouble financially (Morris, 1998: 5). Here Rose speaks of trust and distrust within a community. Moreover, Narayan and Pritchett (1997) demonstrated the importance of trust and the extent of associational activity using household survey data (characteristics, education and assets) in rural Tanzania. They discovered that the greater the social capital in a village, the more the individuals' income levels increased (Morris, 1998:6).

Baulch (1996) cited in Morris (1998:16) debates the similarity of poverty and social capital, focusing on income and vulnerability. This suggests that it may be useful to look at social capital as a link with CSOs which includes phases of informal networks, trust, and ideas of affiliation. From this consideration of civil society organisations, it seems that social capital can be understood through the concepts of formal and informal social capital. Formal social capital is linked to well-organised behavior and norms of institutions and networks in a society. On the other hand, informal social capital is linked to relationships that are exterior to the formal organisation, such as informal associations, kinships, and groups outside the formal system (Morris, 1998:16). Another view is that social capital should be considered a constituent of the concept of poverty (Morris, 1998:16). Here, social capital is regarded as a resource that brings solution to a group of people to end poverty or as a resource needed in itself for development through the work of CSOs

in communities (Morris, 1998:16). In this case, social capital is considered a part of the strategy used by CSOs like Planact to address poverty and vulnerability of people living in poverty.

Several multinational corporations and CSOs have contributed enormously towards the building of social capital approach in South Africa through the different development projects they carry out; for example, community members in Soweto indicate to benefit from the services of Planact and other NGOs as they work together in creating and maintaining standard life among themselves. The relationship of social capital and development is that social capital moves development in a positive way as it affects economic growth and facilitates development. The needs of development also affect the way social capital is designed. When there is a need to meet certain development programs with other people who are not from the same community or association there is need to clarify the approach differently and this becomes a strength to bridge and bond capital. This meeting with others socially to improve development outcomes (Woolcock, 1998). For example, interactions of formal associations such as trade unions, sports clubs and or political parties to link members of the informal associations like neighbourhood relations and kinships connections turn this into solid social capital.

Newman, Tarp, and van den Broeck (2014:78) in their research show the positive effects of social capital in how the women's group saves money for their households by measuring information that the members share. The result shows the link of social capital to development in communities. Markusseen (2015:1) demonstrate in the study done with Tarp in a survey in 2014 that linking social capital has a lot of effect on farmers and local government officials in the informal associations. This increases investment in agriculture and monetary transfer. In the same way, Newman and Zhang (2015) quoted in Markusseen (2015:1) discovered that when households are connected politically there is always a great benefit as these households are more able to access

communal welfares than those households that are not connected. Furthermore, families that are politically connected have a greater chance of establishing non-farming enterprise (Markusseen, 2015:1). Therefore, the use of the social capital approach becomes the strength of CSOs such as Planact organisation because NGOs are said to be closer to the people than the state and the private sector.

Several studies have been carried out to evaluate the impact of social capital in household income distribution in many developing countries. For example, the study conducted in Tanzania by UNESCO in 2002, using the participatory approach revealed that where there is strong social cohesion income inequalities are reduced (UNESCO, 2002:8). Community members can discuss pertinent issues that are being experienced in their communities and can come up with sustainable solutions. In such environments, it is easier to form corporative and share in a very equitable way the income generated from the corporative business. Further, since social capital is easy capital, poor people can have access to it in the community. Therefore maximizing its usage can be a very effective way for poor communities to overcome development challenges. Social capital is thus very important capital which can easily and effectively uplift the living conditions of poor communities (UNESCO, 2002:8).

Social capital literature presents answers to the different challenges that communities have. Because of the strong link between mass organisations and the state, it is not clear how the level of voluntary association activities can be used to measure social capital. Therefore, trust and family ties are very strong attributes to measure social capital in communities. In Vietnam for example, family ties are much respected and very strong among groups of people. Markusseen (2015:10) points to the 2001 World Values Survey in Vietnam where the survey questioned the participants on the significance of diverse life domains. Of those, surveyed 82% mentioned that family is very

vital. When high levels of trust are evident an increase in the will of people to participate in any social activities and group participation follows. Although it is not easy to distinguish the way social capital differs in dimensions of development in each individual or group, Markusseen (2015:12) argues that social capital can possibly upturn revenue in many different networks. In the very first instance, social capital is helping groups of people to find solutions to their communal problems.

Markusseen (2015:12) adds that at the individual level, the potential that one has at the household level helps one to get nice jobs or source inexpensive labour and credit. This increases their way of investing and getting profit for their businesses in communities. Here social capital becomes an insurance source and a source of protection and when one takes the risk to invest, he or she finds that their income really increases. The household well-being can also be affected in another way through social capital when compared to the individual way of increasing income. In itself, a strong social relationship is a benefit that is bigger than that of material items. Social capital augments construction of communal possessions such as public infrastructure which are never included in private possessions. Social capital accepts individuals in society to obtain consumption chattels or goods easily without problems at very low prices, for example in a community where people share their harvest (Markusseen, 2015:12). The way social capital is viewed here shows how community development progresses in society. Some nations have used the social capital approach to understand the change in bank development policy and how it links to the post-Washington model (Jones et al., 2001; Fine, 1999). Maluccio, Haddad and May (2000) argue that social capital is similar to Ubuntu, as discussed in the work of Mbigi (2000) in KwaZulu-Natal who understood social capital as Ubuntu and that this has shown changes in South African communities post-apartheid (Kwan Lau, 2014:7). The Ubuntu network has shown an increase in

government efficiency and maintenance of social networks. The survey shows social capital as a mechanism used to complement Ubuntu. On the other hand, Maluccio et al. (2000) demonstrate that social capital could also cause problems in its implications. For example, the research that Catherine Campbell did in South Africa analyses the application of social capital in communities. She links this to health studies on social forces and AIDS and the health and wellbeing of communities in the mining town of Carletonville in Gauteng. The studies show that there is a difference in the level of HIV among different networks.

Development practitioners contend that social capital sometimes comes at a cost to the community. This means that although social capital is regarded as an asset, it could also become a liability to a society and that this could have a negative impact on the reduction of poverty and economic development (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000:6). This happens through transformation into a tool to achieve better outcomes of policies but in a complementary way. Furthermore, some studies done in developing countries have shown how having social capital, such as a high level of solidarity did not help the community to develop or gain economic success. More so, that bonding and linking in social capital can affect development in a negative way as only people who are within a group can benefit from the development, creating a biased access to resources which in a way reduces economic growth and slows development (Woolcock, 1998). A study by Narayan and Nyamwanya (1996) confirmed that in Kenya some community members still remained poor even when connected socially to each other. This study was done on more than 200,000 groups in different rural communities (White and Smucker, 1998:1).

Another study by Narayan (1999) in Latin America also demonstrated how many indigenous groups which were well known for their high level of solidarity could not experience development or upliftment from poverty (White and Smucker, 1998:1). The problem with these groups in Latin

American countries is that they were not able to access resources and did not have the authority to control or change their lives. Despite having strong solidarity, these groups of people were not able to overcome corruption in higher institutions and the negative effects of colonialism, especially on poor people (White and Smucker, 1998:3).

