RESEARCH REPORT

ENHANCING ACTIVE CITIZENRY ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

MARCH 2015

Enhancing active citizenry ENGAGEMENT in South Africa

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACN	Active Citizenship Network
ANC	African National Congress
APPS	Applications
CDFs	Community Development Foundations/Forums
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CBP	Community Based Planning
CBM	Community Based Monitoring
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CDC	Community Development Corporation
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPSI	Centre for Public Service Innovation
DCOGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CPF	Community Policing Forums
CRL	Cultural, Religious and Linguistics Committee
DAG	Development Action Group
DDP	Democracy Development Programme
DoT	Department of Trade
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
EPA/USDA	Environmental Protection Agency/U.S. Department of Agriculture
EU	European Union
FDC	Foundation for Community Development (Mozambique)
G2B	Government – to – Business
G2C	Government – to – Citizenry
G2E	Government – to – Employees
G2G	Government – to – Government
GBF	Greater Bristol Foundation
GGLN	Good Governance Learning Network
GJMC	Greater Johannesburg Metro Council
GoSA	Government of South Africa
GSDC	Greater Southwest Development Corporation
GTZ	German Technical Support
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Integrated Development Plans
IEG	Institute for Electronic Governance
IPM	Interactive Policy Making
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JCI	Junior Chamber International
JCIACF	Junior Chamber International Active Citizenship Framework
KCDF	Kenya Community Development Foundation
MCC	Mariannridge Coordinating Committee

MCF	The Montana Community Foundation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NDA	National Development Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHCF	New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
NPC	National Planning Commission
OCF	Oxfordshire Community Foundation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RCDF	Richmond Community Development Foundation
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
SAPS	South African Police Service
SCCD	Standing Conference for Community Development
SFCD	Strategic Framework for Community Development
SMS	Short Messaging System
SWOP	Southwest Organizing Project
TCC	Thembelihle Crisis Committee
UCF	uThungulu Community Foundation
UDF	United Democratic Front
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WARF	West African Rural Foundations
WCCF	West Coast Community Foundation
ZCBF	Zululand Chamber of Business Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report mainly presents the findings of the active citizenry engagement study commissioned by the National Development Agency (NDA) as part of the research and evaluation partnership signed by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the NDA, with the overarching objective of assessing the role of Community Development Forums and Foundations (CDFs) in enhancing effective and accountable citizenry engagement.

The motivation, goals and objectives for this study, and the definitions and key concepts underpinning the understanding of active citizenry, have been extensively expanded on in the literature review document of this study. Also explained in the literature are the value of promoting active citizenry, the evolution of active citizenry in South Africa both pre and post-apartheid, the enabling institutions and framework for advancing active citizenry in South Africa, the role of government, typologies of citizen engagement in South Africa, international experiences in development frameworks for active citizenry, and guidelines for enhancing active citizenry engagement. Full details of these aspects of the study can therefore be obtained from the full literature review report. In addition the methodology used in this study, the sampling framework, inclusion and exclusion criteria, the sample size, sample list, unit of analysis, target universe list and the final sample list have also been presented in detail in the Field Work Report of this study. However, key and relevant aspects of the literature review and methodology have been summarised in this report to facilitate coherence with the findings of the study.

This executive summary therefore focuses directly on the results of the study. The presentation of the results in this section starts with a profile of the study sample, a profile of the forums surveyed, an understanding of active citizen engagement and its drivers, the impact of forums on development outcomes, stakeholder mapping, the nature of engagement with government stakeholders, and case studies of CDFs (and a Foundation surveyed in this study). It ends with a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

PROFILE OF STUDY SAMPLE

A total of 19 organisations were sampled covering 8 provinces. The geographic spread consisted of 10 urban (including semi-urban) community organisations and 9 rural community organisations. In terms of the typologies of the structures sampled our sample included the following: 8 Community Development Forums (CDFs); 3 Community Development Foundations (CDFs); 3 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and 5 Community Based Monitoring (CBM) structures. In spite of differences in legal/organisational structure the boundaries in relation to purpose and functions were very blurred.

What has become extremely clear is that the citizen engagement terrain is a highly complex one, that experiences are diverse, and that much of what transpires in the field is largely un-documented.

This has made the analysis of the results from this study challenging, particularly in terms of generalisation of findings and the presentation of findings into discrete thematic focus areas.

PROFILE OF FORUMS SURVEYED

WHEN FORUMS WERE ESTABLISHED

The forums profiled in this study appear to have been established between 1990 to the present, with three of the forums established between 1990 and 1999. These forums were established to deal with a number of social and economic issues. The forums established between 2000 and 2009 focused on social justice issues, responding to service delivery problems, strengthening democratic governance through voter education and addressing rights violations. At least 2 forums set up during this period focused on land reform issues. In the case of forums established from 2010 onwards the study found three additional interesting features. The forums established after 2010 first appeared to be focused on self-reliance strategies such as dealing with food security, youth education, art and addressing unemployment through entrepreneurial skills development in communities. The second feature appears to be the focus on enhancing working relations with government institutions and becoming more involved in decision-making processes. The third feature was the increasing militancy of actions (violent protests) attributable to 5 forums as forms of citizen engagement reflecting the service delivery frustration and the growing perception that "violence is the only language government understands" and would respond to. All forums and foundations profiled in this study were functional at the time of the study.

PURPOSE FOR ESTABLISHING A FORUM

The main reason why forums are established is for people to be empowered to play a part in issues, decisions and processes that affect them as a society, particularly public policy and services. The study found that communities establish forums when they perceive a need or face a threat of a kind. Although forums may have been established in response to an incident or issue respondents indicated that forums were mainly established to "*improve their standard of living, teach the youth not to be lazy and expect handouts all the time"*. The establishment of forums was also partly driven by a sense of responsibility which was expressed as follows: *"But if we do not participate it means we would not be able to communicate the needs of the community."* It was, however, clear that the purpose for which forums were established had changed over time. One clear change in purpose was the visible shift from a focus on knowledge-based community services to greater community engagement.

LEGAL STATUS OF FORUMS

At least half of the 19 organisations surveyed during the fieldwork were legally constituted structures either as Trusts or as Non Profit Organisations (NPOs), many of which were now performing a service delivery role and addressing a myriad of needs. These included youth entrepreneurship, gender based violence, home and community based care (in the context of HIV and AIDS) and drug rehabilitation. Most of them began as informal forum structures. In many

instances the study found that since they had become formal NPOs the forum structure was no longer the main vehicle through which they operated. Support for transformation from a forum or advocacy group to becoming a fully-fledged NPO came from many quarters, including local councillors and government officials from departments such as Social Development or Health. A number of these NPOs have, however, retained some elements of the consultative work with the community through regular or ad hoc meetings.

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP OF FORUMS

With the exception of the Community Foundations and the formally established NPOs profiled in this study, the rest, which were the forums, were structured in diverse ways. Four of the forums reportedly had loose structures which they defined as being open to the community, while a further 3 were highly structured with a board elected annually at the AGM and office bearers appointed.

Membership was defined differently for each forum. Most of the forums indicated that *"the community"* was the source of membership for the forum, making an assumption that the *"community"* was a homogenous group. Some forums specifically targeted youth, others women and in many instances a particular vulnerable group in society.

In a few forums, leaders indicated that they had specifically sought the participation of the ward councillor, izinduna and/or school principals of the area as members of the committee. In the case of victim empowerment forum members included government stakeholders from the Departments of Health, Justice, Social Development and Education. Members were mainly recruited through door to door activities and awareness raising workshops. However, a strong motivation for involvement in forums was how the person had been directly affected by a situation or assisted by a forum. This experience motivates the individual to establish closer links with or become more actively involved in the forum. Personal growth and development was also identified as a strong factor influencing participation by community members in forums.

ACTIVE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

MEANING ATTACHED TO THE CONCEPT OF ACTIVE CITIZENRY

There was no commonly accepted definition of active citizenry and no clear standard model of what an active citizen is. There was, however, a general understanding among the stakeholders interviewed that it referred to the involvement of individuals in;
- public life,
- affairs that bring change into their communities or lives, and
- focusing on making sure public institutions and officials are accountable to communities.

The term is used especially at the local level to refer to citizens who become actively involved in the life of their communities, tackling problems, bringing about change or resisting unwanted change.

NATURE OF CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

The nature of citizen engagement employed differs depending on the focus of the respective forums. In relation to service delivery the types of engagements in the literature include involvement with planning for services, co-creation and production in the delivery of services and oversight functions.

Planning for services type engagements have included budget hearings, izimbizo or community based planning for a particular service. Co-creation and production were focused on the establishment of services where gaps exist in partnership with the community such as the establishment of CBOs or NGOs to deliver a much needed service or oversight where the community monitors and reports on failures and seeks redress. Co-production refers to the involvement of citizens in decision-making and the delivery of a service.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR FORUM ACTIVITIES TO THE BROADER COMMUNITY

Communication costs emerged as strong real barriers but it was clear that the forum members improvised and innovated means for sharing information.

Word of mouth communication was the main approach to information sharing followed by the use of loud hailers and driving through areas in the community to announce information. Where there was a strong volunteer group attached to the forum door to door information sharing was utilised to inform residents of when the next meeting would be held or to invite people to attend a talk or special event. In addition it was noted during a focus group session that *"we also visit local schools, host events and community meetings, so as to get maximum coverage"*.

One respondent noted that if funds were available they would print pamphlets announcing an event. Another indicated that they hosted community meetings every quarter and that this was important for providing community members with a platform to address issues of concern.

The advocacy forums were active users of social and electronic media including Twitter, Facebook, emails and Skype to communicate messages to members or to direct their advocacy messages to relevant stakeholders.

Agenda setting for forums – how community priorities are identified

Workshops and community meetings are the main means through which community members discuss issues, explore opportunities, identify priorities and agree on achievable actions. At times these are structured meetings while at other times they are informal and very loose arrangements.

CHALLENGES OF FORUMS IN ENHANCING ACTIVE CITIZENRY

A number of challenges were cited by the forums surveyed in this study. The lack of access to resources and funds for undertaking the work of forums was mentioned by every forum as a major challenge and limiting factor in their line of work. This included access to office space, telecommunication equipment (computers, printers, photocopiers, etc.), meeting spaces, administrative support and cash resources. Inadequate resources undermine the ability of the forums to work effectively and its sustainability over time. One forum specifically addressed this challenge by running Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) workshops where the community was made aware of the need to recognise and leverage the resources that already exists in the community and among the members rather than bemoan the lack of resources as an obstacle to development. The sustainability of forums is further threatened by their inability to sustain leadership capacity due to high forum leadership turnover caused by forum leaders finding paid employment or alternative jobs. Another challenge forums face is that the political dynamics prevailing in the community sometimes influence perceptions against the forum, whereby the forum is perceived to be aligned to a particular political party due to the forum's strong criticism of a specific policy measure. Ensuring inclusivity emerged as another challenge faced by forums. Forums sometimes find it difficult to ensure that all community stakeholders are involved in every decision-making process. Furthermore, communities sometimes have unrealistic expectations. The difficulty faced by forums is the ability to achieve a balance between keeping people interested in the work of the forum while avoiding unrealistic expectations by community members.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FORUMS IN ENHANCING ACTIVE CITIZENRY

The forums identified a number of factors that they believe have contributed to the effectiveness of public participation initiatives they have engaged in. Factors identified were good planning, good governance in terms of transparency and accountability, effective and proactive consultations with the community, training in the mobilisation and management of resources, especially financial resources, informed and well-capacitated members, and effective channels of communication.

Good planning was identified as one of the key ingredients to having a successful community initiative where the public fully owns and participates in the project. A second critical factor identified was that of governance, translated into a commitment to being accountable and transparent with all stakeholders they deal with, which reportedly helped to build a strong relationship between them and their stakeholders. It is important that people are consulted before projects are implemented in the community. This involves first and foremost speaking to the community and ensuring that the mandate of the forum was properly aligned to the community's needs. A strong caution was noted about not excluding traditional authorities from such consultations as this could be an obstacle with them acting as gatekeepers to these communities.

The need for training in good governance was also highlighted by one advocacy forum. A forum member noted that a particular forum had *"educated their branches about governance and the processes by which decisions are made. In this way, when people are angry or they are not satisfied about something, the community would know where exactly to direct their complaints or grievances"*.

Informed and well-capacitated forum members with access to relevant and appropriate knowledge, skills and information was noted as an important factor in the effectiveness of active citizenry initiatives. Some forums reported drawing on retired professionals in the community to impart their knowledge because they have learnt a lot through their experience and could offer guidance. Effective channels of communication with the community were key to enhancing active citizen engagement and maintaining the social capital built over the years.

IMPACT OF FORUMS ON DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Forum members reported many positive outcomes of their interventions. This includes knowledge dissemination, improved service delivery, promoting social cohesion in communities, enhancing community involvement in development, enhancing the practice of active citizenry in South Africa, and media exposure to enable access to support.

KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION: Information sharing, awareness raising and knowledge dissemination were reportedly the most significant benefits of forums.

IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY: Access to social services was another contribution that forums had made by creating bridges between government service providers and the communities where this need existed.

MEDIA EXPOSURE WHICH ENABLES ACCESS TO SUPPORT: The forums which had undertaken more militant actions also reported impacts through media coverage of such violent protests.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT:

Several forums reported that through the forums community members were more actively volunteering for development work, while others reported that community members' skills had been enhanced in the planning and execution of campaigns, undertaking door to door profiling exercises, and in hosting dialogues and consultations with the community.

ENHANCING THE PRACTICE OF ACTIVE CITIZENRY IN SOUTH AFRICA:

In at least three forums members noted that through participation, training and awareness creation they had learnt alternative and more constructive approaches to addressing problems. They had stopped burning tyres and blocking roads as a mean of registering their displeasure as a community.

PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION IN COMMUNITIES:

An important message which forum members reflected on was that working together as a community had improved social cohesion within the community.

"We have also realised that there is so much more that we can achieve if and when we are united. As the people of xxx we were not united, everybody did their own thing, but now, we know that to be effective we must work together."

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A stakeholder can be defined as any entity with a declared or conceivable interest or stake in a concern. In community development this may include international actors (e.g. donors), national or political actors, public sector agencies, interest groups (e.g. unions), commercial/private for-profit, non-profit organisations, civil society members, and the community itself.

An understanding of stakeholders' involvement in enhancing community participation is important because it helps with incorporating a wide range of interests and voices. The involvement of all stakeholders is a *sine-qua non* for achieving effective and efficient citizenry participation. It is with this understanding that the study engaged in a stakeholder mapping exercise in respect of the sites profiled in the study.

Forums were able to engage a wide range of stakeholders, including CBOs, NPOs, faith leaders, traditional leaders, government institutions as well as private sector organisations. Types of support offered by stakeholders include funding, training, access to venues for meetings, equipment, links to sponsors and donations, legal advice and security during community meetings.

ENGAGEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS

The forums involved in advocacy around service delivery complained bitterly about the lack of responsiveness of government stakeholders. Several forum members said they felt that they did not have government support and complained about how hard it was to partner with government. Forums also reported that it was becoming increasingly difficult to engage with government stakeholders because there was a constant reshuffle of personnel in positions at local offices and this made it difficult to build lasting partnerships with government stakeholders. Even where there has been some responsiveness from government stakeholders forum members expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the response received.

Not all forums, however, reported being unhappy with government's response. One forum reported that as a result of their complaints about the conduct of a police officer, the matter was investigated and the officer was suspended.

CASE STUDIES OF A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FORUM AND A FOUNDATION

Two case studies were conducted on two of the Community Development Forums surveyed. These were the Social Justice Coalition (SJC) based in Khayelitsha, Western Cape and the Wentworth Early Childhood Development (ECD) Forum in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The ECD forum was originally not

part of this study, however, we received permission from the client to include it as a case study in this report. In addition two Community Development Foundations are also profiled in detail in this report. These are the uThungulu Community Development Foundation in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape Community Foundation in the Western Cape. Two of these case studies are summarised below, specifically the Social Justice Forum (SJC) and the uThungulu Community Foundation (UCF).

CASE STUDY 1: SOCIAL JUSTICE COALITION FORUM

When it was established, structure and purpose

The Social Justice Coalition, established in 2008 in Khayelitsha, has a very formal structure. It is managed by three central structures, namely an executive council, the secretariat and the chairpersons' forum, each with its level of responsibility, and with 12 branches across Khayelitsha. It was initially established in response to xenophobic attacks in 2008. With time, its focus was expanded to deal with government's failure to deliver services, lack of accountability on the part of government and issues that deal with the Constitution and the judiciary.

How the SJC enhances active citizen engagement

The SJC has two main campaigns in Khayelitsha.

1. The Clean and Safe Sanitation campaign: focuses on ensuring clean and safe sanitation for the community by holding government accountable for the delivery of these services
2. The Justice and Safety for All campaign: works with government and partners to ensure that the community receives protection by the police and access to justice through the courts

These two activities were identified in consultation with the community and consultative processes through its branches.