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The above discussions show that development progresses through natural social interactions within institutions and community members. This shows understanding of how CSOs can shape suitable development through the social capital approach in poor communities. The analysis of social capital and development literature has shown that the most important factor in this process is the social interactions which raise mobility and resources for communities and organisations to work together. The interaction for community and organisations is the key to development in any specific society. It has been demonstrated that social capital can increase or decrease the public good and benefits but the benefits of this approach are much bigger than the negative which occurs in few selected communities. The great benefit of increasing development is that the poor are connected among themselves and with other groups to protect themselves against vulnerability and risk. The next chapter will discuss the research design and methods used in this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter three dealt with the social capital approach in the development of communities. It began by giving an introduction and background to the social capital approach among civil society in South Africa. It went on to give a definition of social capital, the use of the social capital approach in civil society, as well as the negative and positive effects of this approach in civil society. This chapter deals with the research methodology employed in conducting the study. A research methodology is a technique to scientifically address the research problem as defined (Kothari, 2012:8). It begins by first describing the study design. It then moves on to discuss the sampling technique that was used in selecting participants for the study. Methods of data analysis and interpretation are presented including the validity of the research. The chapter ends by discussing the ethical considerations that had to be considered while carrying out the research as well as the limitations of the research.

#### **4.2 Research design**

Research design has to do with the structure of the research before collection of the data or making the final research analysis based on what the research wanted to study. Research design can be defined as a complete summary of the classification of action that the research project will follow (Kumar, 2014:122). According to Creswell (2008:3), the research design emphasises the end-product; looking at the kind of study planned and the kind of results aimed at; while the

research methodology emphasises the research process and the type of tools and processes that are going to be used and followed during the research.

There are two main perspectives a researcher can adopt in carrying out a research study. A researcher could either follow the objective perspective or an application perspective (Kumar 2014:11). A requirement of testing a theory or claim is known as an application perspective research. The aim for carrying out an application perspective research is to create deeper knowledge and validate a theory or claim. On the other hand, an objective perspective research has a specific focus that it seeks to study. Kumar (2014) further identifies different kinds of researches namely; casual, descriptive, correlational, explanatory or exploratory research.

In this research, the qualitative approach to research, which falls under exploratory or explanatory research was followed. This research approach is flexible and focuses on exploring varieties and not quantities. It also focuses on the exploration of feelings, perceptions and experience and not their measurement. The findings are discussed in a descriptive manner and the generalisation of results is less emphasised (Kumar, 2014:14). The qualitative research design was preferred because it promoted a deeper understanding of Planact roles and strategies in development. It made it possible to explain the roles and strategies of CSOs in development. Furthermore, the research approach was flexible and allowed participants to express themselves in their own words (Babbie, 2011).

## **4.3 Types of research**

### **4.3.1 Exploratory Research**

Explanatory research helps in amplifying how and why two parts of a phenomenon are related (Kumar 2011:11). On the other hand, exploratory research illuminates how and why a relationship exists between two parts of the phenomenon being studied. Exploratory research is conducted with the aim of discovering a phenomenon where little or nothing is known (Kumar, 2014:13). In the existence of gaps in the body of knowledge, such research can be conducted to explore and examine the phenomenon. This approach is suitable for this study because of three characteristics which are applicable to this study. These are (a) a strong need to learn more about a topic, (b) testing the possibility of undertaking research that deals with a wide range of information, and (c) development of methods to be used in future studies (Babbie, 2013:90). Below is a discussion of the different approaches as identified by Kumar (2014):

### **4.3.2 Causal- comparative research**

Casual-comparative research is where the investigator examines two or more groups in terms of a cause that has already happened (Creswell, 2014:12).

### **4.3.3 Descriptive Research**

A research study is regarded as descriptive when its main aim is to describe the phenomenon, that is, what is common to the phenomenon under the study (Kumar, 2011:10). A descriptive study attempts to describe an idea, condition or problem in an orderly way by relating what is common to the issue under study.

#### **4.3.4 Correlation Research**

Correlation research focuses on the significance of connection of two variables. Kumar (2011:10) notes that correlation researches are used to disclose if there is a connection between two parts of a phenomenon. Furthermore, the focus of this kind of study is to find out if a relationship, association or interdependence does exist between two or more aspects of a phenomenon (Kumar, 2014:13).

#### **4.4 Research Strategies (Case Study)**

A research strategy is defined as a design the researcher aims to use in responding to his or her research question (Saunders et al., 2012:173). Here the researcher used the case study strategy to develop the research.

A case study is an inquiry which seeks to investigate up-to-date occurrences (Yin 2009:18). This is done in depth and inside its real life setting. Algozzine and Hancock (2006:9) point out that a case study unit can be a group of people, a single person or situation, and can also be an organisation. Thus, the purpose of choosing the case study approach for the research was to explain the particular roles and strategies in detail. In this study, a single case study strategy (Planact organisation) was selected as it was not difficult to manage and allow the researcher to obtain the benefits of using this method as highlighted by Neuman (2014:42). Case studies are mostly useful in representing a full picture of an individual's experiences and results concerning a research, for instance, when the research involves evaluating the effectiveness of a development program in communities such as that of Planact organisation. Therefore, case studies are often used to bring together a wide variety of data about the case to be analysed by finding patterns and themes and analysing them via cross comparisons to other cases. A case can be any unit, country,

group of people, an individual or individuals, an organisation, a community, a society or even a program or programs and depends on what the researcher wants to evaluate or examine through in-depth comparisons or analysis (Robson 1993:146). In this study, the case is an organisation. Some advantages of a case study as explained by Yin (2009) are:

- Using a case study provides the researcher with a clear understanding as it permits him or her to have a connection of abstract ideas under study with actual specifics.
- This method also assists the investigator in measuring his or her intangible ideas against actual experiences and evidence accepted by many people.
- Finally, case studies are good in generating best theory.

As mentioned above, this study made use of case study method and Planact was chosen as a case study for this research to study their role and strategies for development. The purpose of the case study is to evaluate the role and strategy of Planact organisation in development; studying this case in detail and drawing lessons from the research in case. From the evaluative and descriptive position adopted in this research study and the way it was interpreted, the case study research design became the most suitable methodology to be used for the research by providing a very systematic way of collecting data, analyzing data, and giving a comprehensive report to understand the research problem in depth. A common reproach when using case study is that the findings cannot be generalized to represent a wide social location (Yin, 2003). However, lessons learnt from this single case can be applied in a similar case elsewhere.

#### **4.5 Study Setting**

The beneficiaries involved in this research were from Orlando East. Planact has continued supporting the Orlando East and they have created a Community Development Committee. This

committee work together with Planact to strengthen the abilities of, and creating opportunities for, community-based organisations to engage with government on development initiatives. The Community Development Committee is a combination of different organisations committing themselves to work collaboratively.

In-depth interviews were done in Braamfontein with five key staff members at Planact organisation to obtain the needed information. Some documentation was used to obtain more information. These included the Planact annual reports from 2006 to 2014 and a Planact compiled book (Planact in South Africa: 1985-2005).

#### **4.6 Sampling methods**

According to Strydom (2005:328), a sample is comprised of certain elements, representations, typical attributes and characteristics that are found in the whole population. Sampling in qualitative research is important, but it is not easy to collect data from all the people in a country or a certain area. Even more, it is not very important to collect data from all the people in a community to show the validity of a study. With qualitative research, it is just a set of a sample or a sample of a population which is chosen to conduct the study needed. The objective of the study and the characteristics of the population help the researcher to study and determine the sampling size to study. Thus, there are many different kinds of sampling techniques one could use, from probability to non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is mostly used with the availability of subjects or participants; purposive or judgmental sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling are known to be non-probability sampling techniques (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:203).

The population for this study was staff members working at Planact and their beneficiaries in the community of Orlando East. Purposive sampling was used as a technique to select the research sample and size, namely the five senior staff members at Planact. According to Babbie and Mouton (2004:288), the sampling of participants should consider key elements in qualitative data gathering, including current involvement, suitable time and knowledge of the issues. These elements were very important and were utilized in the researcher's selection of the sample. The key informants chosen were selected following their knowledge in civil society work on development, their involvement, their time, and historical background in different projects they have been involved with.

Thus, the key five informants were selected using the purposive sampling technique, because the researcher knew she would obtain more information from the selected people. Purposive sampling is one of the common sampling strategies used. With this technique, the sample size may or may not be secured before data collection. This will depend on the time and resources available through the study objectives play an important role in this process. A purposive sampling strategy includes the selection of sample elements on the basis of explicit features or qualities that are hypothetically relevant to the study (Leedy and Ormrod 2010 and Silverman, 2004:129). The beneficiaries were purposefully selected as they could provide information regarding how Planact is promoting development in their communities in Orlando East.

#### **4.7 Data collection process**

The qualitative case study was the main research method used for the collection of data of this research, which focuses on CSOs in development in underdeveloped countries, with specific reference to the city of Johannesburg in South Africa. According to Bulmer (1983:44) case study

is a way the social information or data is organised focusing on the problem of the study in a complete system.

Fifteen in-depth interviews, two focus group interviews and observation were used to collect data on the roles and strategies of CSOs from the beneficiaries (a committee). This committee work together with Planact to strengthen the abilities of, and creating opportunities for, community-based organisations to engage with government on development initiatives. The CDC is a combination of twenty-eight organisations committing themselves to work collaboratively. The next in-depth interviews were done in Braamfontein with five key staff members at Planact organisation to obtain the needed information. To gather information about the way Planact works with communities in assisting development, a semi-structured interview was designed for an interview with 10 beneficiaries of the organisation in communities. This interview was also used to gain information about the demographic background of the participants that included: age, location, sex, ways and years of participation in Planact's projects. Some documentation was used to obtain more information. These included the Planact annual reports from 2006 to 2014 and a Planact compiled book (Planact in South Africa: 1985-2005).

#### **4.7.1 In-depth interviews and direct observation**

An in-depth interview is an interview processed from which the researcher is concerned with the content of the discussion as well as in the method through which the content is coming from into conversation (Babbie and Mouton 2001:291). During the in-depth interview process, the researcher also observes the body language of the research participants. The interviews with the key informants were conducted at the premises of the organisation, while those with the beneficiaries were at a location convenient for them. Hence, the researcher could observe both

staff and beneficiaries in their natural settings. The researcher asked questions and these questions were conversational. They helped because more information about Planact was obtained and helped to answer questions. They also made the findings section rich.

The in-depth interviews, as well as the semi-structured interviews, gave room to the participants to respond in detail and in their own way to elaborate answers as much as they could. In-depth interviews were conducted with five senior staff members of Planact (five key informants) and 10 beneficiaries in the community using a semi-structured interview guide. In-depth interviews are believed to be the ideal option for the researcher to collect data on individuals, organisations, and or a group of individuals when learning about their perspectives, personal histories, and their life experiences. The in-depth interview and direct observation helped the researcher to understand even the sensitive issues that needed to be explored for the benefit of the research. In-depth interviews are a very reliable way of collecting data. This technique is used more in qualitative research by many researchers. All interviews were accompanied by the use of an audio recorder to assist the researcher not to get lost in the process and also to have accurate information at hand.

The interviews and observations helped the researcher to obtain the participants' points of views concerning the problems in question by obtaining a more detailed representation of them. This method of collecting data by interviews allowed the researcher and the participant to be flexible (Bailey 1987:174). With this, the researcher was able to obtain more detailed information by following interesting points mentioned in discussions and by asking more questions and ideas during the course of the interviews. The researcher prepared key questions that were followed by further probes were necessary during the interviews. Strydom (2005:296) states that the interview is guided by the scheduled questions but is not dictated by that schedule. This idea is an advantage

to both the researcher and the participant as the researcher was able to get more of what the participants were sharing in detail while answering more new questions and issues emerged during the process. In this process, the respondents are considered to be experts on the subject of CSOs and for this, the researcher allowed them a greater opportunity to explain and talk about their stories and experiences. No questions were answered with a simple yes or no answer but all were open-ended questions to allow the respondents to talk as much as they could. All of these were recorded to allow the researcher not to leave out any points while taking notes.

#### **4.7.2 Focus group interviews**

Focus groups are a type of research approach in which attitudes, opinions or insights towards a phenomenon are examined through free and open dialogue among members of a group and the investigator (Kumar, 2014:156). The researcher conducted two focus groups interviews with beneficiaries, with five participants in each group. One group was made up of males and the other females. The focus group discussions were done to get to know more about the organisation. This method was opted for because of its ability to shape, reshape and even alter opinions as groups of individuals put together are likely to generate new ideas or data. This method is also compatible with the social capital approach to development which focuses on social cohesion. The questions were open-ended. This was done to allow the respondents to talk as much as they could and all of these were recorded to allow the researcher not to leave out any points while taking notes.

Some advantages of focus group discussions as noted by Kumar (2014:156-157) are as the following:

- This method is cost effective and takes less time to complete. The researcher experienced this because people just gathered. There was no transport money forked

out for these people, not even refreshments. Giving people refreshments could result in people giving wrong information because they just want to eat.

- The design allows the researcher to produce comprehensive and useful data on the issues under study. The researcher experienced this advantage as well through explaining more to the participants so that they could understand the subject under study.
- Researchers choose a group of people whom they think are conversant with what they want to explore. This happened in the research to avoid people giving answers which are not relevant to the subject under study.
- The design is good when it comes to exploring different opinions on various issues and can be of importance if the investigator wants to find out the level of this difference.

Nevertheless, the main disadvantage of focus group interviews is that some group members have the tendency to dominate the discussion if not carefully directed (Kumar, 2014:157). People interject when someone is talking.

#### **4.8 Data processing and analyses**

The analyses is about classification, assembling, categorisation, deploying and summarisation of data in an attempt to answers the research questions (Berg 2007). According to Gopaul (2006: 91), the purpose of data analysis is to condense data to a comprehensible and interpretable arrangement to respond to the research question at hand by testing and drawing useful conclusions. Kruger and Mitchell (2009) argued that qualitative analysis is about transforming data or information into findings or narrative story. The analysis of this research was done by

retrieving general statements of the connections of all data collected. The data analysis was done manually through the identification method of themes. According to Patton and Cochran (2002:23) with thematic analysis of data, the researcher tries to find common themes that come up repeatedly and then summarises the different views to develop themes for the study. This research used the content analysis method and thematic clustering to analyse information which was gathered during interviews. This process was about counting words and repetitions of words that were happening all the time and comparing answers from different respondents, a process that is also supported by Kruger and Mitchell (2009). In short, the data processing and analysing after the collection of data was done through qualitative research. The process was about organising the data, categorising data in themes and patterns, interpreting them and writing the report.

#### **4.9 Reliability, validity and triangulation**

##### **4.9.1 Reliability**

Reliability is attained when a research tool is accurate and not likely to change. (Kumar 2014:215). According to Saunders et al. (2012:382), in-depth or semi-structured interviews findings are not repeatable since they show reality at the time of the study and are subject to change. The researcher retained notes related to research design, choice of strategy, methods and data collected. Records are kept to enable other researchers to understand processes used and for them to analyse the data that was collected.

##### **4.9.2 Validity**

Validity is a situation where a research instrument can measure what it is envisioned to measure (Kumar, 2014:213). In addition, it refers to the degree to which the researcher has measured what they intended to measure. According to Neuman (2014:218), validity means giving

the genuine perspectives of respondents. In this study, the principle of validity was followed by making sure that in-depth interviews, direct observation and focus group discussions answered the research questions of the study.