Communication channels used by the SJC to enhance active citizenry engagement

The SJC has 12 branches across Khayelitsha, each consisting of an undesignated number of members and community advocates who are SJC staff members who adopt a particular branch. The advocates are responsible for providing information to branches and each branch is then responsible for disseminating this information to the community. The SJC branches meet weekly and through the branch structures the SJC engages with community leaders to encourage public participation in community affairs.

The SJC's challenges in enhancing active citizenry engagement

The SJC is financially very well-resourced and has access to meeting venues, training, assistance with litigation, research work, media advocacy and access to telecommunication equipment such as computers. As a forum the SJC faces little threat to its sustainability because it is very well-resourced and has a well-defined organisational structure and processes required for election into office. The

SJC strives to ensure as much inclusivity as possible in its engagements with the community while at the same time managing community expectations.

Factors that make the SJC effective in enhancing active citizen engagement

The elaborate structure of the SJC fosters good governance in terms of transparency and accountability. The SJC has annual general meetings at which its leadership is held accountable by its membership and community members. The SJC has access to training which enables its members to be well-informed and capacitated. Its branch network is very effective in ensuring continuous and proactive consultations with the community. The chairpersons of their branches meet frequently to share ideas and find support from each other and solutions to the myriad of issues that need to be addressed.

Impact of the SJC on development outcomes

As a result of the SJC's Safe and Clean campaign in Khayelitsha:

− extra public toilets have been provided to residents of Khayelitsha
− janitorial services have been implemented to ensure that the toilets are clean and functional
− additional street lights and electricity have been provided around public toilets to increase visibility aimed at reducing crime attacks on community members visiting the facilities
− a social audit for janitorial services for communal flush toilets has been done in four settlements in Khayelitsha aimed at improving janitorial services at communal sanitation facilities

Stakeholder engagement

The SJC has strong partnerships with a range of stakeholders including NGOs and research bodies across the country with similar interests and organisational focus as the SJC. This affords the SJC a wealth of support and organisational synergies through which they learn from other stakeholders to improve their operations.

Relationship with Government

The SJC has a tense relationship with government stakeholders in the Western Cape. This is because sanitation, which is a major focus area of the SJC, is a huge problem in the Western Cape. The SJC frequently finds itself caught in the cross-fire between the DA-led provincial government and the ANC-led local government councillors. The SJC, however, strives to be politically neutral in all its endeavours.

CASE STUDY 2: UTHUNGULU COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

When it was established, structure and purpose

The uThungulu Community Foundation (UCF) was established in 1999. The UCF is South Africa's first community philanthropy endowment institution. Seed funding for the establishment of UCF came from the Charles Mott Foundation, the Ford Foundation, BHP Billiton and the South African Grant

Makers Association, facilitated through the Zululand Chamber of Commerce. The UCF is one of three community foundations supported by the Mott Foundation in the country that has succeeded by adapting the philanthropy endowment concept to South Africa.

In terms of structure the foundation has a board of trustees comprised of 9 members who have been drawn mainly from local government and the private sector. The UCF's patron is King Goodwill Zwelithini. A management committee, headed by the chief executive officer (CEO) of the UCF, is responsible for the day to day operations of the foundation. The board, together with the staff, constitute various sub-committees to oversee finances, grant making and other related functions.

The purpose of the UCF is to improve the quality of life in local communities, establish, promote and maintain a sound community-rooted growth fund, support deserving community-based NPOs, mobilise diverse community resources and public support for the UCF's programmes, instil confidence in local communities through the revival of traditional and other forms of philanthropic practices, and promote and develop socio-economic values based on fairness, mutual respect, integrity and public accountability.

How the UCF enhances active citizen engagement

The UCF promotes grant making in the uThungulu and uMkhanyakude District Municipalities of KwaZulu-Natal. CBOs in these two districts can apply for small grants for projects that are focused on community development in relation to education, food security, health, entrepreneurship, social justice, human rights, abuse against women and children, and employment creation. The grant making committee thoroughly assesses applications and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The process is open, transparent and fair. This study also found that the UCF invests in education and training interventions for communities around voter education and dealing with government stakeholders, all of which contribute to enhancing citizen engagement.

Communication channels used by the UCF to enhance active citizenry engagement

As a grant making organisation the UCF does not deal directly with community members. However, it has continuous interaction and dialogue with community leaders and grantees. The UCF engages with CBOs and, through philanthropy, empowers them to engage more directly with community members and their challenges. The UCF also does strategic research into development prioritisation in community driven processes. A typical example is the community mapping and data collection process conducted in 2011 by the UCF aimed at prioritising community needs for redress. While it is referred to as a "research process" the process is aligned with the UCF's motto of "people helping people" which strongly espouses values of self-reliance and self-development. To quote the foundation, "*UCF believes sustainable development is only possible when communities can rely on their own skills and other resources required for sustainable socio-economic development.*"

The UCF's challenges in enhancing active citizenry engagement

The UCF experiences challenges in implementing the development approach outlined above. This includes the lack of coordinated service delivery to local communities arising from the absence of a shared development strategy among the multiple stakeholders. This sometimes results in the duplication of resources and services among development partners. The UCF is otherwise well-resourced financially, faces negligible threat to its sustainability, is well-aligned politically and has a

vast network through its patron. The UCF ensures inclusivity in community driven initiatives through its continuous dialogue with community leaders and grantees, a thorough selection process required for funding from the UCF, and the alignment of grant funding to specific designated development areas based on the community's prioritised needs.

Factors that make the UCF effective in enhancing active citizen engagement

The UCF has a very elaborate organisational structure, management and reporting obligations that ensure good governance, transparency and accountability. As a grant making organisation it ensures efficient mobilisation and management of resources, and has well-informed and capacitated staff. Its continuous dialogue with community leaders and grantees serves as a very effective channel of communication that fosters a vital flow of information between the UCF and relevant stakeholders for positive development outcomes.

Impact of the UCF on development outcomes

The UCF funds a range of local development initiatives including crèches and preschools, youth development, food security, services for the elderly, disabled, orphan and child care interventions, home and community based care programmes and socio-economic development interventions.

Stakeholder engagement and relationship with Government

The UCF has multi-stakeholders in the private sector, government, academia, traditional authorities and grassroots communities with which it collaborates to address development challenges in the communities served. It has been suggested that a deliberate and sustained intervention to enhance active citizenry is within the ambit of the work of the UCF and aligns extremely well with the UCF's ethos and operating principles.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study brings to the fore the value of collective action in development. This value is summarised in terms of Plastrik and Taylor's framework of the benefits of good networking practice, namely; the ability to rapidly and widely diffuse information, ideas and innovations; the ability to build connections among forum members (bridge building); to build resilience amongst network members, many of whom have been members for a long time; to develop adaptive capacity to address new or changing circumstances and respond to emerging needs; and to expand reach and scope of work, exponentially.

This study found that although civil society and government stakeholders ascribed similar meanings to active citizenry there are key differences in the manner in which each stakeholder perceives the practice of active citizenry. This ranges from mere information sharing and consultation to full community involvement in the implementation of development interventions.

Forums are formed in response to real service delivery needs experienced by communities or in respect of deeply held frustrations about the failure of government to deliver services or honour rights. Predominantly, forums established have focused on co-production, working alongside

government to deliver a key service. A few forums have focused on the oversight role in monitoring service delivery and seeking redress.

A number of factors emerged as key drivers to a successful and sustainable forum. These include strong and visionary leadership, good governance, access to sufficient and appropriate resources, and effective and open channels of communication with community members and all stakeholders.

Factors which contributed to the effectiveness of forums included good planning, commitment to governance principles, regular and ongoing consultation with stakeholders and a well-informed membership. Forums also faced a number of challenges. While the need to remain non-partisan is key, forums struggle to be accepted as being neutral. It was not always easy to ensure complete inclusivity in the forums' activities. This created information asymmetries and differences in levels of understanding and cooperation within the community as to why certain decisions and choices were made. Forums also face the difficulty of achieving the fine balance required between keeping people involved in the forums' activities and managing unrealistic community expectations.

The impact of establishing forums went beyond ensuring that service delivery gaps were addressed. It included building community capacity for engaging with development and fostering social cohesion in communities.

This report captures in various places the successes enjoyed and the tangible benefits reaped from active citizenry in South Africa. The report also identifies the challenges that forums experience in their efforts to enhance development outcomes and that much more remains to be done to strengthen active citizenry in South Africa. The study findings make explicit the kind of support that is required. This is what must occupy the focus of the NDA as it moves forward.

Recommendations

Three key recommendations emerge from this study:

1. The NDA is suitably placed in its role in supporting the non-profit sector in South Africa to develop a set of interventions to advance active citizenry engagement by civil society. It can achieve this through its grant agreements with NPOs, through its focus on thematic areas and through a capacity development programme.
2. The NDA needs to consider its role in enabling government stakeholders to reflect on their understanding and practice of active citizenry to ensure that it is more closely aligned to the National Development Plan's (NDP) 2030 goals and aspirations.
3. The need for a knowledge hub for showcasing good practice in active citizenry in South Africa is urgently required. South Africa has a wealth of experience that needs to be widely shared. The role of the NDA in facilitating such information sharing needs to be explored. This would go a long way to change perceptions and educate the citizenry that violence is not the only language government understands, and that there are good local practices of community driven organisations partnering with government to ensure inclusive and equitable growth and development.

1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The government of South Africa acknowledges that active citizen participation is a prerequisite for democracy and transformation. A core component of South Africa's Constitution is the commitment to ensure public participation in governance, aimed at giving effect to the principle of a representative and participatory democratic state, with Sections 59, 72 and 118 of the Constitution calling for public involvement in legislative processes. Central to the Constitution are values of non-racialism, equality and protection of individual and societal rights. Significant evidence exists to suggest that there are substantial development gains to be achieved through enhancing active citizenship, foremost of which is its contribution to deepening democracy (Putnam, 2000; Sheedy, 2008).

South Africa has established a number of channels aimed at giving effect to enhancing citizen engagement in governance. These include legislated, statutory mechanisms such as ward committees, school governing bodies, and formalised avenues such as rural road transport forums and police forums, among others. These platforms are aimed at allowing citizens to shape institutions that determine their wellbeing. National, provincial and local spheres of government can enhance citizens' participation through a variety of two-way information gathering and sharing forums and platforms between citizens and government. While these platforms can enable government to inform, they also enable citizens to give feedback to government and to monitor performance. In addition, these channels will allow all development actors (the individual, communities, NGOs, government and even the private sector) to use this information flow to develop strategies together that enable citizens to best claim their rights and exercise their responsibilities as envisaged by the Constitution. Citizen participation therefore has an important role to play in bringing about transformation.

In this regard significant benefits stand to be realised in terms of well-established mechanisms for redress, two-way communication flows between the state and its citizenry, the ability to hold state officials accountable to expected outcomes and the potential to better align policies to the needs of society. These benefits would help build higher levels of trust between the state, its institutions and the citizenry, enhance the role of ordinary South Africans in decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing and extend the democratic process beyond the ballot box.

Despite the existence of these platforms government has acknowledged that the distance between the citizens of South Africa and the government keeps growing (NPC, 2012a).

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Fifteen Year Review commissioned by the Presidency in 2008 specifically noted that despite a progressive framework espoused by government for public participation, there was still an urgent need for strengthening innovative approaches to fostering participatory democracy. Twenty years into our democracy, many of these values have yet to be realised leading to great discontent among the citizenry as they feel that government has not adequately addressed their needs and concerns. This urgency is underlined by the increasing number of service delivery protests countrywide, both in intensity as well as in level of violence exhibited (DCoGTA, 2014) over the last decade. Although the reasons for protest action are complex they demonstrate a demand for accountability and

responsiveness from government, which appears to be largely unmet within the confines and quality of existing participatory democratic systems (NPC, 2012a; Powell, 2012).

Chapter 15 of the NDP 2030 suggests that the state should focus on engaging with people in their own forums rather than expecting citizens to engage with forums created by the state (NPC, 2012a). It notes that:

> "In many respects, South Africa has an active and vocal citizenry, but an unintended outcome of government actions has been to reduce the incentive for citizens to be direct participants in their own development. To prevent this practice from being entrenched, the state must actively support and incentivise citizen engagement and citizens should:
> - Actively seek opportunities for advancement, learning, experience and opportunity
> - Work together with others in the community to advance development, resolve problems and raise the concerns of the voiceless and marginalised
> - Hold government, business and all leaders in society accountable for their actions
>
> "… The state cannot merely act on behalf of the people – it has to act with the people, working together with other institutions to provide opportunities for the advancement of all communities." (NPC, 2012b: 27)

It is evident that active citizenry and public participation are both overburdened concepts in South Africa's development lexicon.

1.2   GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

It is against this context that this study forms part of the research and evaluation partnership signed by the HSRC and NDA, with the overarching objective of assessing the role of community development forums and foundations in enhancing effective and accountable citizenry engagement.

Specific objectives as outlined in the Terms of Reference provided by the NDA included:

- To compile a comprehensive desktop analysis on CDFs including outlining the purpose, legal frameworks and institutional arrangements for establishment of CDFs
- To undertake a historical review of development of CDFs globally and in South Africa and provide evidence of effectiveness of CDFs in advancing development and in promoting citizen participation
- To assess the relevance of the CDF model for advancing active citizen participation taking into account the rural-urban differences and traditionally governed areas in South Africa
- To identify mechanisms for advancing democratic citizenship among the populace in respect of participation in CDFs
- To develop a working citizenry model for South Africa that can be tested
- To provide clear recommendations for the NDA on how it can contribute to enhancing active citizen engagement in development in South Africa

1.3   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

This study seeks to contribute to the progressive realisation of the NDP Vision for 2030 (NPC, 2011) and, more specifically, the attainment of Outcomes 12 and 14 of the current South African

administration, both of which actively promote the ideals of '*an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship*'.

The NDA anticipates that the findings of this study will:

- define a functional role for the NDA in enhancing active citizen engagement through its capacity development work with civil society organisations, and
- inform the mobilisation of resources for a follow-up longitudinal study to test models for promoting active citizenry engagement in South Africa.

Of relevance is the growing body of evidence of the piloting of alternate development frameworks for civic engagement, particularly by civil society stakeholders in South Africa. Tapping into that reservoir of experience and knowledge through this study could generate recommendations for the NDA to consider how to contribute to effectively enhancing citizen engagement in development processes in South Africa.

There is therefore the need for the emergence of alternative organised frameworks that enable citizens to effectively participate in local governance. The objective of developing such alternative frameworks is to make citizens realise the direct benefits to participation and reduce the probability of a community getting participation fatigue and withdrawing from future engagements. In this way, citizenry participation will take place on a continuous basis as opposed to seasonally or in response to a specific event (Heese and Allan, 2009).

1.4   THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

Section 1 of the report provided the context for this study. The rest of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides a summary of key findings from the literature review of both international and South African evidence in respect of active citizenry engagement.
- Section 3 details conceptual framework and the methodology which informed the design and implementation of the study.
- Section 4 presents key findings of this study according to key thematic focus areas.
- Section 5 reviews two case studies which provide a deeper analysis of two findings.
- Section 6 summarises key lessons, provided some overarching conclusions and offers recommendations for how the NDA may want to contribute to advancing active citizenry in South Africa.

2 SUMMARY OF KEY CONCEPTS AND UNDERSTANDING UNDERPINNING ACTIVE CITIZENRY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides an overview of the key findings emerging from the literature review conducted prior to the fieldwork component of this study. The aim of the review was to provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the terrain of active citizenry, including definitions, to define the enabling environment components which support active citizenship engagement both globally and in South Africa and to increase awareness of some of the key challenges, debates and issues with respect to advancing active citizenry as highlighted in research literature. The information gathered during this review underpinned the development of the conceptual framework for this study, informed the design of the study methodology, the sampling framework and the development of survey instruments.

2.2 DEFINING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Citizen engagement is essentially a process where citizens claim the right to participate in informing decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing. Citizen engagement entails the redistribution of power from the state to citizens as a core element of a democratic governance system. While there does not appear to be a universal definition of citizen engagement, common themes running through many of the definitions are '*political action, community activism, mutual respect, nonviolence, democracy in practice and the redistribution of power from the state to citizens as a core element of a democratic governance system*' (GGLN, 2013; Hoskins and Mascherini, 2009). Active citizenship is thus concerned with questions of what it means to be a member of society, how identities and loyalties are constructed, how citizens are supported and resourced as members of society (rights) and how citizens contribute to the improvement of society's wellbeing (obligations and duties).

2.2.1 NATURE AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Participation alone is not a sufficient indicator of democratic practice. An important link is made between participation and democratic values with the assertion that unless participation adds value it will be neither democratic nor beneficial. The postulation is made that participation could be reduced to a mere empty and frustrating ritual if not accompanied by a real distribution of power.