### **4.9.3 Triangulation**

Triangulation is used in qualitative study to neutralise a bias that might be present in one method or data sources with other methods or data sources (Denzin, 1978). Therefore, by using multiple methods, data sources and theories, the researcher hopes to overcome any inherent bias coming from using a single method or data source (Patton and Cochran 2015:661). In order to increase the trustworthiness and credibility of this study, the researcher used triangulation of methods and data as suggested by Denzin (1978). Triangulation of methods which includes literature, interviews and observations were used. Here, the use of more than one method (interviews and observations) was used to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. There was also triangulation of data sources, in-depth interviews and focus group interviews. Triangulation here was achieved by collecting data from different sources. This was advantageous because the researcher was able to check the data collected from the individual interviews against those collected during the group interviews for any nuances.

### **4.10 Ethical considerations**

Because this research was done with people and the qualitative study was followed the ethical statement needed to be observed. The researcher interacted intensely with the participants to understand their personal understanding of CSOs, their values, strengths and weaknesses.

The study began with the proposal which was approved by the Department of Development Studies at the University of South Africa. This research followed the ethical standards and legal

obligations of the University. An ethical approval letter was given to the researcher by the departmental board of ethics that permitted the researcher to conduct interviews and confirming that the research study was not harmful to any participant. Permission to conduct interviews was granted by the management team at Planact and all the participants who were willing to respond to the interview questions.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:520) argue that it is the responsibility of the researcher to comply with the principles of ethics as they are practiced in social sciences. These are good practices such as not harming the participants, and avoiding the acceptance of favours that can violate the research principles. The researcher should also avoid deceiving participants and should respect the confidentiality of all respondents. The participants were informed earlier of the purpose of the research and that it was for the master's degree only. The researcher also explained to participants that participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time during the interview. The researcher acknowledged all sources and quotations collected as data for this research. The researcher also acknowledged and thanked all the participants for their contributions to the research. As discussed already authorization was obtained from all the interviewees prior to do interviews and the researcher did obey all the crucial ethical principles before, during and after data collection.

#### **4.11 Timeframe**

The research's time frame for collection of data was during the months of June and July 2016 at the Planact organisations' offices in Johannesburg and their communities in Orlando East (which is mixed up with different community based organisation). Planact work with many

different communities such as Leandra, Springvalley, Thembelihle etc... Due to limited time on hand it was not feasible to go in all the communities. This is reflected in the table below:

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Activity</b>
June 10, 2016	interviews with two beneficiaries in the community (B7 and B9)
June 14, 2016	Interviews with one staff member at the Planact office in Braamfontein (S5) and interviews with two beneficiaries in the community (B3 and B4)
June 15, 2016	Interview with one staff member at Planact office (S2) and one beneficiary in the community (B1)
June 20, 2016	Interview with one beneficiary (B5) and also facilitated one focus group discussion with a group of women (FGD2)
June 21, 2016	Interview with one staff member at Planact offices (S3)
June 24, 2016	Facilitated a focus group discussion with a group of men in the community (FGD1)

June 30, 2016	Interview with one staff member at Planact offices (S1)
July 5, 2016	Interview with one beneficiary in the community
July 6, 2016	Interview with a staff member at the Planact office (S4)
July 7, 2016	Interview with one beneficiary in the community (B2)
July 19, 2016	Interview with a beneficiary in the community (B6)

**4.12 Limitations of the study**

The study was limited to the roles and strategies employed by Planact in aiding development in post-apartheid South Africa. An analysis of the roles and strategies of CSOs in aiding development should account for the activities of all the groups or all types of CSOs in the developing countries. However, this research only focused on Planact activities as one of many CSOs. The study was carried out at the premises of Planact, which are based in Braamfontein, part of the city of Johannesburg in South Africa. The findings of this study can therefore not be generalised to all CSOs in developing countries.

The researcher encountered few challenges and difficulties while collecting the data. It was not easy to secure an appointment with the potential respondents. Many of them did not have time for meeting up with the researcher due to their packed-up work schedules. The researcher overcame this by negotiating with them to conduct the interviews when available. The other difficulty was the language barriers as some of the respondents were more comfortable talking in their own mother tongues, but this resolved as participants were also fluent in English and agreed to talk in English as it was the only language the researcher could understand. Furthermore, some respondents were not comfortable giving an open viewpoint. Initially, some respondents expected to get something in return, but this was clarified as they read the consent form and the researcher clearly explained to them that their participation was voluntary and no payment or financial benefit was involved.

#### **4.13 Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter covered the discussion of the methods used in this study. The research design followed, which is the qualitative approach was discussed. Furthermore, the methods used to collect data in this study were explained. The purpose of this research design was to validate the answers which were given for the research questions. The discussion of the analysis of data was given; ethical issues, challenges encountered and time frames were discussed as well. This chapter also discussed the way the data was analysed to ensure the data was trustworthy.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research design followed in the study. Also, the method used to collect data in this study was explained. Before the findings of the study are provided, it is important to restate the problem that led to this study and the research aims and objects the study set out to answer. The problem highlights the fact that CSOs are agents of change and also promote development through the work they do. They also promote democracy and good governance and create safe spaces where the poorest of the poor could make their voices heard (Lewis, 2005). However, the development process continues to face diverse challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and inequality. Unemployment, poor service delivery and lack of education remain the main causes of poverty and challenges facing the civil society sector (Aliber, 2003).

On the other hand, skills development programmes, education, and internships are key in creating an opportunity for individuals to be employed or follow entrepreneurial ventures; and this is where CSOs like Planact come in (Aliber, 2003). As poverty, unemployment and inequality increases in South Africa, CSOs assumed diverse roles as well as employ different strategies to tackle these development problems (Lewis, 2005). However, these problems persist and continue to affect the development process. This then called for an evaluation of the strategies used by civil society to combat these problems facing development in South Africa. Therefore, the main focus of this study was to critically evaluate the roles and strategies of CSOs in the development of South African communities, using Planact as a case study. This is because Planact organisation works directly with community-based organisations (CBO) and the people at the grassroots to design and

implement projects aimed at addressing some of the development challenges facing the community.

In this chapter, the results of the research are discussed in an attempt to answer the research questions raised in the first chapter which are: What roles does Planact play in aiding development in the Johannesburg area? How does Planact use social capital as a strategy in promoting development in Johannesburg? What challenges does Planact as a civil social organisation face in promoting development? And finally, what developmental lessons can be learned from Planact? This section pays attention to the perception of the participants concerning the role and strategies of Planact organisation in the development of their communities. The results will be discussed and related to other studies highlighted in the literature review and theoretical background.

This section begins by providing a background of participants' profile, and a background of Planact as an organisation. Furthermore, it will discuss the roles of Planact in development, the strategies used to promote development and some of the challenges faced by the organisation.

## **5.2. Background of participants**

Table 5.2: Participants' profiles

This study was conducted at Planact organisation and the community of Orlando East with 15 participants and two focus groups with a total of five persons in each group; Table 5.2 below is a brief description of participants' profiles:

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age group</b>	<b>Highest level of education</b>	<b>Duration in the organisation</b>
S 1	Male	30-40	Diploma	8 years
S 2	Female	40-50	Masters	9 years
S 3	Female	30-40	Bachelor degree	3 years
S 4	Male	20-30	Diploma	13 months
S 5	Male	40-50	BA Honours	7 years
B 1	Female	30-40	Diploma	15 months
B 2	Male	40-50	Matric	8 years
B 3	Male	30-40	Higher Certificate	7 years
B 4	Male	20-30	Matric	4 years
B 5	Female	40-50	Diploma	8 years
B 6	Female	30-40	Grade 5	6 years
B 7	Male	20-30	Diploma	17 months
B 8	Female	40-50	Grade 10	10 years
B 9	Male	20-30	Diploma	5 years
B 10	Male	30-40	Matric	4 years

FGD 1	Male	20-50		
FGD 2	Female	20-50		

*S= Staff      B= Beneficiaries:      FGD= Focus Group Discussion*

As seen in Table 5.2 above, S stands for staff members who were interviewed at Planact organisation to obtain the required information with regard to the role their organisation plays in development. The ages of the staff members range from 20-50 years and their lowest level of education is a diploma while the highest is a master's degree. B stands for beneficiaries of the organisation living in the communities. They are both male and female with the lowest level of education being a Grade 5 and the highest a diploma. Their age group ranges from 20-50 years. FGD stands for Focus Group Discussions, which were done to get to know more about the organisation. All those who participated in this study were both female and male Africans by race. This is because Planact is an organisation that deals with community development and democratisation in South Africa. Purposive sampling was used to select five key informants such as the staff based on the criteria that they are in a better position to give me information regarding the role of Planact. The focus-group interviews were aimed at getting different views about the research questions from participants. In order to protect the identity of participants and ensure maximum confidentiality, letters will be used to identify the participants.

### **5.3 Role of Planact organisation**

This theme reports on interviewees' perceptions of the background and the roles that the organisation plays in the development of the community. Planact as CSO focused on developing and meeting the needs of local communities. These activities include but are not limited to service provision and advocacy

**5.3.1 Advocacy:** the organisation advocates for the rights of the community. B3 highlights that *“the organisation is helping us talk to the government about our problems especially about housing. If they were not here, I don’t know what would have happened to this community”* (B3 June 14, 2016). Edwards and Gaventa (2014:18) confirms this by saying that civil society as associational life is created to help people in society to solve the problems that disturb them all. This suggests that civil society is not just an institution, but forms part of the society in which it operates. Cashdan, (2000) postulates that civil society has increasingly been recognized as being critical to the successful growth in development and poverty reduction processes in communities.

The organisation also organises meetings with relevant stakeholders where beneficiaries could sit and discuss the different challenges facing them. S5 (14 June 2016) highlighted that *“as an organisation, we have managed to bring together politicians, local government, and even the MEC so that the community could present their problems and brainstorm a way forward”*. More so, one of the beneficiaries stated, *“You see, this organisation is really helping the community. The other time we had problems with our water and poor sanitation, the NGO organised a meeting between us and government officers and we were able to discuss the problem with them. After that meeting and another one, they then addressed our concerns. We really thank Planact”* (B6 July 19, 2016). This suggests that Planact has been instrumental in advocating for the rights of the people of this community especially when it comes to water and sanitation problems faced in the community, which was resolved after Planact arranged a meeting with them and the local council. The above quotes echoed the views of Oakley (2003) that civil society pushes for economic reforms, promotes accountability and transparency. Furthermore, they promote the protection of human rights, deliver services to the community, and fight against social exclusion and inequalities.

**5.3.2 Giving voice to the voiceless:** Most participants knew very well how the organisation started and their roles as well as the things that they have benefited in the organisation. S2 notes that *“Planact is a civil society organisation and the roles of Planact as an organisation are to favor the interests of the marginalized people in the community”* (S2, June 15, 2016). What participants mentioned echoed what Anheier (2004) points out about civil society. He states, CSOs are associations, collections of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and institutions that are designed to serve the interest of its members. In addition, civil society is “the sphere of institutions, organisations, and individuals located between the family, the state and the private sector in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests” (Anheier, 2004:22). This suggests that Planact as a civil society organisation is created to represent the concerns of the community.

Participants did not hesitate to mention the wonders that Planact does in their community on a voluntary basis. Most of the participants said that *“Planact is there to serve the interest of the silent voices of poor people”* (FGD2 20 June 2016). As noted by UNDP (2001:12) civil society is distinct and different from the government and business sectors. They are normally concerned with providing a space through which citizens could make their voice heard through participation. In addition, a staff member noted that *“the organisation was established around 1985 as a group of passionate professionals came together, volunteering to assist communities. This was done by proposing alternative plans of development processes during the bridging to democracy. The target of the organisation was in the disadvantaged communities and had a great involvement in the policy development of the new democratic government”* (S5 14 June 2016). This suggests that civil society organisations work with government to address the needs of communities as observed by Kim, et al (2005) that civil society organisations are considered as middle agents between communities, government, and the private sector; and are vital for improving the lives of poor

people while at the same time creating pressure for change in government policy and service delivery.

However, a few were not sure of what Planact is doing in their communities by saying that *“the organisation is not meeting the developmental needs that we are facing. We need a lot of things in this community, but I don’t think they can help us that much”* (B9, June 10, 2016). This suggests that although most participants are happy with their services, others seemed not to have benefited from their services or wanted more than was being offered.

**5.3.3 Contribution to policy-making:** S3 (June 21, 2016) said: *“Planact plays a crucial role in intervention and policy making through the obtaining of information through the individuals and communities it serves”*. Brown and Kalegaonkar (1999: 1) argued that civil society organisations play a significant role in social, political, and economic development activities in the country. Civil society actors play a vital role in leading development of the country and are now actively engaged in promoting and implementing development worldwide. In addition, *“Planact really tries its best to take up communities’ issues with the relevant people so that they address them at policy level”* (S2 15 June 2016). This suggests that they bring the peoples’ issues to the attention of public authorities, monitor policy and programme implementation, act as a watchdog and contribute to the realisation of more transparency and accountability in the country (Lange, Wallevik and Kiondo 2000:2). They organised training, seminars, forums and workshops at different levels; producing and publishing information materials to facilitate the development process (NDA 2008:13). They participate in dialogues with public authorities on the development of socio-cultural policies and also measures to be implemented.

**5.3.4 Governance and Accountability:** Some staff members at Planact said, *“The organisation serves as an intermediary between the government and the common people; our organisation is also there to make government accountable democratically”*. (S2 15 June 2016). Echoing the above, Nyalunga (2006:40) postulates that since 1994, CSOs have played a significant role in supporting the government in raising awareness on the implications of the new era. CSOs not only assist with providing basic services but have increasingly been involved in advocacy and monitoring.

Planact was appointed by the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) in Gauteng to conduct an audit in ward committees of some communities in Johannesburg. *“Planact is a trusted organisation even by the government, that’s why the CoGTA in Gauteng approached us to do an audit for them. The aim was to promote accountability and to promote good governance which is one of the main aims of the organisation”* (S3 June 21, 2016). B8 added, *“Because of the presence of Planact in our community, our local counsellors are doing their jobs because Planact is always checking on them”* (B8 July 5, 2016). This constant monitoring done by Planact on local government helps promote good governance and accountability. Habib (2003:4) affirms the notion that civil societies played a role in recording and publicising the wrongdoings of the state during and after 1994.

**5.3.5 Promoting participation:** Planact promotes participation in the community among local people and between the local government and the community. S3 posits that *“Planact is an organisation that also seeks to foster participation and engagement between the community and their local counsellors. We want both of them to work together in order to come up with development projects that will benefit the community in the long run”* (S3 21 June 2016). Diamond (1991: 7) speak out that civil society organisations have been involved in promoting democracy

and reinforcing good governance. In addition, they also check the power of the state, promote political participation as well as the upholding of human rights and freedoms. This is true for Planact's community as they create the environment where democracy flourishes for the poor masses.

Additionally, S2 posits that Planact realizes that people are an important asset to the organisation. She said, "*Planact facilitates engagement between communities and government and undertakes nationwide training of municipal officials, community leaders, and councillors which lead to the success of the projects and meeting of objectives. The right people who are equipped with the right tools and information are key to success*" (S2 June 15, 2015). These people that are trained then moved into the community and assist community members where and when necessary. This suggests that although Planact is just an organisation, its influence is felt in the broader communities around Johannesburg through trained volunteers.