This preoccupation with the quality of participation emerged in the discourse on public participation in the late 1960s initially with Arnstein (1969) who sought to distinguish between '*real participation*' and '*manipulation*' using an eight-step Ladder of Participation.

FIGURE 1: ARNSTEIN'S LADDER OF PARTICIPATION
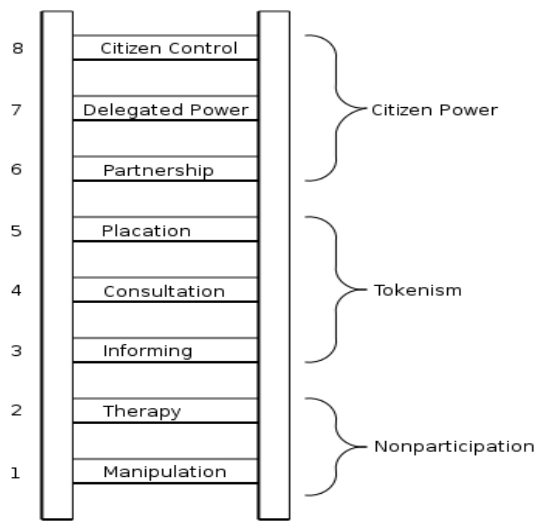
Source: Arnstein (1969)

The rungs on the ladder represented various gradations of the distribution of power, with the highest rung reflecting effective citizen control.

More recently Rowe and Frewer's typology of public engagement mechanisms defines participation as a two-way channel of communication equivalent to rungs 7 and 8 of Arnstein's Ladder (Rowe and Frewer, 2005) as illustrated in figure 2 below:

FIGURE 2: TWO WAY CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION
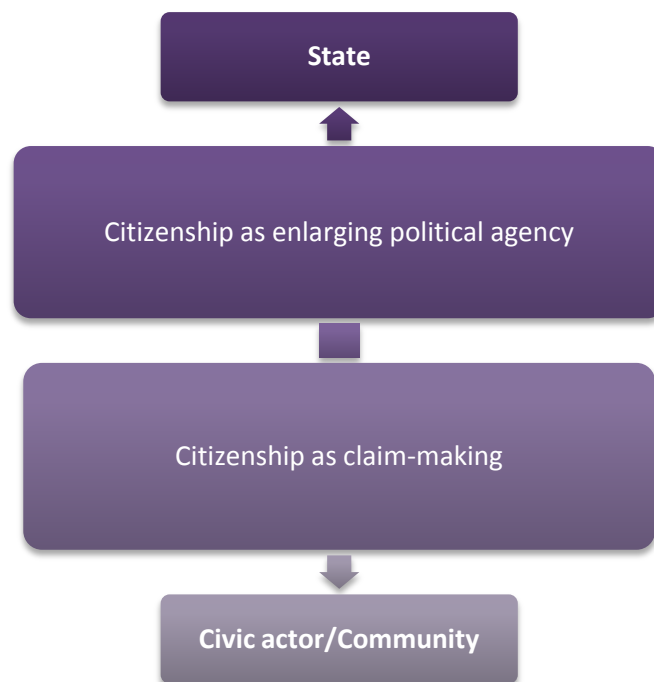
Source: Rowe and Frewer (2005)

Here the notion of active citizenship as a two-way process is clearly articulated whereby on the one hand citizens claim the right to participate in decision-making processes with government, while on the other hand government is held accountable to the citizenry in terms of agreed milestones and expected outcomes. Well-established platforms of communication and information flow in both directions are required to ensure an effective and successful civic engagement in democratic governance processes.

2.3 VALUE OF PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENRY

Substantial development gains stand to be achieved through enhancing active citizenship, foremost of which is its contribution to deepening democracy (Putnam, 2000; Sheedy, 2008).

Sheedy (2008) noted at least six potential benefits of strengthening citizen engagement, namely:

- It enhances decision-making as it suggests that ignoring public opinion is short sighted and decision-making arising thereof will be perceived as illegitimate.
- It improves policy decisions as it provides a broader basis on which to make informed decisions.
- It serves to overcome polarisation and reduces potential for conflict as it helps to build trust.
- It strengthens citizen competencies in terms of enabling skills development and transfer in problem solving and strengthening their confidence to engage with government structures.
- It involves citizens in political life beyond the ballot box.
- It provides a platform for minority voices to be heard in decision making processes.

Putnam's work on social capital is relevant here. Loosely defined, social capital refers to the connectedness between groups of people. Drawing on his seminal work on social capital formation in the USA in the 1990s, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Putnam presented evidence which indicated that in communities where social capital was high there were positive benefits for both communities and individuals. Putnam's thesis about the value of social capital is closely aligned with the active citizenry benefits outlined by Sheedy (2008), namely that it contributes to collective problem solving, widens awareness of an issue by hearing from different perspectives and enables the building of trust between the state and the citizenry.

The need to build social capital through effective and functional mechanisms of civic engagement is of paramount importance in South Africa. This is due to the challenges to effective communication and dialogue between the state and the citizenry evidenced by the frequency and violent nature of public protests in South Africa. Successful participation of the citizenry in processes of governance and the realisation of the goals and objectives of development and transformation in South Africa cannot be overemphasised. These benefits would help build higher levels of trust between the state, its institutions and the citizenry, enhance the role of ordinary South Africans in decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing and extend the democratic process beyond the ballot box. Effective mechanisms of civic engagement also improve the level of cordiality in the relationship between the state and the citizenry, which helps to mitigate political polarisation and conflict. These benefits are of utmost importance to the political and governance landscape of South Africa as intended in the 1996 Constitution.

2.4 EVOLUTION OF ACTIVE CITIZENRY IN SOUTH AFRICA: PRE- AND POST-APARTHEID

2.4.1 PRE DEMOCRACY ACTIVE CITIZENRY IN SOUTH AFRICA

A study of the evolution of civic engagement in South Africa from the pre-democracy era to the present provides interesting historical antecedents for active citizen participation.

Government in South Africa pre-1990 provided little opportunity for community participation. The conditions during apartheid pushed most CSOs towards a common goal of defeating apartheid and seeking to transform South African society. Citizen engagement during this period by the disenfranchised majority took place within the mass democratic struggle aimed at toppling the apartheid regime.

Interestingly, Perold et al. (2007) advance that during apartheid the context for citizens' activism embodied two different concepts of service. During apartheid 'national service' was the term used to describe citizen engagement where young white men had to complete military service upon leaving school. Alongside this development the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) played a leading role in facilitating social change in South Africa, and spawned a wide variety of organisations that provided services in communities suffering under apartheid while also contributing to the goal of liberation. Alongside these organisations mushroomed a range of forums or public spaces for citizen engagement including the emergence of civic structures such as housing action committees and youth forums in academic institutions which championed campaigns such as COSATU's living wage campaign and anti-eviction campaigns.

2.4.2 POST-APARTHEID CITIZENRY ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The notions of a participatory democracy and an interactive state are rooted in the ancient African principles, *'morena ke morena ka batho and motho ke motho ka batho'*, a principle espoused in the Freedom Charter through a well-known provision, 'the people shall govern'.

Post transition to democracy, the Constitution sought to make the people of South Africa the provenance and recipients of development planning. This translated into the development of an increasingly institutionalised system of public engagement, and citizen involvement reflected in legislative and policy commitments such as the development of the ward system in local government.

In former president Thabo Mbeki's second term (2004–2008/9), systematic attention was given to the institutionalisation and improvement of the early initiatives such as the Izimbizo (public consultation and feedback). The notions of citizen engagement and citizens assuming co-responsibility through specialist bodies (such as businesses) or with councils who represented sectoral interest (religion, culture and gender) gained prominence in an effort to establish participatory democracy and help bring forth effective governance. These initiatives enhanced prescriptive public participation, as directed by the Office of the Presidency (The Presidency, 2012).

In addition, there was a greater emphasis on co-governance with civil society, even if in theory more than practice. During this period, South Africa experienced a sustained contraction in public demonstrations (The Presidency, 2012). It did, however, see the emergence of, among others, campaigns and movements such as the Treatment Action Campaign, the People's Budget Campaign

and the Landless People's Movement 2000, advocating for fundamental changes to the delivery of healthcare, allocation of resources and land reform.

2.4.3 Contextualising service delivery protests in the governance landscape of South Africa

Unfortunately, public protests over service delivery, labour strikes and unrest have been one of the most visible indicators of active citizenship 20 years after attainment of democracy in South Africa (Lefko-Everett, 2011). DCoGTA (2014) reported that there had been 155 protests nationally in 2013, the highest recorded protest-ridden year since 2004. The main drivers of protest action within South Africa have included poverty, high unemployment and socio-economic exclusion, relative deprivation, inequality in informal urban areas and dissatisfaction about the provision of services such as electricity, water, sanitation, refuse removal, roads and housing (DCoGTA, 2014; Gould, 2012; Ngwane, 2011). Importantly, Ngwane (2011) found that the decision to protest was often preceded by repeated attempts to engage the authorities with no success. Hence, the issue of governance failure is important when considering the protests and appropriate civic engagement mechanisms aimed at mitigating such violent protests. These public protests, regardless of their repercussions, have been seen as being a more effective space to communicate with government than ward committee structures (Andani, 2012).

A deeper analysis of available evidence on service delivery protests reveals some interesting patterns (DCoGTA, 2014):

- The communities where protests took place are significantly poorer,
- Such communities have higher rates of unemployment and have lower levels of access to services than the rest of the country and
- Unemployed, uneducated males participate more than females in protest actions

While the evidence does not specifically identify the youth as key protagonists it stands to reason that in the context of the disproportionate number of unemployed youth who are living in poverty and thus experience high levels of exclusion and marginalisation, the youth are more likely to turn to protesting to make their grievances visible. This finding resonates with Putnam's findings on the relationship between social capital and active citizenship in the USA as elaborated on earlier in this report.

A slightly contradictory pattern has emerged, which reveals that protest activity declined prior to both the 2000 local government elections and the 2014 national elections. Analysts suggest that this is in response to intense political engagement during the pre-election periods where politicians undertook to address local issues whilst debating the broader progress made over the last 20 years (DCoGTA, 2014). It further serves as evidence that a deeper and effective level of engagement with the citizenry could yield positive results. However, the ability to implement well-stipulated policies and legislation that place citizen participation at the centre of governance processes still remains a challenge.

Despite the rights and freedoms bestowed on citizens in the wake of liberal democracy in 1994, many ordinary South Africans have still not bought fully into the notion of active citizenship. As South Africa crawls through adolescence and stumbles into adulthood, it is sad to observe that it doesn't matter how communities are approached or how many pamphlets are distributed, ordinary

South African citizens are not interested in participating in governance, particularly if this does not address their immediate concerns (Gaidien, 2013).

This can be attributed to several factors. The transition from apartheid to liberal democracy is a new experience to many citizens who are yet to understand and get used to its practices. This may explain why many people are unable and unwilling to seize opportunities to interact with government in an invited space. It is simply a case of lack of knowledge and awareness of democratic practices and the relevant legislations that govern the democratic state (Pieterse, 2013). This passive attitude towards democracy has in the past paved the way for government to work in isolation and, arguably, fuel the current state of disjuncture that exists between government and communities.

2.5 ENABLING INSTITUTIONS AND FRAMEWORKS FOR ADVANCING ACTIVE CITIZENRY IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.5.1 Institutions and frameworks for advancing active citizenship

There are many institutions, statutory, regulated and informal, which promote opportunities in South Africa for active participation.

In accordance with the mandate of the Constitution for public involvement in legislative processes, numerous institutions have been established to support constitutional democracy, and importantly to enable citizens' participation in public affairs. These include the six Chapter 9 institutions, namely the South African Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Office of the Public Protector, the Independent Electoral Commission, the Auditor General and the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. These institutions were established to promote and defend people against rights violations, as well as government failure to advance rights, especially those pertaining to socio-economic rights and safety (The Presidency, 2012). As independent institutions, the Constitution empowers these bodies to perform their functions without 'fear, favour or prejudice'.

In addition, various mechanisms and policy frameworks have been established to ensure that citizens' participation in governance extends beyond the ballot box. These include:

- The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery aimed at ensuring that government responds to the needs of the people (DPSA, 1997), and
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 promulgated to provide access to state information and administrative justice for citizens. (The Presidency, DPME, 2014).

Both the above require government departments (across all spheres) to conduct their work in specific ways which promote active citizenship.

2.5.2 Role of Local Government in citizen participation

Local government's role as a medium for citizen participation in governance has been recognised globally (Gaventa, 2002). In South Africa various policy documents emphasise the centrality of the role of local government in development, including the State of Local Government in South Africa 2009 (DCoGTA 2009b), South Africa's Twenty Year Review 1994–2014 (The Presidency, DPME, 2014) and the National Development Plan Vision for 2030 (NPC, 2011).

The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (No. 117 of 1998) requires the establishment of ward committees as a means to enhance participatory democratic processes down to ward level.

Complementary to the ward committee system is community-based planning (CBP), a ward-based planning mechanism aimed at breaking down the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) of the municipalities to the ward level and allowing citizens to influence the development of these plans (SALGA, 2011).

Ngamlana and Poswayo (2013) posit that due to capacity constraints of local government, IDPs are generally compiled by planners, engineers and consultants who are qualified to focus on spatial and infrastructural issues rather than process dynamics of community participation. The resulting effect is that community ownership of the IDPs is virtually non-existent and consultation with the community is simply to legitimise decision-making.

Local governance in South Africa had been found to be the most dysfunctional sphere of government (DCoGTA, 2009a) and a turnaround strategy was developed, the main thrust of (DCoGTA, 2009a) which was to enhance public participation processes including better facilitation of protest activity, for instance by promoting petition processes (DCoGTA, 2014).

Despite interventions encouraging active citizenry at local government level, wide gaps still remain. Paulus et al. (2013) found that citizens tend to participate more in systems that they are familiar with. While the service delivery protests may be seen as another form of active citizenry, the frequency with which they occur and their continuation serves as evidence that structures adopted by government for enabling citizen participation have poor community infiltration. This further suggests that there has been a significant breakdown in communication between government structures and the citizens (Heese and Allan, 2009).

2.6 TYPOLOGIES OF CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The literature review appraised the different forms of associational life in South Africa that provide spaces for citizens' voices to be heard and specifically for facilitating public participation.

Below are identified examples of the spaces available for the ***practice*** of active citizenry -:

- **Elections –** at national, provincial and local government level – participation through the ballot box
- **Public Hearings –** these are generally formal processes initiated by government in respect of endorsement of emerging legislation or in response to a particular challenge being confronted. Parliamentary public hearings are an example here
- **Referendums and Surveys –** these could take the form or telephonic polls, exit questionnaires and represent a direct form of feedback from citizens on a particular measure for approval or rejection
- **Izimbizos –** spaces where citizens interact with political leadership in order for policy makers to hear citizens' needs (complaints) and to communicate plans that government has for a specific community
- **Help-lines/Hotlines –** telephonic channels of communication between government and citizens. Provide a space for citizens to communicate concerns to government. A key example here is the Presidential hotline

- **E-democracy/M-democracy –** innovative use of technology for active citizenry engagement**,** including social media for mobilising stakeholders. It represents mass mobilisation of person-to-person collaboration, a process which has been used effectively and globally such as with the "Arab Spring" and which has the potential to unleash citizen power in ways not yet fully understood.
- **Ward Committee Structures –** institutionalised at local government level and aimed at planning and oversight
- **Service Delivery Forums e.g.** Rural Road Transport Forums, School Governing Boards, Community Policing Forums, Water Committees – established by the state to enable planning and implementation
- **Citizen Based Monitoring and Planning Structures –** oversight role and advocacy
- **Community Development Forums/Crisis Committees -** "community/citizens"-led or initiated.
- **Local Community Development Foundations –** combining philanthropy/resource mobilisation and local development objectives

The inclusion of CDFs as a space for citizen engagement is slightly unusual in that the focus of such structures is primarily in relation to the community grant making role that they play in channelling critical resources required for facilitating people-centred development. However, their commitment to people-centred and community driven development has included an element of active citizen engagement. The inclusion of this type of forum has been informed specifically by the NDA wishing to explore how such institutions can contribute to expanding the active spaces for citizen engagement while at the same time helping to harness resources for development.

A fuller description of these active citizenry spaces, including an analysis of their effectiveness, is provided in Annexure 1 of this study, the Literature Review Report.

These different typologies of citizens' engagement represent, according to the World Bank (2004), two distinct ways through which citizens seek accountability from the state. The first is traditionally noted as the "long route of accountability" between state and the client. As the figure below indicates:

FIGURE 3: LONG ROUTE ACCOUNTABILITY

Source: World Bank (2004)

Here citizens' voices are largely mediated through the ballot box by citizens exercising their power to political office bearers who, in turn, hold policy makers and departmental operational staff accountable for service delivery. This form of accountability is represented through elections (at all levels), as well as through a range of other mechanisms indicated above e.g. referendums, imbizos and the highly regulated ward committee structures.

However, there has been increasing recognition globally that the "long route" has been failing citizens in their ability to hold government accountable (Joshi, 2010) and there has been a crescendo of voices actively encouraging the exercise of the short route of accountability where the client directly engages with front line service providers. Examples of these include peaceful and non-peaceful protest actions against state parties, raising public awareness of state failures (drug stock outs at clinics), litigation against a state party for failure to deliver (school books delivery) and community engagement in planning and development prioritisation at a local level (budget forums or community based planning processes for water or roads, etc.).

FIGURE 4: SHORT ROUTE ACCOUNTABILITY
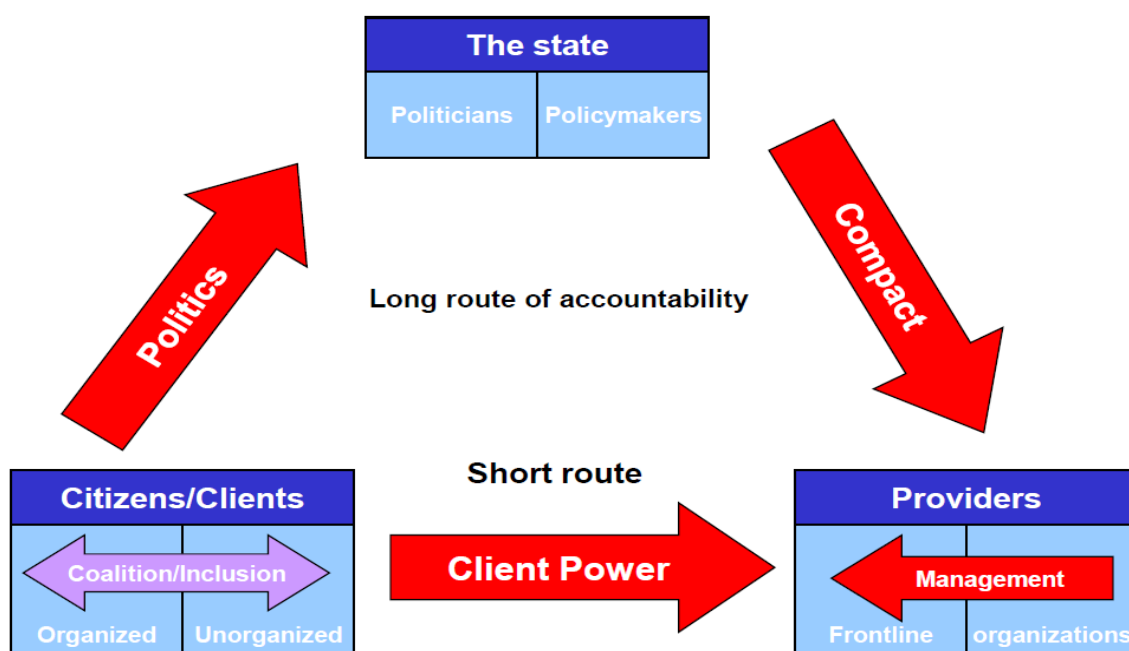
Source: Levy and Walton (2013)

While these two distinct types of engagements appear to represent a dichotomy, in reality this is not the case as citizens will exercise multiple routes across both the short and long term to achieve outcomes. Two important issues must be noted, namely that social accountability measures (where citizens pressurise government) are increasingly recognised as significant for improving development outcomes, and the focus is both on the *process* as well as on the *outcomes* of the engagement.

2.7 LEVELS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The above relates to Arnstein's Ladder of Participation (1969), elaborated on earlier in this section, whereby the level of and nature of participation influences the quality of and the outcomes of citizen engagement.

Citizen participation can be approached in many different ways and at varying levels. This is why the concept of active citizenship, as particularly applied to the sphere of community development, encompasses such positive values as cooperation, cohesion, caring and neighbourliness, and evoking ideals of belonging and solidarity (Gaynor, 2011).

However, there is no universally accepted approach to advancing active citizenry. Some authorities on the subject emphasise the conditions within which active citizenry could be encouraged. These include having an *appropriate organisation*, drawing attention to the *benefits to be gained*, the *obligation and commitment* to participate by all parties involved, the ideals of having *better knowledge* and being *comfortable in the group*, among other factors.

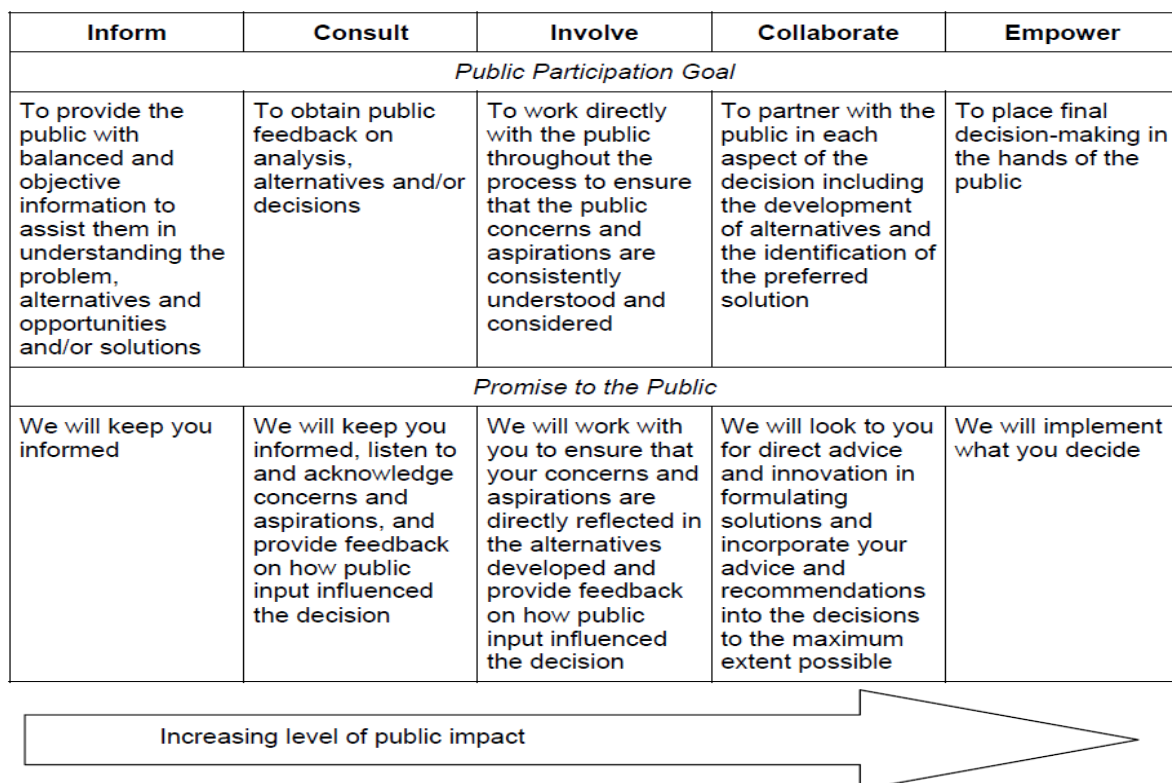Sheedy (2008) postulates a five-step guideline to enhancing active citizenry, each with its own public participation goal. These five steps in chronological order are: *Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate* and *Empower,* as illustrated in the diagram below:

FIGURE 5: SHEEDY'S LEVELS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal				
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that the public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public
Promise to the Public				
We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	We will implement what you decide

Increasing level of public impact

Source: International Association for Public Participation (2014)

These steps are chronological and are intended to move the nature of engagement up to Arnstein's Ladder towards increasing control and ownership.

2.8 INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRAMEWORKS FOR ACTIVE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

International experience with promoting active citizenship has spawned a wealth of documented knowledge and experience informing good practice in advancing citizen engagement. A range of such international frameworks for advancing active citizenry were reviewed and key lessons extracted.

Community development forums or foundations facilitate active citizenry and enable citizens to participate in bringing about change within their communities. Hodgson and Knight (2010) indicate that the fundamental role of community forums is to ensure that links are created between different

aspects of the community in order to build public trust. Several frameworks are used globally to actively engage the citizenry to achieve social change.

A framework is a conceptual model which is meant to act as a support or guide for a set of objectives/goals, processes and activities/actions that allow for the expansion of a structure into an operational entity. A framework for effective and active citizen participation must take into consideration the following:

- **Citizen engagement goes beyond the structures and mechanisms established**: The World Bank (2006) suggests that while these are important, the most critical issue is to harness political will and commitment to realising effective citizen participation.

- **Community members as active citizens versus practitioners as enablers and facilitators, not leaders**: A critical issue for an effective framework for active citizenry is the abandonment of the historical parachute approach to community development. Community-based development needs to be driven by the community and not practitioners as community development works best when the community determines its own agenda.

- **Skills and knowledge to support active citizenry**: The frameworks that were reviewed recognised the role of empowering members through well-designed learning programmes and approaches. This is because communities need a certain level of capacity to enable them to identify, articulate and actively participate in the planning and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the right initiatives to address community needs.

- **Complex community challenges require acquisition of technical skills**: Related to the previous point is the issue of technical skills to deal with complex challenges. Technical skills are needed in situations where the issue at hand is fairly complex.

- **Active citizenry through local voluntary activists/champions**: An active citizenry framework should also recognise the importance of voluntary activists who can create a pool of local experts that are closer to the community's developmental challenges than professional practitioners.

- **Leveraging indirect approaches for community development:** In cases where it is difficult for communities to work together due to poor social cohesion, indirect approaches can be used to begin the process of bringing the community together; sport for development being one such example.

- **Design context specific interventions:** Interventions are dependent on the context within which they are applied. Hence decisions about which mechanisms and what approaches to utilise must be firmly grounded in the reality of the current context. The World Bank suggests that

adaptation is the key to success and must take into account who is involved and how (World Bank, 2006).

- **Monitoring and evaluation and dissemination**: A framework for active citizenry should also outline its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes as a way of ensuring that not only the lessons for success but also reasons for failure are understood and effectively disseminated to ensure the quality of community development going.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The government of South Africa is advocating for active citizenry with the hope that active citizenry will assist in the attainment of development goals and objectives. The participation of the citizenry in local government has always been central to government's development strategy in South Africa. Democracy is advanced through the increasing decentralisation of power. In order for meaningful active citizenry to be attained in South Africa, government clearly needs to show keenness to explore alternative spaces of engagement to complement existing legislated frameworks such as the ward committee system.

This calls for a change of strategy by the state in its attempts to harness active citizenry in governance for development. In this regard, international best practices provide crucial benchmarks that South Africa could draw from.

A summary of the common themes that run through the different models of citizenry participation profiled in this document include:

- Awareness creation of processes and mechanisms for active citizenry: inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower;
- Necessity of implementing capacity-building initiatives for citizens to provide strategic support to enable them to identify, articulate and participate in the design and implementation of programmes aimed at meeting the needs of society;
- Establishment of feedback, reporting mechanisms and processes for information dissemination;
- Mobilisation of financial resource to meet key community needs and challenges;
- Monitoring and evaluation of achievements against set goals and targets;
- Enabling networking among people in the community through the establishment of working groups and committees assigned to various tasks.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 OBJECTIVES AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The overarching objective of the study was to conduct an assessment of the role of community development forums and foundations (CDFs) in enhancing effective and accountable citizenry engagement.

Specific objectives include:

1. To compile a comprehensive desktop analysis on CDFs including outlining the purpose, legal frameworks and institutional arrangements for establishment of community development forums.
2. To undertake a historical review of development of CDFs globally and in South Africa and provide evidence of effectiveness of CDFs in advancing development and in promoting citizen participation.
3. To assess the relevance of the CDF model for advancing active citizen participation, taking into account the rural-urban differences and traditionally governed areas in South Africa.
4. To identify mechanisms for advancing democratic citizenship among the populace in respect of participation in CDFs.
5. To develop a working citizenry model for South Africa that can be tested.
6. To provide clear recommendations for the NDA on how it can contribute to enhancing active citizen engagement in development in South Africa.

3.2 INTERPRETATION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for this study drawn by the NDA were found to require further refinement and this was undertaken through a process of discussions and workshops between the NDA and the HSRC research team. Through this process the main purpose of the study was identified as deepening our understanding of the factors that enable and enhance active citizenry through leveraging international and South African best practices and to define what frameworks, mechanisms and interventions are relevant and appropriate for transforming the governance landscape of South Africa.

The specific refinements to the Terms of Reference (TOR) included the following:

- The original TOR focus was predominantly on engagements at local government level. This was clarified as exploring citizen engagement not exclusively with local government, but rather to focus on citizen engagement at a local level with whichever sphere of government is operating there. This was strongly motivated in terms of the fact that many of the services delivered at local level are not the competency of local government and hence a focus on this level alone will limit accountability.
- Given the extensive documentation and analysis of ward committees and other government initiated governance structures and in particular their failures, this study would specifically *exclude a focus on the spaces which are currently provided, supported and resourced by the state e.g. ward committees, CPFs, SGBs, etc.* and look instead for other alternate and innovative spaces which promote public participation that have been facilitated by civil society stakeholders.

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- Finally that the study would include a specific focus on CDFs as community based philanthropy initiatives to assess their role as vehicles for expanding citizen engagement.

3.3 APPROACH TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

A desktop study of available literature was conducted and structured around the core objectives of this study as outlined earlier in this section.

This literature review included national and international academic and grey area studies on the subject of active citizenship. It was based on the Campbell-Collaboration guidelines for information synthesis.

Specific synthesis procedures were applied; namely, implementation of a defined and replicable electronic search strategy in which key terms were searched within repositories of published and unpublished literature. A multi-staged retrieval and synthesis process was applied comprising of: (1) an initial screening (review of database-generated sites based on keywords) (2) strict screening for inclusion/exclusion criteria, and (3) information synthesis and review. Briefly stated these phases involved:

- **Stage 1**: Initial screening of policies/legislation and academic literature: Inclusion criteria: Key search terms were used to access peer reviewed academic papers in South Africa and abroad. These search terms included civic engagement, active citizenry, civic duty, civil society, public participation, democratic governance, social compacts and social capital.

- **Stage 2**: Strict screening of policies/legislation and academic literature: Members of the research team reviewed the information retrieved for relevance and application to the objectives of the literature review.

- **Stage 3**: Information synthesis and review: This involved a review and analysis of the literature and policy/legislative directives and comprised: (1) intern training for consistent information extraction, and (2) a review of findings by members of the research team.

3.4 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS FOR SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

From the research questions it was relatively clear that the main thrust of the research is largely explorative, which lends itself to a qualitative sampling design. As such, a non-probability based sampling approach was adopted. This approach was further necessitated by the fact that the sampling universe is largely unknown (and under documented). In order to explore all the research questions, a pre-determined respondent selection criterion was used. This included a pragmatic assessment of stakeholders whose knowledge and experience was to provide important insights into addressing the study questions. Since the objective of the study is not to generalise the findings, this design is therefore appropriate as it addresses the aims of the project. This framework is thus intended to provide transparency regarding the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the construction of the study population from which the sample was derived.

Purposive sampling, also referred to as selective and subjective sampling, is informed by strategic choices and is synonymous with qualitative research. Some of the principles of purposive sampling that were particularly relevant for this study, are that it should:

- take into account the wide variations in citizen engagement structures,
- include a range of interest groups and
- take into account the different thematic domains within Active Citizenry

Purposive sampling can include stakeholder, extreme/deviant case, typical case, maximum variation, paradigmatic and expert sampling.

3.5   SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

The sampling approach was both multi-staged and stratified. Stratification involved the assignment of members of the target population into "homogenous" sub-groups from which the sample was derived. This process attempted to seek heterogeneity among strata and homogeneity within a stratum.

3.5.1 INCLUSION CRITERIA

The first level of stratification as suggested by the literature review was the typology of participation structures. These included conventional forms of participation such as legislated or policy directed forums or structures, including those established by governments and civil society initiated forums for development.

The second level of stratification referred to the nature of involvement in development processes, namely, are they involving citizens in design and planning, co-production (implementation/service delivery) and oversight (monitoring and advocacy). These first two levels were not mutually exclusive.

The third level of stratification that was applied was by province with the intention of covering all 9 provinces in South Africa. While not exhaustive, an attempt was made to ensure inclusion of participants from both urban and rural locations. This was not applied proportionally as the target population across province or urban-rural spatial locations is not known and might be uneven.

First and second level of stratification: Typologies of Active Citizen Engagement Structures and the nature of involvement in development processes.

Types of **the practice** of active citizenry are listed under section 2.6 of this report, "Typologies of citizen engagement in South Africa".