**5.3.6 Education and training:** Planact assists the community in terms of skills transfer. One of the participants highlighted that "*Planact has been very instrumental in training and offering support toward committee members from wards 30 and 31 in the Johannesburg Metropolitan area. The training was aimed to empower participants and give them knowledge around service delivery issues, municipal budgetary processes and the integrated development plan*" (S3 June 21, 2016). This suggests that the organisation not only holds the government accountable but attempts to make sure that they are equipped to do what they are supposed to do. In addition, the organisation offers training on sustainable urban agriculture to assist community members to produce food to help them supplement their incomes. This is echoed by B5 (20 June 2016) who said, "*The organisation has really helped me a lot especially by helping me know how to use the space in my yard to grow food. Now I and my children can eat healthily. They also give us training on farming*

*methods*". This echoed a study done in 2007 in Indonesia in an organisation involved in development activities such as agriculture, environmental protection, sanitation and human development and uses this approach to empower communities so that they can be able to take charge of their own future (Suharko, 2007:6).

## **5.4 Strategies used by Planact to promote development**

This theme explains the strategies used by Planact in promoting development in the community, such as participation, integrated human settlement and community economic empowerment.

**5.4.1 Participation:** In a conversation with staff members most of them postulate that Planact as an organisation uses different approaches to reach out to community members. Planact does participatory governance, the aim of which is to contribute to processes and projects which grow the capacity of organisations of civil society in disadvantaged communities. S3 (June 21, 2016) said, "*Planact nurture the capacity for local government to address and rectify problematic systems in service delivery and engage with communities in a participatory manner*". This concurs with Lewis (2005) that an effective civil society links and helps the poor and marginalised people in the society by giving them a platform through which their voices could be heard.

Furthermore, S5 (June 14, 2016) goes on to say, "*The aim is also to have a strong presence in local government planning and development processes and projects. The project is aimed at influencing actions at the national level regarding issues for underprivileged communities and projects concerning development planning. Through improved participation at local government, the aim of the project is to influence bureaucratic systems and contribute to policy regulation through knowledge and facts obtained from implemented pilot projects*". This echoed the work of

Igbuzor (2010:13) that the function of civil society is to effectively participate with relevant stakeholders in the design, formulation, implementation, and monitoring of anti-poverty programmes and that the principal activities of NGOs are capacity building and training; provision of project management and microfinance as well as advocacy.

**5.4.2 Mentoring:** In addition, the organisation uses mentoring as a strategy to engage with the community. They mentor community members on a number of issues confronting them such as environmental health, farming and housing issues as highlighted by S2 that *“The organisation mentor community members on a continuous basis to make sure that they implement the skills transferred to them especially when it comes to farming and business skills”* (S2 June 15, 2016). Concurring with the above, a beneficiary posited that *“I always have people from Planact who comes to check on my food gardens and advise me when things are not going according to plan. When our gardens are doing well, the organisation recruit us to go help train other community members”* (B8 July 5, 2016). This approach to mentoring is very important to development as it cannot only empower the individual but also leads to job creation. Tannenbaum and Yukl (1992: 399-441) allude to the value of mentoring to retention and recruitment strategies of organisations. Mentoring is a successful tool to motivate and develop individuals in terms of training and skills development and facilitates long-term improvement in individual development.

**5.4.3 Technology in Networking:** Planact uses technology to network with community members. Some participants highlight that *“using the organisation social media is helping the organisation to network with other stakeholders and even community members easily without necessarily meeting with them face to face, which is good in cutting cost”* (S3 June 21, 2016). In addition, *“we also get feedback from the community, put out announcements regarding development happening in the community that could be of help to them”* (S3 June 21, 2016). This

suggests that the creation of an organisational social media platform allows interaction and feedback from users, providing information on the organisation, development, municipal services, important forms, contact details and online e-learning for skills development and educational purposes. This is of great advantage to Planact to build its network and capacity whilst promoting training and development.

However, some participants said that *“the organisation should try to use other networks such as radio and television to reach more people”* (B9 June 10, 2016). This means that alternative networking platforms like television and radio can be explored in order to build capacity and acquire partnerships. Schuler (1994) posits that radio and television are still very popular platforms in advertising and network-building initiatives as many citizens have access to these. People tend to see companies and brands advertised on television or radio as trusted and link quality and good service to these brands and companies.

**5.4.4 Integrated human settlement:** Another strategy used by Planact to reach communities is through integrated human settlements. During my conversation with one of the beneficiaries B10 (June 28, 2016) said, *“This depends on the need of vulnerable communities. I feel that specific support and training is being provided to their community members. I think this is how Planact reaches its community by implementing land and housing access to basic services”*. This view is echoed by Ranchod (2007) in that the project aims to engage and influence actions at a local level so that results about human settlements in turn influence decisions and processes at a national level. The aim is to achieve improvement in the quality of settlements and producing evidence of various successful methods of practice in supporting citizens and communities.

Furthermore, responding to a question on how Planact organisation helps community members to improve their living conditions, most beneficiaries responded that *“When the country is experiencing any kind of instability, be it political turmoil or any kind of distractions, the organisation comes in with projects that mainly address the consequences of what is happening in the country”* (B5 20 June 2016). For example, one of the staff members referred to an event that happened during the days of apartheid when people lost everything and Planact came to their rescue by providing them with basic needs such as healthy food, clothing and proper shelter. So, Planact as an organisation bridges the gap by focusing on housing issues and urban development.

**5.4.5 Community economic development:** Community economic development is another strategy used by Planact to reach the community. S1 (June 30, 2016) said, *“Using the community economic development strategy, we aim to engage and influence actions at the community level which will in turn influence the local and national level”*. In a male focus group (FGD1, June 24, 2016) they said that these projects aim to show the different processes of identification of assets within communities by citizens compared to available external resources. B8 believes that the lowest level of improvement by Planact illustrates the efficiency and success of practice and policy. She said, *“This is how the community gets developed, we have access to all available resources to improve our living conditions and we come together and identify and utilize these assets to our benefit, for example, food gardening”* (B8 July 5, 2017). This suggests that the community uses social capital or social cohesion in achieving economic development among them. This echoes the views of Bourdieu (1986:248), who maintains that social capital is the collection of real and possible resources connected to control of a solid network of more or less organised relationships of common association and acknowledgment. In addition, social capital which is the

networks and norms that help people in communities to act together as one has enabled the community to be economically viable (Woolcock and Narayan 2000:2).

**5.4.6 Social organisations:** in a focus group discussion (FGD2, 20 June 2016) participants highlighted that Planact reaches their communities through social organisations. *“We do have meetings in the community to discuss what is affecting us and Planact usually attends to give us support and sometimes training”* (FGD2 20 June 2016). This suggests that the organisation assists the community in terms of meeting their training needs in social forums. NDA (2008:13) concurs that CSOs do organize training, seminars, workshops, and forums at different levels; producing and publishing information materials to aid the development process.

**5.4.7. Forums:** One of the beneficiaries’ postulates that *“Planact like other organisation reaches out to people through forums which help them know what the people need and then give solutions”* (B6, July 19, 2016). Mkhwanazi (2013:3) strengthens the views of B6 when he says NGOs are addressed as the promoters of economic development and also looked upon as those having the solutions to the problem of poverty. They believe that the importance of their role is recognised through their inclusion in world forums, such as the World Economic Forum and World Social Forum and by the acknowledgment from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the development partners whom they have been searching for to assist in the fight against poverty. This shows that NGOs are seizing opportunities to participate in development activities as development partners using different strategies (Nzimakwe 2008:91).

**5.4.8 Awareness campaigns:** B9 (June 10, 2016) said that *“they reach out the communities through the awareness campaigns so that they protect the common people”*. Concurring with this view, Igbuzor (2010:13) states that civil society plays a role in creating awareness and raising the

consciousness of people. They build and organise the capacity of rights holders and advocate for pro-poor policies. It is not the CSOs' responsibility of to design and implements policies that eradicate poverty. They act as entry points for service to people and service providers. The role of civil society is to effectively participate in the design, formulation, implementation, and monitoring of anti-poverty programmes and the principal activities by NGOs are capacity building and training; provision of project management and microfinance as well as advocacy (Igbuzor, 2010:13).

Planact also raises awareness around issues of HIV/AIDS. They work with community members in organising awareness workshops, where people are sensitised about the virus and how to look after themselves. One of the participants noted that *"Things were going anyhow in our community because many people did not understand this HIV/AIDS thing. You know, people were afraid to go and test because of the fear of finding out their HIV status"* (B10 June 28, 2016). Another participant in the female focus group added that *"We were afraid to go and get tested because everyone knew that having HIV is a dead sentence. But Planact has created awareness in the community and people can now freely talk about it and also go for testing"* (FGD2 20 June 2016).

**5.4.9 Empowerment:** In addition, S5 (June 14, 2016) highlighted that *"We reach out the community through empowering citizens to know their rights. This is to say that Planact organisation has the role of empowering citizens to know their rights"*. Also, they urge the government to be accountable to their people and work transparently. Noyoo (2007:14) postulates, that the *Access Initiative* known as TAI is considered the largest network of civil society organisations in the world. This organisation is committed to making sure that citizens have the right and ability to influence decisions about issues that affect them in their communities. In

addition, TAI evaluates government performance on issues of accountability, transparency, and inclusiveness using a standard research method (Carr and Norman 2008). It uses the feedback from such assessments to carry out dialogue with governments regarding legal and institutional reforms that promote access to information, citizens' participation, and access to justice (Carr and Norman 2008:371).

### **5.5 Problems faced by Planact**

Planact, like many other NGOs, interacts with the marginalized poor in the community and mobilizes local communities. S1 (June 30, 2016) postulated that *“Planact’s interventions concentrated on local government policy, with actions. Regardless of the identification of water and sanitation as global rights, societies in South Africa however, experience poor basic service delivery”*. S5 (June 14, 2016) echoed the same sentiments with S1 (June 30, 2016) and went on to give an example of places that are experiencing poor service delivery, for example, Springvalley, Thembelihle, Jabulani, Kwazenzele, and Leandra. He goes on to say despite the fact that South Africa is a middle-income country, half of its people lack access to adequate nutrition, clean water, energy, proper shelter, good healthcare, education, foods, and sufficient access to social and economic services. Noyoo (2007:10) points out that, for a long time, black people have been living on the precincts of society and were regarded as sources of cheap and available workforce for the apartheid economy and that the fall of apartheid and that the establishment of the new government and CSOs brought hope to the many South Africans living in poverty.

Lack of funding, one of the beneficiaries said that *“Planact’s interventions revolve around planning and promoting communities, advocating for enhanced service delivery, and providing training to the communities, and sometimes, they are unable to do so due to lack of funds”* says

(B2, July 7, 2016). This concurs with Cashdan (2000) who notes that civil society has increasingly been recognized as being critical to the successful growth in development and poverty reduction processes in communities, but that this is often limited by lack of funds. In addition, B2 notes that *“the organisation is struggling to raise enough funds in order to fully meet the need of the community. This situation has been worsened by the financial crisis”* (B2 7 July 2016). This concurs with Heller (2001) who observed that donors are beginning to pull out of South Africa since it became independent.

S4 (July 6, 2016) is the view that *“Insufficient inclusivity in local governance has grown to be a cause of hindrance for citizens whose expansion requirements continue to be unmet”*. B3 added that *“Some low-income groups, therefore, encounter hindrance regarding partaking in municipal systems such as the Integrated Development Plans and budgeting processes”* (B3 June 14, 2016). This situation increases poverty in the community. The FGD2 (June 20, 2016) added that *“the communities are discontent regarding basic service delivery such as the provision of water, electricity, and waste management in several ways. If these services are not met, they give rise to protests”*.

Furthermore, *“the organisation facing challenges with built-environment problems like housing and basic services delivery. Of which its mission is to facilitate community development processes that enhance democratic governance at the rural level, improve people’s living conditions and alleviate poverty”* (B2 July 7, 2016). This suggests that the organisation is struggling to meet its obligations to the community. In a male focus group discussion (FGD1, June 24, 2016) the view was expressed that the organisation works primarily within the urban areas of Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. It empowers people who lack good living conditions, improves their surroundings, and alleviates poverty.

## 5.6 Challenges faced by beneficiaries

This theme will discuss some challenges participants have encountered while engaging with Planact. It looks at issues of accessibility, accountability, and responsiveness.

**5.6.1 Accessibility:** Some participants living within the community complained that it is sometimes difficult for them to access the Planact offices as they are far away from where they live. B2 notes *“The problem we face is that sometimes their community people do not always come out, so when we have problems we struggle to reach them. They are far away from us and I do not always have money for transport to get there”* (B2 July 7, 2016). In addition, a member of the focus group noted that *“They always meet with government officers, but I have never had the opportunity to really discuss my problem with them as it is difficult sometimes”* (FGD2 June 20, 2016). The above statements suggest that accessibility in terms of location is a challenge to some participants while others find it hard to approach Planact employees to discuss their problem. This may pose a challenge in the development process since NGOs are meant to represent the interest of the community and not the other way round. This confirms the views of Lind (1997) that civil societies do not always offer an automatic route to the empowerment of their members as it is sometimes not clear if they are actually representing the interests of each member of the community which they claim to represent.

**5.6.2 Accountability:** as a civil society organisation, some participants felt that the organisation is being more accountable to their funders than the communities which they represent. One participant highlighted that *“We have a lot of things that can be done for the community, but you know sis when funders give you money, it has to be used for a specific thing. So even when you see a pressing need, you cannot divert that money, which is sometimes difficult for us”* (S1 June 30,

2016). Another beneficiary concurred with the above by saying that *“We do ask the organisation to assist us with skills that will help us get employment, but they tell us that there is not money for that now as donors have only given them money to implement advocacy programmes. That they will try and apply for other funds that will address our needs, which is not correct as they have to give us what we want, not what funders think is correct”* (B6 July 19, 2016). This suggests that the organisation is more accountable to their donors at the expense of the work they do in the community. Confirming the views of Whitfield (2009) that most governments and civil societies of developing countries spend time responding to donor initiatives and trying to make their priority fit the donor’s agenda in an attempt to secure funds. However, as in the case of Planact, their attempt to please their donors at the expense of the community has made some community members unhappy.

**5.6.3 Responsiveness:** Beneficiaries felt that the time the organisation uses to address their issues is sometimes too long. B10 (June 28, 2016) notes that *“Sometimes we raise a concern with them and they only come back to us after many months. Although it is not entirely their fault because they have to look for money and sometimes talk to the government, but the waiting creates more problems in the community. For example, getting the issues of housing addressed, when it takes too long, people run out of patience and start protesting”*. CSOs are often empowered by the government of funders to be able to carry out development initiatives. Lewis (2005) notes that the role of CSOs has widened and includes engaging in diverse debates, negotiating with the government as well as with international and local non-profit organisations for the best interests of the community or its members. But as posited by the beneficiary above, it is often not easy to perform these roles in time sometimes due to slow responsiveness from either the government or donors; thereby delaying the development process within the community.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

The findings of this study have been made possible by using different methods to collect data; such as in-depth interviews which gave participants the opportunity to express themselves in their own words about what they think about the roles and strategies used by Planact. In addition, focus group discussions also enabled the researcher to get different opinions and sometimes completely new data from members of the group. And finally, the researcher also used direct observations to pick up issues that participants were not sharing. All these methods enabled the researcher to understand the different perspectives of the participants regarding the role and strategies used by Planact. Furthermore, the social capital theory used to guide this study was explained in different ways by participants. Some mentioned social organisations, forums, participation, and empowerment.