- **Ward Committee Structures** – institutionalised at local government level and aimed at planning and oversight
- **Service Delivery Forums e.g.** Rural Road Transport Forums, School Governing Boards, Community Policing Forums, Water Committees – established by the state to enable planning and implementation
- **Local Community Development Foundations** – combining philanthropy/resource mobilisation and local development objectives
- **Citizen Based Monitoring and Planning Structures** – oversight role and advocacy

- **Community Development Forums/Crisis Committees -** "community/citizens"-led or initiated
- **Izimbizos –** spaces where citizens interact with political leadership in order for policy makers to hear citizens' needs (complaints) and to communicate plans that government has for a specific community
- **Help-lines/Hotlines –** telephonic channels of communication between government and citizens. Provide a space for citizens to communicate concerns to government. A key example here being the presidential hotline
- **Elections –** at national, provincial and local government level – participation through the ballot box
- **Public Hearings –** these are generally formal processes initiated by government in respect of endorsement of emerging legislation or in response to a particular challenge being confronted. Parliamentary public hearings are an example here.
- **Referendums and Surveys –** these could take the form or telephonic polls, exit questionnaires and represent a direct form of feedback from citizens on a particular measure for approval or rejection
- **E-democracy/M-democracy –** innovative use of technology for active citizenry engagement, including social media for mobilising stakeholders. It represents mass mobilisation of person-to-person collaboration, a process we have seen being used effectively and globally such as with the "Arab Spring" and which has the potential to unleash citizen power in ways not yet fully understood.

3.5.2 Exclusion criteria

Having identified the various forms of citizen engagement some of the forms listed above were expressly excluded from the sample frame. Two exclusion criteria were exercised, namely:

- If the site of interaction between citizens and government was not at a local level (defined as at the very least municipal level) that site was excluded;
- Interactions that do not represent collective action of citizens (i.e. they represent individual actions) were excluded.

Based on the application of these two exclusionary criteria the study sample excluded:

- elections
- izimbizos
- public hearings
- surveys, referendums and
- help lines

All of these are the exercise of participation by individuals rather than as collective forms of engagement.

3.6   SAMPLE SIZE

Based on the foregoing, a sample size of 15 *"active citizenry structures"* was determined and this was also done on the basis of pragmatic considerations of costs and time and, importantly, to balance the need for the inclusion in the sample of diversity of structures that meet the criteria. It is

noted that in qualitative research "how many?" is not as relevant a question compared to the question, "can we learn enough from the sample selected?" in order to deepen our understanding of the research question.

3.7   UNIT OF ANALYSIS AT SITE LEVEL

Once the citizen engagement structures had been selected the unit of analysis for each site included the following participants/beneficiaries and stakeholders -:

Stakeholder	Instrument	No of participants	Location
Forum/Structure Members	Focus Group	5-6 members	At site
Forum Leadership	KII*	1-2 (Chairperson/Director (CEO)?	At site
Community beneficiaries	Focus Group	5-6 participants	At site
Government stakeholders	KII	1-2 people	At site or other level
Private sector/Donors	KII	Where applicable	Prov/national
Academic/Expert Informants	KII	4-5	Prov/National

*Key Informant Interviews

3.8   SAMPLE LIST CONSTRUCTION APPROACH AND PROCESS

It had been hoped that a useable sample frame could be obtained from sector experts and organisations in this domain, however, efforts towards assessing the existence of such a frame proved futile. As such, the next task was to construct the list of "participants" – target population for those forms of citizen engagement included in this study from which the sample was identified. This process used the foregoing criteria to construct the sample frames.

For each of the practice types included in this sample a brief outline of the process for constructing target population data bases is provided.

3.9   TARGET UNIVERSE LIST

A caveat is presented in respect of the sample frame presented below in that its accurateness and completeness is not assured for the reasons tendered earlier. To partly resolve this issue, a snow ball/chain referral sampling approach was used to identify potential participants that might have been left out from the above sample frames.

Active Citizenry Practice Typology	Sources consulted for sample frame construction	Outcome
Ward Committees	SALGA[1] CoGTA[2] GGLN[3]	1 unique ward committee initiative identified
Service Delivery Forums	GGLN DoE, DoT, DSD etc. ➢ ECD Forums in KZN ➢ Child and Youth Care Forums ➢ Community Policing Forums ➢ School Governing Bodies ➢ Rural Road Transport Forums ➢ Water Committees	Large undefined population group
Community Development Foundations	Consulted Mott and Ford Foundation[4] in SA, both of whom have provided support to this sector Attempted to contact former leaders of SA Grant Makers Association which also supported CDFs Identified names of CDFs from available literature of CDFs in SA. Consulted database of Community Grant Maker Leadership forum[5] Identified in Literature review report Google Search	23 CDF members identified. Of the 23 only 6 met the criteria of local philanthropy in addition to community mobilisation
Citizen based monitoring and planning structures Community development forums/crisis committees	Google search Identified in literature review report DPME report on citizen based monitoring[6] GGLN Identified through a search of selected websites and database platforms including SANGONET[7] Prodder database[8], South African Civil Society Information Service[9], GGLN; Anti-Privatisation Forum membership list[10], NPO directorate list[11], key informants (including HSRC colleagues), press clipping searches on protest actions (hot spots), Google search Social Protest Observatory http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/default.asp?2,27,3,1858 Multi-level government initiative (MLGI) service delivery protest barometer http://mlgi.org.za/barometers - this site provided details of places and nature of protest but not details of civil society structures involved with the protect action. Municipal Data and Intelligence Site- Municipaliq http://www.municipaliq.co.za/ - this is a subscription site and hence not able to access data on hotspots.	15 projects listed 11 other initiatives listed Huge number of forums and sites. Difficult to access contact details, to assess current status or to assess if they meet broad criteria
e and m Democracy forums/spaces	Drum Beat and Communication Initiative[12] website Google Searches	1 example identified

[1] http://www.salga.org.za
[2] http://www.cogta.gov.za/summit2014
[3] GGLN (2012) Putting participation at the heart of development/putting development at the heart of participation
[4] http://www.mott.org/FundingInterests/Regions/southafrica & http://www.fordfoundation.org/regions/southern-africa
[5] Synergos (n.d.) Community Grant Making: Southern African Community Grant Makers Leadership Forum
[6] DPME (2011) Citizen based service delivery monitoring: research into current practices
[7] http://www.ngopulse.org
[8] http://www.prodder.org.za
[9] http://www.sacsis.org.za
[10] http://apf.org.za
[11] http://www.dsd.gov.za/npo
[12] http://www.comminit.com

Type of Structure	Nature of Engagement	Name of Structure	Location	Comment
Com. Dev Foundations **Sample size: 3**	Philanthropy/Civic engagement	Greater Rustenberg Community Development Foundation	Mpu	To include x 1
		uThungulu Community Development Foundation	KZN	To include x 1
		West Coast Community Development Foundation	WC	To include x 1
		Community Development Foundation	WC	no
		Atok Community Development Foundation	LP	no
		DockDA Rural Development Foundation	NC	To include x 1
Ward Committees **Sample size: Nil**	Institutionalised planning, participatory governance	Assumption that every ward in SA has one.	All provinces	Problems have been widely documented. No added value of documenting another ward committee structure functioning
Citizen Based Monitoring and Planning Structures **Sample size: 4**	Oversight (Monitoring and Advocacy)	CMAP – Black Sash – grants monitoring of SASSA and DSD	All provinces	To include x 1
		Raising Citizens' Voices in Regulation of Water Services/Village Water Committees – DWAF/Mvula Trust – WC and LP	CT, eThekwini Ekurhuleni Umsunduzi All provinces	To include x 1
		Ward Key Performance Indicators Matrix (WKPIM) – Planact in Gauteng municipal areas	Soweto Orlando East	To include x 1
		Civil Society Action Groups (CSAG) – AFEIS Coreplan –	Eastern Cape	To include x 1
		Citizen Report Cards	provinces	no
		Community Action Planning – PPT	GP	no
		Community based management	Tshwane	no
Service Delivery Forums **Sample size: 2**	Co-production/ implementation	Rural Road Transport Forums – DoT KZN	KZN	To include RRTF
		Community Policing Forums School Governing Boards Service Delivery Improvement Forums – OGP	All provinces	To exclude CPFs and SGBS
E and M democracy **Sample size: 1**	Mass citizen mobilisation using social media	MOBISAM	Makana Municipality, EC	To include x 1
Development Forums/Crisis Committees **Sample size: 4 -5**	Citizen initiated structures for mobilising and advocacy	Crisis Committees	National	To include x 2 To be identified
		Residents Associations	National	Not to include
		Community Development Forums	KZN	To include x 1
		(ECD forums, Child Care forums)	National	KZN ECD Forum member at a local level
		Issue based forums e.g. Abahlali baseMjondolo – informal settlement residents mobilisation, Landless People's Movement, etc.	Gauteng KZN	To include x 1 To be identified
		Tenure Security Coordinating Committees. Babanango.	MPU/KZN	
		Service Delivery Crisis Committees (mining sector)	National NW	To be explored

Based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria outlined in this document, a snowball technique was applied to identify potential sites which are exemplary, deviant and innovative examples of citizen engagement structures. This was identified through consultations with the NDA, colleagues in HSRC and 2-3 targeted KII interviews with experts.

3.10. NDA PILOT

Once the sampling was completed a pilot was conducted to test the set of instruments that had been developed for the study. The following represents the pilot sample:

Nature of forum	Which instrument to use for the interview	Type of Forum	Semi-Urban
Community Development Foundation	CEO/Coordinator	Foundation	Rural
Advocacy and Research Institution	Expert/Academic	Forum	Urban
Community Based Organisation	Participants/Member	CBO	Rural
Rural Based NGO operating in planning	CEO/Coordinator	CBO	Urban
Community Based Organisation	CE0/Coordinator	Forum	Semi-Urban
Local Community Development Forum	Participants/Member	Forum	Urban
Local Development Forum	NGO/Expert/ Academic	Forum	Rural
NGO operating in the Urban Planning Environment	CEO/Coordinator	Foundation	Urban

3.11 FINALISED STUDY SAMPLE

The final sample was originally determined as being a multi-layered stratified sample of 12 sites countrywide. It was expected to include 3 community endowment foundations, at least 3 forums which were involved in community based monitoring activities and the final 6 was to include various type of forums included in the sample such as CDFs involved with service delivery and forums emerging in response to a crisis. It was agreed that in the selection of these remaining forums attention will be paid to ensuring that forums include unique and innovative forum structures. Snowballing techniques informed by the prior literature review helped with the final site selection. During the sample finalisation process the research team had to take decisions while in the field as to which sites to include and exclude and in some instances the decision to include was taken out of the research team's hands by lack of availability of the stakeholders of that forum to participate at that given time or unwillingness to participate.

An example of unwillingness to participate was at a site in the NW province for which prior consultations had been undertaken and consent to participation had been secured. When the fieldwork team arrived at the site as previously agreed to they were advised that the relevant people were at another remote site and that they could only be contacted physically by driving to the site some 200 km away. The team accordingly followed these instructions. On arriving at this site they were met by stakeholders purportedly from a university department who were currently working with this forum. They were advised that the forum stakeholders were not available or interested in working with HSRC and the NDA. *"HSRC and the NDA will steal our intellectual property and hence we want nothing to do with you."* Although attempts were made to clarify the study objectives with

the forum leader with whom initial negotiations had been made the fieldwork team was unable to secure an interview.

In total 20 sites, including urban and rural sites, were profiled across 8 provinces through the fieldwork conducted although for this study only 19 sites were actually visited. Profiles of the 20 sites are provided in the results section of this report. Alongside this study conducted on behalf of the NDA, the HSRC was involved in another slightly different study on the role of forums in advancing Early Childhood Development outcomes for children on behalf of Save the Children South Africa (SCSA). Permission was granted by SCSA to use the material generated from the fieldwork on that study for this report. One case study which has relevance to this study is thus included.

4. RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section is one of three sections that reports on findings from fieldwork, key informant interviews and focus groups conducted across 8 provinces, in both urban and rural sites. This section provides a general overview of findings in relation to the practice of active citizenry in 19 profiled sites. The next section (5) showcases a few case studies of the practice while section 6 specifically covers findings in relation to CDFs. The perspectives generated provide limited but crucial insights into the experience and practice of citizen engagement in South Africa. While it is not claimed that this analysis is exhaustive or representative of the universe of experiences, it does provide evidence to inform recommendations for strengthening citizen engagement interventions in South Africa, particularly focusing on the civil society sector.

What has become extremely clear is that the citizen engagement terrain is a highly complex one, that experiences are diverse and that much of what transpires in the field is largely un-documented. An understanding of the complexity is necessary as it could inform further and future research agendas. The research team's attempt to untangle the complexity is elaborated on below:

- At the policy level, policy documents speak of active citizenry as if its meaning and the intention of policy objectives are commonly understood;
- At the sector level there are boundary issues that relate to the different typologies, intersections, overlaps and implications for a framework; this is particularly relevant as the lines of distinction between the types of forums and between an organisation and a forum become less clear;
- At the research level there is a lack of documented knowledge on the subject in respect of who the key role players are, what and where are some of the major innovations in citizen engagement, all of which has had a bearing on how the research is conducted given that there was no sample frame to speak of.

This has made the analysis of the results from this study both challenging particularly in terms of generalisation of findings and even with the presentation of findings into discrete thematic focus areas. The research team has acknowledged this challenge and has attempted to mitigate this through triangulation of findings where this has been possible and in attempting to cover the wide spectrum of themes that the study data has generated.

General findings from the fieldwork are presented in this section according to the following focus areas: a profile of the study sample, unpacking of meanings attached to citizen engagement and general overview of practices of citizen engagement as captured in the sample population.

4.2. PROFILE OF STUDY SAMPLE

A total of 19 organisations were sampled covering 8 provinces. The geographic spread consisted of 10 urban (including semi-urban) community organisations and 9 rural community organisations. In terms of the typologies of the structures sampled our sample included the following: 8 Community Development Forums, 3 Community Development Foundations; 3 NGOs and 5 Community-based monitoring structures. In spite of differences in legal/organisational structure the boundaries in

relation to purpose and functions were very blurred. The distinction between community development forums and community based monitoring structures is perhaps artificial in that monitoring structures may well be forums, the only difference being what purpose they serve.

TABLE 6: SAMPLED SITES

Province	Issue/Thematic Focus	Geographical location	Type of Structure
Eastern Cape	Women's Support Centre	Semi-urban	Community Development Forum
Free State	Youth Development Organisation	Rural	Community Development Forum
Free State	Environmental Club	Rural	Non-Government Organisation
Gauteng	Development NGO	Urban	Community Development Forum
KwaZulu-Natal	Community Development Organisation	Rural	Community based planning and monitoring structure
KwaZulu-Natal	Community Development Foundation	Urban	Community Development Foundation
KwaZulu-Natal	Land Forum	Rural	Community Development Forum
KwaZulu-Natal	Youth Centre	Rural	Community Development Forum
KwaZulu-Natal	Mining Monitoring Forum	Semi-urban	Community Based Monitoring Forum
Limpopo	Community Mining and Monitoring Forum	Rural	Community Based Monitoring Forum
Limpopo	Legal Advice Centre Association	Urban	Community Development Foundation
North West	Traditional Authority Endowment Fund Administration	Rural	Grant making (akin to CDF)
Northern Cape	Social Development Forum	Rural town	Community Development Forum
Northern Cape	Community Development Forum	Urban	Community Development Forum
Western Cape	Community Development Foundation	Urban	Community Development Foundation
Western Cape	Community Development Organisation	Rural	Community Development Forum
Western Cape	Coalition on Justice	Urban	Community Development Forum
Western Cape	Open Streets	Urban	Community Development Forum
Western Cape	Welfare Service Delivery NGO	Urban	Non-Government Organisation

4.3. MEANING ATTACHED TO THE CONCEPT OF ACTIVE CITIZENRY

It was evident that there is no commonly accepted definition of active citizenry and no clear standard model of what an active citizen is. There is, however, a general understanding among the stakeholders interviewed that it refers to the involvement of individuals in:

- public life
- affairs that bring change into their communities or lives, and
- focusing on making sure public institutions and officials are accountable to communities.

The term is used especially at the local level to refer to citizens who become actively involved in the life of their communities, tackling problems or bringing about change or resisting unwanted change.

The following quotes illustrate how different stakeholders understand the notion of active citizenry:

"Citizen engagement is, I think, it's when the people take part in government decisions especially when there are projects and programmes of government that need to be implemented in a particular community." (NGO leader)

"My understanding is that you need to engage the community to bring about the change that is needed and addressing the challenges they face socially and economically so that they develop a sense of ownership in terms of the solutions they have for their challenges." (Forum leader)

"To me active citizenship participation is twofold:
a) It means to be actively informed about national issues, to engage in/with issues such as the SONA, creating dialogues and responding to national issues such as voting during national elections.
b) Also actively doing things on a daily basis/do something for a community not only for 67 minutes." (Foundation leader)

The central tenet in these three quotes is that active citizenry means coming to grips with what happens in public life, developing knowledge, understanding, critical thinking and independent judgment of local and national issues. It implies action and empowerment, i.e. acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes, being able and willing to use them, make decisions, and take action individually and collectively. Two characteristics which were repeatedly identified as being associated with an active citizen/s were:

- Active participation of that person in the community (involvement in community activities, a voluntary activity or engaging with local authorities)
- People who are empowered to play a part in the decisions and processes that affect them as a society, particularly public policy and services.

An active citizen was defined by one respondent as "someone who cares about the community and wants to make a difference".

Interestingly, the general understanding of citizen engagement by government stakeholders was mainly of this being a channel of communication to citizens by the state as the quotes below illustrate:

A NW official indicated: *"I can answer this by this term "Setsokotsane"… where the premier launched community consultations at a taxi rank…… . It's where we engage one on one with the community members to check if they have any interest in what the departments have to offer, then we will see how to intervene."*

In similar vein was the response of an EC official who identified active citizenship as a vehicle for sending and collecting information from communities. This official went further, stating that this was the explicit role of public liaison officers in government departments.

The statements above bear testimony to the critique offered by some forum members who described the State's definition of active citizenry as reductionist and in some cases felt the term had been hijacked by the State. They perceived the term as only involving communities to tick the box for community consultation while decisions have already been taken rather than allowing the voices of communities to drive the process. A general perception which prevailed was the sense that the state involves or communicates with communities only when they are in need of their votes and that once the votes were captured government officials and political leaders were nowhere to be seen and not able to be held accountable for the promises made in the election manifestos.

A refreshingly divergent view, but a lone voice, emanated from a government official:

"Community must take ownership of everything that is happening in their locality….. Government must not come up with programmes that they think will address the needs of the community. …. Community themselves must come with the issues that affect them and also the means for addressing these issues."

4.4. WHEN FORUMS WERE ESTABLISHED

The forums profiled in this study appear to have been established during the period 1990 to the present with three of the forums established between 1990 and 1999. These forums were established to deal with a number of social and economic issues.

Several of the forums established between 2000-2009 focused on social justice issues, responding to service delivery problems, strengthening democratic governance through voter education and addressing rights violations. At least 2 forums set up during this period were focused on land reform issues. Land in this country is a highly contested topic; communities, government departments and land owners have been at loggerheads with indigenous communities seeking land to be returned to them. Through community involvement these forums highlighted success stories where community

members, government departments and land owners have worked together, following proper channels and policies at their disposal, to reach agreement and have land returned.

For those forums established since 2010 the study found, in addition to the motivations for establishment indicated above, three interesting features. Here the forums appeared to be focused on self-reliance strategies such as dealing with food security, youth education, art and addressing unemployment through a focus on entrepreneurial skills development in communities, to name a few. The second feature appears to be the focus on enhancing these forums' working relations with government institutions and to take on a greater involvement in decision-making processes.

All forums and foundations profiled in this study were functional at the time of the study, although it was clear that the purpose for which they were established had not remained static. One clear shift evident was the visible shift from a focus of the forum on knowledge based community services to greater community engagement.

The third feature was the increasing militancy of actions (violent protests) reflected by 5 forums as forms of citizen engagement reflecting the service delivery frustration and the growing perception that "violence is the only language government understands" and would respond to.

4.5. CATALYSTS FOR CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

People are empowered to play a part in issues, decisions and processes that affect them as a society, particularly public policy and services. The study found that catalysts for the establishment of forums were perceived need or threat which the community faced as described in the examples below:

> *"The forum was established by a group of local women to protest against rape, domestic violence and woman abuse. The first case the forum responded to was a rape case of a 12 year old child whose case was dropped out of court because there was not enough evidence to prosecute the accused. The police did not handle the case very well. This frustrated mothers and women in that community. A group of women organised a protest campaign to re-open the case, but it was realised that the state did not have a strong case due to the lack of evidence from the police. It was then that this forum was established as a forum to educate women and children about domestic violence and child abuse, improve police services when dealing with rape cases, and importantly the police's attitude towards women and domestic violence cases. There were no proper procedures to handle rape cases or victims, there was no unit established to counsel rape victims. As a result rape victims were not comfortable in reporting their cases to the police."*

At one site, mining activities near school premises brought the community together to address the problem in consultation with the mines and the Department of Education, while at another site the

proximity of drug dealing activities and taverns to local schools served as a rallying point for citizen engagement.

Service delivery challenges and Batho Pele principles appear to be the overriding catalysts for the establishment of forums addressing a range of issues, including helping the elderly at pension collection points, responding to service delivery issues (water and sanitation, electricity, education, roads), providing support to agricultural projects and programmes, responding to crime and drug abuse, and providing awareness raising, training and capacity development and legal advice. In one instance the forum focused on voter education during elections and in many instances forums acted as a link between communities and government institutions.

The example below illustrates how a crisis motivated a more radical form of community

engagement. In a KZN community which believed it was being deliberately isolated by the state over

many years the community dug up the road in protest against the silence on the part of government.

> *"Actually we have tried all avenues to engage government; we have had demonstrations; written letters to all three presidents. We have hosted ministers. All of them know about our request. Now people are cutting the road because the government is not responding. We have decided that we are not going to keep quiet until our voices are heard. We are saying that the citizens of "xxx" have been isolated by the state. All these demonstrations we are having are means to show government that there are citizens here."*

4.6. PURPOSE FOR ESTABLISHING A FORUM

Although a forum may have been established in response to an incident or issue respondents identified the following as the main purposes for which forums were established:

- *"To improve the standard of living in the area";*
- *"The forum is also here to teach the youth in the area not to be lazy and expect handouts all the time";*
- *"But if we do not participate it means we would not be able to communicate the needs of the community."*

The director of one forum indicated that while the original objective had been to address violence against women, over time and in response to a greater appreciation of the problem of gender based violence the forum's objectives had been amended to include issues affecting men, poverty, unemployment and dependency.

Another example relates to the role of a tribal administration in championing the establishment of a forum. This is elaborated on in the quote below:

> *"The main reason for the forum to be established was that the tribal authority was concerned that there many NGOs that are being registered but when we visit then either you find them still running but many are dead they no longer there or operational, so they did not understand what was the challenge to cause this. So they commissioned a research study to*

find out which NGOS were providing what services to the community..... they found that there were NGOs and there was no one taking care of these NGOs.... Then they felt that there was a gap between these NGOs and the government because some of them needed training. So they decided to fill up this gap and have this forum and have a coordinator who will assist them throughout the way make sure that they are being trained, that the NGOs become sustainable and link them to possible funders."

4.7. Nature of Citizen Engagement

Earlier in this report the typologies of engagement were elaborated on, namely the long route of accountability, largely through the ballot box, and the short route of accountability where communities engaged directly with service providers. As indicated this report is mainly focused on the latter and this aspect was analysed in relation to the forums profiled in this study.

Particularly in relation to service delivery the types of engagements which have been identified in literature have included involvement with planning for services, co-creation and production in the delivery of services, and oversight functions.

Planning for services type engagements have included budget hearings or imbizos or community based planning for a particular service. Co-creation and production have been focused on the establishment of services where gaps exist in partnership with the community such as the establishment of CBOs or NGOs to deliver a much-needed service and, finally, oversight where the community monitors and reports on failures and seeks redress. Coproduction refers to citizens' involvement in the decision-making and the delivery of a service.

For those forums established since 2010 the study found three interesting features in respect of the type of citizen engagement. Here the forums appeared to be focused on engaging in self-reliance strategies such as initiating projects dealing with food security, youth education, art and addressing unemployment through a focus on entrepreneurial skills development in communities, to name a few. The second feature appeared to be a focus on enhancing the forums' working relations with government institutions in order to facilitate a greater involvement in decision-making processes in respect of the manner and nature through which services were delivered to communities and even to deliver the services in partnership with government. Examples of these included establishing victim empowerment forums to enhance services to victims of violence and in setting up home-based care for the elderly and orphan children.

The third feature was the increasing militancy of actions (violent protests) reflected by 5 forums as forms of citizen engagement reflecting the service delivery frustration and the growing perception that "violence is the only language government understands" and would respond to. This relates to the oversight role of forums in seeking redress for rights violations.

Militant forms of citizen engagement

In all 5 groups the one recurring theme was that militant action had not been the first response and that years of effort and non-responsiveness had led to the building up of anger and frustration and ultimately to militant reactions. A focus group with members of one of these forums generated these responses, a sample of which is shared below.

- *"The only way for us to get the attention of the municipality and the government is for us to protest. We need them to tell us where we belong because everybody around us is being developed except us. They need to answer as to why they have forgotten us."*

- *"We have had almost all the government officials come and visit this area. Even Mandela knew of this problem. So all the people who have the power know about what is going on here but nobody wants to solve it. We have had numerous people come in and say that they will help. The last task team to come here was from the office of Collins Chabane He said that he is the messiah, that with his arrival, our problems would be solved, but that has not materialised."*

- *"We do not understand why this government is not listening to our cries. We do not know why the government is not helping us fight this fight. In other areas you hear of the government having evicted white farmers from land that is not theirs, but here with us, they do not want to do the same thing. Every time we have to vote, all the political parties come here and sell us dreams which they never deliver on. It will be very sad when we refuse to vote, but it will come to that soon."*

- *"If they do not do anything about it, we will carry on protesting until something happens."*

Importantly, what can be discerned from the above is that while the outcome of the engagement process is critical the process of engagement is equally important.

4.8. LEADERSHIP IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FORUMS

Overwhelmingly, across all the sites profiled the study found that the main drivers for the establishments of forums were concerned community members. Some forums only target the youth or women in that community depending on the nature of the forum or its objectives while others were more generic in focus and involved a wide spectrum of community members. Community members initiate forums to mobilise resources to address a common goal within their location and from the fieldwork it was evident that communities understand the importance of working in unison. Community members were largely defined as geographical communities, those sharing the same physical space.

However, a few examples emerged where the "community" was not spatial but rather emerged around an issue. This is particularly true in respect of the social justice work on certain forums. One example of this is the claiming "streets" projects which is driven by social activists who have a strong research background and commitment to citizen engagement. Another example relates to the role of a tribal administration as the leadership structure in that community which established the forum. This is elaborated on in the quote below:

"The main reason for the forum to be established was that the tribal authority was concerned that there many NGOS that are being registered but when we visit then either you

find them still running but many are dead they no longer there or operational, so they did not understand what was the challenge to cause this. So they commissioned a research study to find out which NGOS were providing what services to the community..... they found that there were NGOs and there was no one taking care of these NGOs.... Then they felt that there was a gap between these NGOs and the government because some of them needed training. So they decided to fill up this gap and have this forum and have a coordinator who will assist them throughout the way make sure that they are being trained, that the NGOs become sustainable and link them to possible funders."

Visionary leaders are important for initiating development actions as we found in several sites:

- At one site a former government official had, after years of working in government, resigned to set up a consultancy. As part of his commitment to the community he had set up a forum to respond to community needs.
- In another example a young person who had returned from training from abroad helped to initiate a development intervention targeting youth in the community.
- A senior development practitioner and gender activist established a women's forum as a way of advancing gender rights in her community of origin.

4.9. LEGAL STATUS OF FORUMS

Of the 19 forums surveyed during the fieldwork, at least half were now legally constituted structures either as Trusts or as NPOs, many of which were now performing a service delivery role addressing a myriad of needs such as youth entrepreneurship, gender based violence, home and community based care (in the context of HIV and AIDS) and drug rehabilitation. However, in tracing their origins it is clear that most of them started off as informal forum structures. In most instances the study found that since they had become formal NPOs the forum structure was no longer the main vehicle through which they operated. Support for transformation from a forum or advocacy group to becoming a fully-fledged NPO came from many quarters including local councillors, and government officials from departments such as Social Development or Health. A number of these NPOs have, however, retained some elements of the consultative work with the community through regular or ad hoc meetings.

4.10. STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP OF FORUMS

With the exception of the Community Foundations and the formally established NPOs profiled in this study, the rest of the forums functioned in diverse ways. Four of the forums reportedly had loose membership criteria which they defined as being open to the community, while a further 3 were highly structured with a board elected annually at the AGM and with appointed office bearers.

Membership was defined differently for each forum. Most forums indicated that *"the community"* was the source of membership for the forum, making an assumption that the *"community"* was a homogenous group. Some specifically targeted youth, others women and in many instances the targets were a particular vulnerable group.

In a few forums leaders indicated that they had specifically sought the participation of the ward councillor, the izinduna and/or school principals of the area as members of the committee. In the case of victim empowerment forum members included government stakeholders from the Departments of Health, Justice, Social Development and Education.

One forum claimed that it was easier to recruit females than males to participate in forums. It was suggested that males are hindered by societal pressure as it was not seen appropriate for men to serve as volunteers or to undertake door-to-door campaigns. The rationale for this was that men were perceived as *"leaders and providers of their families"* and hence to volunteer was not in keeping with their image. The study was not able to test this empirically in the absence of ability to review records of forum membership.

In response to a question posed in the study, *"how would you describe a well-functioning forum?"* two responses below capture the general consensus and expectation of what a well-functioning forum would epitomise.

> *"A well-functioning forum must be accessible to the community and its main focus should be on community needs."* (Forum member)

> *"Respect for each other, encourage members to express their ideas, information sharing that will and working towards a common goal."* (Forum leader)

One question which was explored was how individual members had been recruited or became involved in a forum's activities as active members. Recruitment of community through door to door activities, awareness raising workshops etc. as described above have all contributed to community recruitment.

However, a strong motivation for involvement in forums was how the person had been directly affected by a situation or assisted by a forum. This experience had motivated the individual to establish closer links with or become more actively involved in the forum. Personal growth and development was a strong factor influencing participation as this participant reflected:

"I started volunteering in xxx in 2009. I got involved because I saw that there were many people who were in xxx and they had information. I wanted to gain knowledge and also to know my rights. I then got involved and worked with the informal settlements teaching them about their rights."

A recommendation made in one focus group was that forums should maintain attendance registers and regularly review them to ensure wider stakeholder participation in forums.

Members of one forum reportedly paid an annual membership fee of R10 and noted that this forum had 2 types of membership, namely as a member or a supporter. If you are a member, you fill in the membership form and pay the joining fee. The members are the people who attend meetings, take decisions, etc. A supporter would be either an individual or an institution that made a small contribution to the work of the forum and did not actively participate.

4.11. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR FORUM ACTIVITIES TO THE BROADER COMMUNITY

One of the questions explored was how forums communicated with the wider community. Communication costs were a real barrier but it was clear that the forum members improvised and innovated means for sharing information.

Word of mouth communication was the main approach to information sharing, followed by the use of loud hailers and driving through areas to announce information, as reported by several forums. Where there was a strong volunteer group attached to the forum then door to door information sharing was utilised to inform residents of when the next meeting would be held or to invite people to attend a talk or special event.

In addition it was noted during a focus group session that *"we also visit local schools, host events and community meetings, so as to get maximum coverage"*.

One respondent noted that if funds allowed they would print pamphlets announcing an event. Another indicated that they hosted community meetings every quarter and that this was important for providing community members with a platform to vocalise issues of concern.

The advocacy forums were active users of social and electronic media including Twitter, Facebook, emails and Skype to communicate messages to members or to direct their advocacy messages to relevant stakeholders.

An amusing anecdote was shared related to who participates in training events: *"We found that the workshops were well-attended when we had catering. That was funny to us. The hall would be packed during the training that is catered for, but when there comes the time when people must come and implement the resolutions of the workshop, then you see the same few faces. But that is something that we are working on."*

Agenda Setting for Forums – how community priorities are identified

Workshops and community meetings were the main means through which community members discuss issues, explore opportunities, identify priorities and agree on achievable actions. At times these are structured meetings while at other times it's a very loose arrangement as the quote below illustrates:

"Usually my crew and I throw the youth Izimbizos and talk of let's say water, self-esteem (issues) just to get to know different people, differentiating between crooks and the night people, how people think and behave and how to treat those who are from jail so they can feel accommodated back again in the community so they do not start committing crimes all over again." (Forum leader)

4.12. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A stakeholder can be defined as any entity with a declared or conceivable interest or stake in a concern. In community development this may include international actors (e.g. donors), national or political actors, public sector agencies, interest groups (e.g. unions), commercial/private for-profit groups, non-profit organisations, civil society members, and the community itself.

An understanding of stakeholders involved in enhancing community participation is important because it helps with incorporating a wide range of interests and voices. The involvement of all stakeholders is a *sine-qua non* for achieving effective and efficient citizenry participation. It is against this understanding that the study engaged in a stakeholder mapping exercise in respect of the sites profiled in the study.

Forums were able to engage with a wide range of stakeholders including CBOs, NPOs, faith leaders, traditional leaders, government institutions as well as private sector organisations.

The table below outlines some of the stakeholders involved and the nature of support provided. From the table it can be seen that forums are able to harness substantial resources from government, the private sector and the non-profit sector.