This chapter, therefore, presented the views of participants on what the roles of Planact are in the development of its communities. These include giving a voice to the voiceless, advocacy, holding the government accountable and improving the community economically. In addition, it highlights the strategies used by Planact to promote development in the communities; such as an integrated human settlement approach, participation through social cohesion and community economic development. Finally, this chapter also highlighted some of the challenges faced by Planact in promoting development, such as lack of funding.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the summary of the key findings of this research. The researcher set out to critically evaluate the role and strategies used by civil society organisations in development; using Planact as a single case study. The summary of the findings of this research will be provided in terms of participants' views of how Planact as a civil society organisation has contributed towards development in their communities; the strategies used by the organisation in promoting development in the community. In addition, their views on the challenges faced by Planact will be given. Finally, this chapter will provide some developmental lessons that can be learned from the case study. Such lessons are important in enhancing the developmental role of the sector.

#### **6.2 Summary of the research findings**

Planact was involved in policy development under the new democratic government. Their aim is also to have a strong presence in local government planning, development processes, and projects. The organisation aimed at influencing actions at the national level on issues affecting underprivileged communities, and on those concerning the development project and planning. Through improved participation at local government, the project of participation aimed to influence bureaucratic systems and contribute to policy regulation through knowledge and facts obtained from implemented pilot projects. The role of Planact has evolved over time. Most participants and staff noted that the organisation is benefiting the community in terms of creating safe spaces where their voices can be heard. In addition, they said that the organisation is helping

them advocate for their rights by organising meetings with government officers where their matters could be heard and addressed. Planact is also empowering the community economically through training and skills transfer.

This study found that Planact uses several strategies to reach their target community; such as the integrated human settlements approach. Through this approach, Planact is able to interact with the community by improving the quality of their settlements. Furthermore, participants noted that through the human settlement project, they have been able to access land, received training and skills on how to make their environments habitable and sustainable.

In addition, community economic development is another strategy used by Planact to reach the community. Communities are empowered to use the resources that they have available to them to produce something for economic advancement; such as producing food on home gardens to supplement income. Some beneficiaries pointed out that Planact has assisted the community to improve their provision of water, electricity, and waste management in several ways, such as by means of petitions and protests. In trying to rectify and address these problems Planact organises seminars, training, workshops and forums at different levels. In addition, they produce and publish information materials to facilitate the development process (NDA, 2008:13).

In several of its project areas, Planact continues to be successful in endorsing effective engagement between the communities and municipalities so that violent protests are prevented. The organisation has a strategic approach towards the planning of projects to ensure sustainability. There are three project categories which Planact focuses on and through which they intend to improve the quality of life; particularly for the disadvantaged people by way of innovative

approaches to increase the number of community members and government officials participating in development processes.

However, this study found that as a civil society organisation, Planact is facing a number of challenges. These challenges include lack of funding for the organisations' activities, lack of accountability to the community, limited access to the organisation by some community members as well as a lack of responsiveness on the part of the organisation to meet up with community demands at times.

In order to improve service to the communities in the future, more than 50% of the participants said Planact must develop strategies to deal with the economic needs of its programmes. This includes designing interventions that join donors' priority areas. For this reason, Planact proceeds to prioritise research that informs its interventions and policy strategies. Moreover, communication should improve. The reason the organisation was established was to enhance communication with partners and communities.

### **6.3 Developmental lessons**

As seen at Planact, agricultural training is key in enabling communities to generate income from farming and smallholding whilst receiving the knowledge and skills to manage natural and economical disasters, infrastructure issues and the lack of public services. Therefore, training and skills development projects could be implemented by similar CSOs as sub-projects to housing and land access development initiatives in order to give communities the skills and knowledge they require to successfully manage farming and the use of land to generate income.

Other NPOs should consider using mentoring as a method of training and developing of individuals in order to gain skills and knowledge in certain areas. This method creates an

opportunity for employment for the mentees who are mentored by experts. Planact as an organisation which is in constant development also faces the challenge of losing employees to retirement and resignations. They need to explore ways of identifying suitable people in order to recruit new talent and retain top employees. Individuals from outside of the organisation can be recruited or offered the opportunity to apply for mentorship programmes in order to learn the business and gain the experience and skills needed to eventually be employed full time. In this way, the organisation will be directly involved in employment creation.

Planact uses networking to increase community participation and create social capital. Networking techniques such as information and training forums, workshops, interpersonal engagement, the internet, forming of partnerships with key private companies and community leaders; all form a big part of social capital and capacity building for the organisation. Other civil societies working in the community could also identify more networking methods that will take development initiatives to the poorest of the poor.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

Planact mainly receives funding via donors and sponsors. It is highly recommended that the organisation explore other areas of income. The availability of funding is directly linked to the possibility of performing operations and facilitating projects of NGOs. Funding could be sought from the national and local government, foreign aid agencies, carrying out fundraising Initiatives and by approaching private companies for funding.

Planact operates in Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces only. This is due to limited funds as highlighted by some participants. However, the organisation could source more funds and expand its operations outside of these two locations to other areas of South Africa. This will add

to the general development of communities in South Africa. Planact scaling up will enable them to have a broader influence in the wider communities, enhance the creation of social capital in more communities that could lead to poverty reduction and development.

Workshops, meetings, and forums face the challenge that not all citizens of rural and underdeveloped areas are reached as was highlighted by some participants who said that they do not always have transport fare and thus do not have access to training and information provided during such training. The location of the meetings should be considered in order to establish if all target groups will be reached and have access to the locations. Alternative methods of distributing information and training should be considered, for example, the creation of a newsletter with critical information, printed training materials which can be distributed or to television for those who have access; and audio-visual training materials.

As noted by participants, alternative networking platforms like television and radio can be explored in order to build capacity and acquire partnerships. In addition, this study is limited in scope as it only focused on the roles and strategies of civil societies in development in the Johannesburg area, not considering other parts of South Africa. An all-inclusive study could be carried out by interested researchers which will take into considerations (a) a larger sample which could include other civil societies in other parts of the country, (b) the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide for richer and varied information that could enable generalisation of the findings.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This study intended to critically evaluate the role of civil societies in development using Planact as a case study. The researcher sought to understand the role Planact plays in development

in the Johannesburg area, its use of the social capital approach to development and the challenges faced by this organisation in implementing development. This study has contributed to the field of civil society especially by promoting the use of the social capital approach in the development of local communities.

NGOs still play a crucial role in the development of local communities by enhancing social capital and co-operation between communities, individuals, national government and international communities. CSOs have great responsibilities within communities and their members because they ensure that they create a space where the voices of the vulnerable can be heard as well as advocate for change of unfavorable development policies that can affect their members. CSOs are able to close the gaps between citizens, communities, and government by meeting the basic needs of the community which the government cannot or will not provide, such as skills development and poverty reduction. Therefore, the role of civil society organisations in aiding development and Planact, in particular, cannot be overemphasised and has been demonstrated in what they do in the community.

Support from government and international aid agencies towards the work of civil society organisations would enable them to effect more change, reach more people, call for accountability and carry out more advocacy work. As a result, this could promote social capital among community members, which could lead to sustainable development.

However, regardless of how the sector is viewed, civil society plays an important role in providing a space where the voices of the poor in society can be heard and where they can carry out their civic duties and promote social cohesion. Civil society organisations are vital as they

create a space for the building of identity in a society where people feel vulnerable and have little control over the things that affect them.

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