Table 7: Stakeholder involvement in sampled organisations

Province	Stakeholder Category	Type of support
Northern Cape	SASSA	Referral
NC and NW	Department of Social Development	Funding Training
	Department of Health	Funding
North West	Pastors forum	Psychosocial Support
	SAPS	Security during community gatherings
	Private sector Mine owners	Donations and Sponsors
	Tribal Authorities	Access to venues
Eastern Cape	Department of Social Development	Helped in the registration of the NPOs, information sharing, providing funding, providing training opportunities and networking
	Department of Health	Sharing of information, funding support for home based care programmes
Limpopo	Social Development	Helped to register the forum, provide advice
	Ward Councillor	Provides support
	Local Chief	Advice and support
	Human Rights Commission	Advise on any human rights matters

	Legal Aid Board	Provide Legal Support
Free State	HCS Foundation	Stationery
	Department of Public works	Office Equipment
	SAB	Computers and OQ
	Department of Social Development	Awareness raising workshops
Western Cape	Equal Education	Partnerships and collaboration on projects
	Ndifuna Ukwazi	Provide office space and capacity building through leadership training and teaching history and law
	Treatment Action Campaign	Assisting with litigation work
	Ward councillors	Support on campaigns
	University Department	Donation of computers

Only one forum indicated that they had signed Memorandum of Understandings with partners. The respondent didn't elaborate further on why this had been deemed important but one can surmise that this would be important for clarifying roles and expectations of each party.

4.13. ENGAGEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS

The forums involved in advocacy around service delivery complained bitterly about the lack of responsiveness of government stakeholders. This is typified in the comments below:

- *"They only come when we protest or when it is close to election times when they want our votes. When they do come, they are full of empty promises. Every time they come here they give us false hope that they will make this place better, but it never happens."*
- *"We have reached the breaking point. We will now react. The police in this area are <u>anti us.</u> They do not even listen to our grievances."*

Several forum members cited that they felt that they did not have government support and complained about how hard it was to partner with government. A few examples were shared:

- *"Some of the challenges we have experienced working with our stakeholders is that they are local service centres of these various departments; they are unable to take certain decisions without consulting their district offices."*
- *"Change of leadership in municipalities is a major challenge in the partnership with Government."*

Forums also reported it was increasingly difficult to engage with government stakeholders because there was a constant reshuffle of personnel in positions at local offices and this made it difficult to build a lasting partnership.

Even where there has been some responsiveness from government stakeholders forum members expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the response relating to a land dispute:

> *"Yes, he (referring to the Mayor) has just come recently. He did not have anything different to say. They have all been saying one and the same thing. He just came to tell us that he is new in his position and that he needs some time so that he can deal with this issue. We are still waiting, as we are awaiting all the others before him."*

Not all forums, however, reported being unhappy with government's response, with one forum reporting that as a result of their complaints about the conduct of a police officer the matter was investigated and the officer was suspended.

4.14. ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Access to resources and funds for undertaking the work of forums was mentioned by every forum as a major challenge and limiting factor in their work. This included access to office space, telecommunication equipment (fax machines, photocopiers, etc.), meeting spaces, administrative support and cash resources. Funds were required to cover printing costs, travel expenditure, and catering for workshops, among others. One forum specifically addressed this by running Asset Based Community Development workshops (ABCD workshops) where community awareness was raised about the need to recognise and leverage the resources that already exist in the community and among the members rather than bemoan the lack of the resources as an obstacle to development.

4.15. CHALLENGES FACED BY FORUMS

Perceived neutrality of the forums

"There is sometimes a lot of politics in the area." (Forum leader)

A repeated mantra of most forum members was the challenge that perceived party affiliation had on the work of the forums. One forum cited as an example the fact that the community hall had been built by one political party and as this forum appeared to be in conflict with the local government which was run by that party they were denied the use of the hall for meetings.

Participants of a focus group noted *"sometimes people refuse to take help from the forum because they say that members of the forum belong to an opposition political party"*. Clearly this impacted their ability to support development in the community. This association with the opposition political party mainly arose because the forum was critical of a department's response to an issue.

One stakeholder reported that political parties in the area would use the forum platform to settle political disputes with other parties and to also try to gather support from their respective communities. In addition the community would also use the platform to air their grievances to

government officials. This dialogue between the different stakeholders would then undermine the core objectives of that specific meeting and not much would be accomplished.

Inclusivity

Another challenge identified was of trying to make sure that no stakeholder group was side-lined. This requires regular and continuous communication to ensure that everyone understood why certain decisions were taken and choices made.

Some forums claimed to include all community members, including children. A respondent reported that "*the people who are not in the forum are those who have made the choice not to join as they are not interested*".

Unrealistic expectations from community members

A challenge that generated much discussion and debate related to expectations of members and the community. The forum leaders had to find a balance between keeping people interested in the work of the forum without raising expectations which were likely not to be met. One of the biggest challenges in this regard was that people were impatient and wanted to see many problems being addressed at the same time.

4.16. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO EFFECTIVENESS OF FORUMS

A theme explored with all the forums was what factors they had identified which they believed contributed to the effectiveness of public participation initiatives they had engaged in. ***Good planning*** was identified as one of the key characteristics to have a successful community initiative where the public fully participates and takes ownership of the project. The example cited was the planning for the social audit undertaken to highlight sanitation problems which the local municipality had failed to respond to. Through thorough understanding of the issue, recruitment and training of volunteers, and conducting the audit they collected a wealth of information on the problem. However, this had to be coupled with a learning environment where the community is empowered to reflect and act. This required forums to be open to change.

A second critical factor identified was that of ***governance,*** translated into a commitment to being accountable and transparent with all stakeholders they deal with which reportedly helped to build a strong relationship between them and their stakeholders.

One of the forum leaders attributed their success to the following:

"We are successful because we recognise where we come from, we constantly improve on our mandate. We are successful because of good planning combined with learning environment."

Consultation was also pointed out as one of the key features and an enabling factor towards effective active citizenry engagement, and that it should be inclusive and also timeous. It was important that people are consulted before projects are implemented in the community. This involves first and foremost speaking to the community and ensuring that the mandate of the forum was properly aligned to the community's needs. A strong caution was noted about not excluding

traditional authorities from such consultations as this could be an obstacle with them acting as gatekeepers to these communities.

A development facilitator in one NPO had this to say about a commitment to consultation:

"I think consultation is our strength. To recognise the local leadership. We work with traditional leaders."

"As a community worker, you must look at the needs of the people in the community. You cannot just decide for the people but you must get the mandate from them."

An advocacy forum highlighted the importance of governance training for members of the forum. Their training had focused on how to identify problems, who to communicate issues with and in what manner.

A forum member noted that a particular forum had "*educated their branches about governance and the platforms that decisions are taken. In this way, when people are angry or they are not satisfied about something, then the community would know where exactly to direct their complaints or grievances*".

Informed and well-capacitated members who had access to relevant and appropriate knowledge, skills and information was noted as an important factor in the effectiveness of active citizenry initiatives. Some forums reported drawing on retired professionals in the community to impart their knowledge because through their experience they have learnt a lot and could offer guidance.

A strong call was made for ensuring skills in managing financial resources:
"People must be trained … work with finances because it can build or destroy the organisation if finances are not well-managed." The need for transparency in the functioning of the forum was also stressed with a clear message that the community also has to be aware of what the forum is doing in the community and this can be done through opening up a dialogue with the community. This can benefit both parties. *"The forum has contributed to development through the volunteer programme, community members involved are empowered, through information giving and sharing, exposed to temporal employment programmes through EPWP."*

Effective channels of communication: The failure to communicate with the community is an issue that can impact the effectiveness of the forum's work. In a community based monitoring forum addressing problems in a mining community this failure has resulted in the forum's work being discredited. Participants of a community focus group in the area where the mining forum was active have completely rejected even the existence of the forum:

> *"Let me say this to you, as far as I am concerned there is no forum in this community, we do not even meet to discuss anything in this community. Even the forum you are referring to I have never heard about it, I don't know if others have heard anything about them."*
> *"I don't know of any forum in our community, we don't meet; those who meet are meeting each other in secret. I don't know if others know of any forum. We don't know any forum, that's where I end."*

4.17. IMPACTS OF FORUMS ON DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Forum members reported many positive outcomes of their interventions.

Knowledge dissemination

Information sharing, awareness raising and knowledge dissemination were reportedly the most significant benefits of forums. The role of the forums in bringing specific services to the community was also noted. *"Brothers for Life did a campaign for the circumcision of males in the area. Everything was provided for. We have seen that many parents have allowed for their kids to go and get circumcised."* Several of the members reported having accessed training and capacity development interventions and others had been assisted in setting up food gardens or being assisted to link up with job creation initiatives.

Improved service delivery

The impact of a forum on advocating for better service delivery is illustrated by the example provided by one forum below:

> *"There was a case of negligence caused by a police officer who was suppose to arrest a man who violated his restraining order. Instead of arresting the man, the police officer did not follow procedure. As a result the man murdered his girlfriend. Through the forum we were able to take up the case with the police station and the police officer was then suspended."*

Access to social services was another contribution that forums had enhanced by creating bridges between government service providers and the communities where this need existed.

An urban metro based forum undertook a social audit of sanitation in the community to bring attention to their plight. The audit findings were documented, both in writing and visually and were shared through a specially organised meeting of stakeholders as well as through the use of social media. As a result of this action the metro government, which had allegedly repeatedly ignored the problem, was forced to acknowledge the issue and commit to addressing it.

Media exposure enabled access to support

The forums which had undertaken more militant actions also reported impacts. In the land reform example the media exposure had generated goodwill for the community in the form of offers of *pro bono* support from legal companies to assist them with this particular struggle. Another forum noted that an NGO working in the land sector had actively sought them out to provide support.

Enhancing community involvement in development

Several forums reported that through the forums community members were more actively volunteering for development work, while others reported that community members' skills had been enhanced in the planning and execution of campaigns, undertaking door to door profiling exercises and in hosting dialogues and consultations with the community.

One of the expected outcomes would have been that the practice of active citizenry would be enhanced, particularly in the context of growing community frustrations about the lack of or slow pace of development as well as the increasing militancy of citizen engagement. In at least three forums members noted that through participation, training and awareness creation they had learnt alternate and more constructive approaches to addressing problems as the quote below encapsulates:

> *"We understand the violence is not the solution and that the forum has educated us that we cannot be angry and destroy the little resources that we do have when we are unhappy. We need to follow the proper channels and be proactive in bettering our lives."*

PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION IN COMMUNITIES

Another important message which forum members reflected on was the need for the community to work together.

"We have also realised that there is so much more that we can achieve if and when we are united. As the people of xxx we were not united, everybody did their own thing, but now, we know that to be effective, we must work together."

4.18. SUSTAINABILITY OF FORUMS

The majority of the forums profiled in this study operated from a fairly low resource base and had managed to harness local resources despite the challenges in this respect and the low resource mobilisation potential. Taking this into account the outcomes reported are considerable. In this context the lack of financial resources per se is not likely to impact the sustainability of existing forums.

Forums reported that information shared, skills transfers and good practices shared would all contribute to the sustainability of forum activities.

More importantly, what has becoming increasing evident is that sustained leadership capacity can and will impact on the sustainability of forums. If forum leaders leave the area, become employed full time, or if their time is consumed in other initiatives this will and has impacted on the sustainability of the forum.

5. CASE STUDIES

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Narratives are an important way of describing phenomena and case studies provide the vehicle for conveying descriptive information about an issue from multiple sources. Case studies were identified as suitable for extracting and highlighting key issues relating to the practice of active citizenry. For this study two case studies are presented.

5.2. CASE STUDY 1: SOCIAL JUSTICE COALITION

Historical background

The Social Justice Coalition (SJC) was established in 2008 in Khayelitsha by a number of organisations, including the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and Equal Education, in response to the xenophobic attacks that were widespread across the country at that time.

While the initial focus was on responding to these attacks the coalition broadened its focus to wider issues of the failure of government to deliver services, the lack of accountability and the related attacks on the Constitution and judiciary.

Structure of the Coalition

The Social Justice Coalition consists of 12 branches across Khayelitsha. Each branch consists of an undesignated number of members and community advocates, who are SJC staff members that adopt a particular branch. The advocates are responsible for providing information to branches and each branch is then responsible for disseminating the information to the community. Branches meet weekly and through the branch structure the SJC engages with community leaders to encourage public participation.

In addition to the branch structure at community level, there are three central structures, namely the executive council, the secretariat, and the chairpersons' forum. The executive council is the highest decision-making body and consists of the secretariat, co-opted members that are not elected but were chosen by the secretariat to assist them, and two individuals from each branch. It is unclear how often the executive council meets.

The secretariat comprises of five people that are elected by the branches. These include the general secretary, the deputy chairperson, and the treasurer. Annual general meetings (AGMs) are held, with the secretariat's term of office being 2 years.

The chairpersons' forum deals with issues at branch level. The various chairpersons of the branches meet and share issues that they have in common and find support from each other in the various issues being addressed.

Campaign activities of the SJC

The SJC has two major campaigns in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, namely the "Clean and Safe Sanitation Campaign" and the "Justice and Safety for All Campaign".

The Clean and Safe Sanitation Campaign focuses on ensuring clean and safe sanitation for the community by holding government accountable for the delivery of these services. The Justice and Safety for All Campaign is motivated by townships being unsafe and that these communities are inadequately served by under-resourced police and court systems. The SJC works with partners and government to ensure that the community receives protection by police and access to justice through the courts.

The two campaigns were identified through community dialogues and consultative processes via branch structures.

The SJC's relationship with local government and national government is quite tense. Sanitation is a hot topic in the Western Cape and therefore all sanitation related issues are pushed to the top for local government's attention. At first, the SJC advocated for a janitorial service in Khayelitsha for the public flush toilets as they were very dirty and many were broken. This service was implemented in 2012 by the City of Cape Town. However, although there has been big improvement with extra toilets, electricity next to public roads in Khayelitsha, and increased street lighting, there are still problems with the janitorial service. In July 2014, the SJC, Ndifuna Ukwazi (NU), residents of Khayelitsha, and partners from around the country performed a social audit of the janitorial service for communal flush toilets in four informal settlements in Khayelitsha. After the social audits report was released and submitted to the City of Cape Town there was a breakdown in the relationship between these two entities.

Stakeholder Engagement

The SJC has developed strong partnerships with a range of stakeholders including NGOs and research bodies that do similar work elsewhere in the country and through this process they find support and learn from one another. However, a challenge with working collaboratively is that each structure's focus has to be aligned to a shared goal and often resource constraints may limit the extent of collaboration.

The SJC does not enjoy a collaborative relationship with either local or provincial government particularly as the SJC is not party political. They appear to be caught in the cross-fire between two political parties, namely the DA-led provincial government and the ANC-led local government councillors.

Leveraging resources

The SJC has been able to harness a wealth of resources from stakeholders including access to meeting venues, training, assistance with ligitation, research work, media advocacy and even access to computers.

4   SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF AN ACTIVE CITIZENRY INTERVENTION UNDERTAKEN BY THE SJC

Sanitation is a massive problem, particularly in informal settlements, and this was no different in Khayelitsha were the communal flush toilets were in a dire state. Furthermore, there was insufficient lighting in the informal settlements making people vulnerable to criminal attacks when

walking to toilets. SJC's campaign focused on working, well-maintained and clean environments. In 2012 janitorial services were instituted across Khayelitsha. Janitors are responsible for cleaning toilets and surrounding areas and undertaking minor repairs. They are also responsible for monitoring whether the toilets are in working order and reporting all toilets that are not working properly and could not be fixed to the City of Cape Town. Despite this development Khayelitsha residents continued to have problems with sanitation.

To address this issue the SJC undertook a social audit of sanitation as a way of providing the evidence base to support their advocacy demands. Social audits are used to measure, verify, identify, report on, and ultimately improve an institution's social and ethical performance and in India are widely used for increasing accountability and transparency of local government (Srivastava, 2003). To gain experience in how to conduct social audits advice and training was sought from an expert on social audits who was visiting from India.

To perform the social audit SJC needed records from the City of Cape Town on the ratio of toilets to janitors in Khayelitsha. As these records were unavailable SJC devised a questionnaire in order to generate data. Data collection was undertaken over a week in July 2014, with approximately 90 people participating as data collectors, with five teams formed, each consisting of SJC staff and branch members, residents from the four informal settlements being audited, independent observers, and representatives from partner institutions across the country. The social audit was conducted in four informal settlements in Khayelitsha, namely BM Section, PJS, Nkanini, and BT section and involved interviews with janitors and residents as well as inspections of the toilets. More than 800 questionnaires were completed during this period. Following the data collection and analysis, findings of the audit were documented in a Social Audit Report and presented at a public hearing set up by SJC.

The SJC invited individuals from the City of Cape Town and a media contingent to the public hearing. Councillor Ernest Sonnenberg of the City of Cape Town attended this hearing. SJC members noted with disappointment that instead of taking the findings seriously he refused to engage with any of the findings and cast aspersions on the validity of the research process. The perception was that he saw this as a way for the community to attack his party's service delivery track record rather than to address a legitimate issue.

The expectation had been that the social audit would impress upon the City of Cape Town to produce a plan for delivering sanitation to informal settlements which was unfortunately not the outcome. Nevertheless, it did raise the profile of the issue in the national media.

5.3. CASE STUDY 2: WENTWORTH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FORUM (ECD)

The importance of investing in early childhood development (ECD) for human health, wellbeing and productivity has been well recognised (NPC Diagnostic Overview Report, 2011). Research suggests that the presence of promotive factors in the care environment can make a difference in the life of a child. Enhancing quality early childhood development interventions, particularly targeting children

from disadvantaged communities, can prevent or offset potential negative impacts on a child's cognitive and social development.

Save the Children South Africa (SCSA) has been extensively involved over the past fifteen years in the early childhood development sector, specifically supporting ECD service providers through community based development forums which serve multiple objectives - including strengthening ECD practitioner capacities, showcasing best practices, facilitating and enabling collective action and advocacy, and enhancing quality of service provision to young children. During 2014 it commissioned the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to conduct an evaluation of selected area-based ECD forums actively supported by SCSA in the KZN province. The evidence for this case study below has been drawn from that study with the approval of SCSA for its use for this specific study.

For the SCSA study, community forums were loosely defined as decentralised and largely non-hierarchical decision making structures which are activity based and are made up of linkages between individuals (Plastrik and Taylor, 2006). The underlying characteristic of a forum is that forum members are able to share decision making, resources and credit. In South Africa community forums exist in different forms.

Origin of the Wentworth ECD Forum

Initially SCSA worked with individual ECD centres but found that its ability to reach a wider audience was constrained by human and financial resources. Arising from its work in the Wentworth community (south of Durban) SCSA proposed the establishment of an ECD forum for Wentworth in 2010.

Objectives of the Wentworth ECD Forum

The ECD forum had three overarching objectives, namely:

- To build capacity of ECD centres to improve ECD quality;

- To encourage the sharing of best practices amongst ECD practitioners;

- To facilitate collective action of ECD forum members in addressing the challenges faced by the sector.

Composition of the Wentworth ECD Forum

The forum is comprised of representatives of individual ECD centres (crèches, preschools or day care centres) in the Wentworth community who come together voluntarily to share information, experiences and strategies of overcoming challenges they are facing as ECD centres. Participants at these forums are mainly the principal or owner of the ECD centre and occasionally some of the staff members of an ECD may participate.

Wentworth ECD Forum Activities

The forum is involved in various activities which are tailored towards improving ECD services to children in the Wentworth community and towards harnessing resources for the development of ECD centres in this community. These include the following:

- Forum networking meetings: these meetings are held monthly to give members an opportunity to discuss their challenges, concerns and needs. They also allow for sharing good practice amongst forum members and create a space for sharing information. The underlying concept of the intervention at the forum level is that once community members are working together collectively then they can achieve greater bargaining and resource amassing power as compared to individual ECD centres operating on their own. Forum members are encouraged to network with various stakeholders who include service providers and local and provincial development partners.

- Linking members to opportunities: A key role of the forum has been to provide support to centres attempting to register their ECD interventions with the Department of Social Development and other various government institutions given the difficulties being faced by centres when they try to register.

- Creating access to knowledge resources: Through the development of a resource centre, based in Wentworth, ECD centres have access to children's books, teaching aids, educational toys and general information relevant to educators and education. Of note is the resource kit which contains ECD manuals, networking information, registration documents, various templates and lesson plans.

- Provision of a mentor for the Wentworth ECD centres: In an effort to support holistic development of ECD in Wentworth, SCSA appointed a mentor. The mentor works with individual ECD centres between forum meetings to help them address challenges experienced and to enable better regulatory compliance by centres.

Impact of the Wentworth ECD forum on enhancing active citizenry.

ECD forums have impacted positively on active citizen engagement. The following impacts are noted:
- ECD forums have been made aware of their rights in respect of decisions made by government departments. This was particularly relevant for ECD centres who have struggled for years to secure registration with the Department of Social Development as is statutorily required.
- In the Wentworth ECD forum where SCSA piloted its intervention model, government departments who have attended the forum meetings have had to engage with the problems faced by ECD centres by providing information and training sessions and even reviewing their policy and programming to be more responsive to the centres. One example of this was access to ECD learnerships which had an age criteria for eligibility. Many forum members were excluded because they were above 35 years. The forum members lobbied the Department of Education to review the age criteria and as a result the age requirement was amended to included members up to the age of 40.
- In order to improve quality of the ECD services delivered the Wentworth forum members requested government departments responsible for ensuring ECD centre compliance to inspect

their centres periodically so that they meet compliance regulations. Through this voluntary process, problems were identified and addressed.

- The forum platform has served as a key vehicle for resource leveraging. In Wentworth alone the study found that SCSA had harnessed, over a period of 3 years, substantial financial and in-kind resources for ECD centres. It was estimated that in excess of R2million of support had been leveraged for Wentworth ECD centres through SCSA. SCSA not only leveraged resources for the centres but also capacitated the members through training in resource mobilisation and good management practises.

Conclusion

The impact reported on above was as a result of strong support from the SCSA. The SCSA offered strong support through its mentors, facilitators and its general support to the forums. An important message for enhancing active citizenship is the role that support institutions play in advancing development outcomes.

6. COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS: FINDINGS FROM THE FIELDWORK

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Community foundations have increasingly become a vehicle for community philanthropy in South Africa. Unlike other non-profit charities (some of which may have a singular focus area e.g. healthcare and disaster relief), community foundations are focused on enhancing the entire wellbeing of the community and operate in a very specific geographical area.

The key difference in respect of community foundations is that the resource mobilisation strategy for community foundations (CFs) is unique in that funds are harnessed from external stakeholders as endowments. Broadly defined, endowment funding is made up of gifts and bequests that are invested with the provision that the capital sum is not utilised but that the investment provides an income stream which can be used for development purposes. More importantly, they generate separate funding streams for operational costs, grant making and for endowment (Malombe, 2000).

Endowment funds have gained prominence in the challenging fiscal space that the non-profit sector in South Africa is finding itself in. Given that South Africa has been classified as a middle-income country this has given rise to an exodus of donor funds away from the country as well as from the non-profit sector during the last decade. As a result, donors are increasingly attracted to endowment funds as they realise the potential these provide for continuing to influence and contribute to development long past the grant making period.

Evidence suggests that CFs have and continue to play an important role in broadening civil society participation in development work. They have been credited with bringing together sometimes unlikely partners to a development initiative, such as local advocacy bodies partnering with a business entity to address a particular concern (Lowe, 2004; Malombe, 2000).

For the purposes of this study the focus on CFs was specifically to understand how they have, through their grant making, advanced active citizenry initiatives and whether there is any comparative advantage in enhancing citizenry engagement given their access to resources.

In the remaining section an assessment is made in respect of two foundations included in the study.

6.2 UTHUNGULU COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Introduction

The uThungulu Community Foundation (UCF) promotes grant making in the uThungulu and uMkhanyakude District Municipalities of KwaZulu-Natal. Community-based organisations in these two districts can apply for small grants for projects targeting upliftment of communities in areas of education, food security, health, entrepreneurship, social justice, human rights, abuse against women and children, and employment creation. The grant making committee thoroughly assesses

applications and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The process is open, transparent and fair.

Background

The UCF is South Africa's first community philanthropy endowment institution funded by the Charles Mott Foundation, a United States of America donor agency operating in SA. The UCF, in existence for 15 years, is one of three Mott Foundation supported community foundations in the country that have succeeded by adapting the philanthropy endowment concept to South Africa. Seed funding for the establishment of the UCF came from the Charles Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation, BHP Billiton and the South African Grant Makers Association, facilitated through the Zululand Chamber of Commerce. As at the time of the research (February 2015) the UCF's endowment fund had grown from R5million in 1999 to R19million in 2015.

From its start in 1999, the UCF understood the importance of securing funds from South Africa-based donors while most others in the pilot project remained dependent on overseas support.

According to the 2013 Annual Report of the UCF, their objectives are as follows:

- Improve the quality of life in local communities
- Establish, promote and maintain a sound community-rooted growth fund to support deserving community-based NPOs
- Mobilise diverse community resources and public support for the UCF's programmes
- Instil confidence in local communities through the revival of traditional and other forms of philanthropic practices
- Promote and develop socio-economic values based on fairness, mutual respect, integrity and public accountability.

Types of Community Programmes Supported

The UCF funds a range of local development interventions including creches and preschools, youth development, food insecurity, services for the elderly, disabled, orphan and child care interventions, home and community based care programmes and socio-economic upliftment interventions .

Organisational Structure

The Foundation has a Board of Trustees comprised of 9 members who have been drawn mainly from local government and the private sector. The Foundation's patron is King Goodwill Zwelithini. A management committee, headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of UCF, is responsible for the day to day operations of the Foundation. The Board, together with the staff, constitute various sub-committees to oversee finances, grant making and other related functions.

Enhancing Active Citizenry through Community Foundations

The intention of this study was not to assess the impact of the broader development work of the UCF but to assess the extent to which the manner in which the UCF facilitates its work and also

contributes to enhancing active citizen engagement.

The main indicator for how UCF undertakes its work is found in a number of presentations which the CEO of the UCF has made, all of which are available in the public domain. The community mapping presentation made to a rural development conference (UCF, 2011) outlines a data collection process for development prioritisation in community driven processes. The approach which was indicated was one of continuous interactions and dialogue with community leaders and grantees. While it is referred to as a "research process" the process is aligned with the UCF's motto of "people helping people" which strongly espouses values of self-reliance and self-development. To quote the foundation, "*UCF believes sustainable development is only possible when communities can rely on their own skills and other resources required for sustainable socio-economic development*".

In the course of this study it was not possible to see evidence of this approach in action although it was reported on by both the UCF and private donor stakeholders. The beneficiary stakeholders interviewed for this study did not make any mention of this as a central approach to the way the UCF undertook grant making. However, what the study found was that the UCF invested in education and training interventions for communities around voter education and dealing with government stakeholders, all of which do contribute to enhancing citizen engagement.

Challenges experienced

The UCF has been foremost in acknowledging the challenges that it has experienced in implementing the development approach outlined above and include the lack of coordinated service delivery to local communities arising from the absence of a shared development strategy among the multiple stakeholders. This had also resulted in duplication of services among the development partners.

Concluding remarks

The relevance of the UCF is that it is located in a predominantly rural area where poverty, underdevelopment and lack of resources create a vicious cycle of perpetuating disadvantages. Through the CF model the UCF has mobilised multi-stakeholders in the private sector, government, academia, traditional authorities and grassroots communities towards addressing development challenges in the communities served (Mkhize, 2004). It is suggested that a deliberate and sustained intervention to enhance active citizenry is within the ambit of the work of the UCF and aligns extremely well with the UCF's ethos and operating principles.

6.3 WESTERN CAPE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The West Coast Community Foundation (WCCF) was established in 1999 but only formally registered as a foundation with the Department of Social Development (DSD) in 2001. The foundation was founded by the Goegedacht Foundation which was given a mandate by the West Coast District Municipality community to establish a foundation for two main reasons:

- To build the capacity of the communities they operate in;
- To also provide financial assistance for CBOs that do community development work.

Structure and Functioning of the WCCF

The West Coast Community Foundation was established as a 20 member organisation with members expected to engage fully in dialogue with other stakeholders at meetings with the aim of making grant making decisions in timely fashion. Of the 20 members, 7 members were selected to sit on the board of trustees, however, over time the foundation's constitution was amended and this led to the size of the board of trustees being reduced.

The board of trustees is responsible for all decision making including staff employment and approval of grants. The CEO of the foundation reports to the board and is responsible for translating the decisions of the board into practice. The board of trustees meets quarterly as well as hosts an annual general meeting.

The foundation also has meetings where they give feedback to the West Coast District Municipality community that they serve and the stakeholders that they work with.

A campaign supported by the WCCF

Land is a highly contested issue in South Africa and issues of ownership continue to perpetuate heated debate twenty years into democracy. The WCCF was approached by community members in Chatsworth where the community could not build on the land because they did not own the land. Furthermore, the Chatsworth area did not have housing for local residents The WCCF was roped in to intervene in assisting the community get legal ownership of the land in order that they could build their houses. This was despite this area of work being beyond the scope of the WCCF mandate.

The WCCF initially attended community meetings to develop a better understanding of the problem in the West Coast District Municipality community in Chatsworth. Through this interaction WCCF identified the need to assist the community with filling in of applications for land with the Department of Rural Development and in addition they were provided with training and awareness on governance and financial management.

An important principle which WCCF exercised in the manner it provided support was that it respected the autonomy of the community to make their own decisions. Arising from these interventions the community accessed security of tenure in land to develop housing for the local community. The Chatsworth community stakeholders acknowledge the critical role played by the WCCF in enabling this outcome.

7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The report is peppered with anecdotes which speak to the power of collective action for the community at large. This value is summarised in terms of Plastrik and Taylor's framework of the benefits of good networking practice, namely:

- the ability to rapidly and widely diffuse information, ideas and innovations

- the ability to build connections between forum members (bridge building)

- to build resilience amongst network members, many of whom have been members for a long time

- to develop adaptive capacity to address new or changing circumstances and respond to emerging needs

- to expand the reach and scope of work, exponentially.

The following are key findings emerging from the study:

While the meanings ascribed to active citizenry by civil society and government appear to be shared it is evident that there are key differences in the manner in which each stakeholder perceives the practice of active citizenry on the continuum from mere information sharing and consultation to full community involvement in the implementation of development interventions.

Forums emerged in response to real service delivery needs experienced by communities or in respect of deeply held frustrations about the failure of government to deliver services or honour rights.

Predominantly, forums established have focused on co-production, working alongside government to deliver a key service. A few forums have focused on the oversight role in monitoring service delivery and seeking redress.

Having strong and visionary leaders is important for the effective running and the success of the forums. **Good leadership** is paramount and determines the success or failure of a forum. Good leadership is synonymous with good governance and implies that the organisation's work should be transparent and they should be accountable to the people they represent.

A forum's credibility is enhanced if it ensures open channels of communication with all stakeholders. The essence of forums is rapid diffusion of information, best practices and resources through its links. In almost all the forums members noted that forums had drastically improved the way individual members access information and resources.

The ability of a forum to harness involvement of multiple stakeholders can contribute significantly to the forum's ability to leverage resources and support.

While the need to remain non-partisan is key, forums struggle to be accepted as being neutral.

Access to sufficient and appropriate resources: While both financial and human resources are needed for the work of forums it was evident that the most critical resource required was strong and appropriate support institutions which provided advice, training and guidance. This has been overwhelmingly provided by NPOs. This is an area that needs to be strengthened.

Factors which contributed to effectiveness of forums included good planning, commitment to governance principles, regular and ongoing consultation with stakeholders and a well-informed membership. **A commitment to good governance** requires that forums must be owned and controlled by the forum members. Forums also faced a number of challenges. While the need to remain non-partisan is key forums struggle to be accepted as being neutral. It was not always easy to ensure complete inclusivity in the forums' activities. This created information asymmetries and differences in levels of understanding and cooperation within the community as to why certain decision and choices were made. Forums also face the difficulty of mustering the fine balance required between keeping people involved in the forums' activities and managing unrealistic community expectations.

The impact of establishing forums went beyond ensuring that service delivery gaps were addressed. It included building community capacity for engaging with development and fostering social cohesion in communities.

This report captures in various places the successes enjoyed and the tangible benefits reaped of active citizenry in South Africa. The report also identifies the challenges that forums experience in their efforts to enhance development outcomes and that much more remains to be done to strengthen active citizenry in South Africa. The study findings make explicit the kind of support that is required. This is what must occupy the focus of the NDA as it moves forward.

7.2. Recommendations

Arising from the study are three key recommendations which the NDA is urged to act on. Each of these is outlined below.

1. The NDA is suitably placed in its role in supporting the non-profit sector in South Africa to develop a set of interventions to advance active citizenry engagement by civil society. It can achieve this through its grant agreements with NPOs, through its focus on thematic areas and through a capacity development programme;
2. The NDA needs to consider its role in enabling government stakeholders to reflect on their understanding and practice of active citizenry to ensure that it is more closely aligned to the NDP 2030 goals and aspirations;
3. The need for a knowledge hub for show casing good practice in active citizenry in South Africa is urgently required. South Africa has a wealth of experience that needs to be widely shared. The role of the NDA in facilitating such information sharing needs to be explored. This would go a long way to change perceptions and educate the citizenry that violence is not the only language government understands, and that there are good local practices of community driven organisations partnering with government to ensure inclusive and equitable growth and development.

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Layout & Design: Nthabiseng Kraai
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