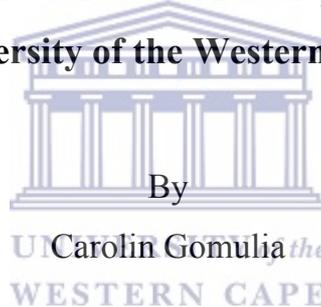


**State-Society Networks and Social Capital:
A case of Political Participation in the Western
Cape Province
(South Africa)**

**A Master Thesis submitted to the
Institute for Social Development,
University of the Western Cape**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	IV
LIST OF TABLES.....	IV
LIST OF BOXES.....	IV
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	V
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	VI
ABSTRACT	VII
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	5
1.1. Social Capital	5
1.1.1. Definitions and concepts of Social Capital.....	5
1.1.2. Types of social capital	10
1.1.3. Favorable conditions for social capital	11
1.1.4. Social Capital and Development.....	14
1.2. The role of civil society in networking between society and governmental institutions	16
1.2.1. Definition of civil society and non-governmental organisations.....	17
1.2.2. Relationship between government and NGOs.....	20
1.2.3. NGOs – the ‘voice’ of the poor?.....	22
1.3. Political participation	25
1.3.1. Definition of political participation	25
1.3.2. Political participation in the policy formulation process	28
1.3.3. Political participation and its link to social capital	32
1.4. Conclusion	34
CHAPTER TWO	
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOUTH	37
AFRICAN CASE STUDY	37
2.1. Data Needs & Operationalisation	37
2.2. Research Method & Research Design	42
2.3. Sampling and Data Collection	44
2.4. Data processing	46
CHAPTER THREE	
CASE STUDY.....	48

3.1. Context and Background of the Case study	48
3.1.1. Political participation and policy-making in South Africa	48
3.1.2 The Social Capital approach within the South African context.....	54
3.1.3. Role of NGOs in South Africa.....	57
3.2. Networks between NGOs and government departments in the Western Cape Province	59
3.2.1. Description of the formal characteristics of the networks	59
3.2.2. General perception of the relationship within the networks	60
3.2.3. Trust	63
3.2.4. Norms that encourage cooperation and collective action	65
3.2.5. Interpersonal communication and exchange.....	67
3.2.6. Conclusion	69
3.3. Political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process	71
3.3.1. Actors involved in the process	71
3.3.2. Opportunities for NGOs to contribute to the policy formulation process	72
3.3.3. Perception of participation in the policy formulation process	77
3.4. Functions of networks for political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process	79
3.4.1. NGO perspective.....	79
3.4.2. Perspective from the Departments	84
CHAPTER FOUR	
CONCLUSIONS	87
BIBLIOGRAPHY	94
ANNEX A	
INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK	100
ANNEX B	
LIST OF RESPONDENTS	105

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1: The vertical and horizontal dimension of Social Capital.....	10
Fig. 2: Integration and linkage in bottom-up dilemmas of development	12
Fig. 3: The ideal approach to measure social capital.....	38
Fig. 4: Operationalisation of networks between NGOs and government actors as an outcome of social capital.....	39
Fig. 6: Research Question.....	42
Fig. 7: The stream of policy-making on national issues.....	50
Fig. 8: The possible ideal of political participation in South Africa	53
Fig. 9: Investigated Networks	59

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Trust according to types of NGOs.....	65
Table 2: Norms that encourage cooperation and collective action according to type of NGO	67
Table 3: Interpersonal communication and exchange according to type of NGO	69
Table 4: Type of NGOs in relation to which networks they belong to	71
Table 5: Opportunities to participate in the policy formulation process, NGOs(+) vs. NGOs(-).....	79
Table 6: Perception of political participation in the policy formulation process in relation to NGOs(+) and NGOs(-).....	82

LIST OF BOXES

Box 1: The policy formulation process of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) strategy.....	76
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BABS	Build a better society
CBO	Community based organization
DDP	Democracy Development Programme
DSSPA	Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELRU	Early Learning Resource Unit
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
Minmec	Meetings of national cabinet ministers and members of provincial executive committees
NCOP	National Council of Provinces
NEC	National Executive Council
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NGO(-)	Non Governmental Organisation, that are not an outcome of social capital
NGO(+)	Non Governmental Organisation, that are an outcome of social capital
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NWC	National Working Committee
PCAS	Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services
PDC	Provincial Development Council
SC	Social Capital
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme



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ABSTRACT

Social capital is a concept discussed in recent years in many debates, particularly in the developmental context. Various research results indicate the positive linkages between social capital and developmental outcomes. In contrast, problems in measuring social capital opened a controversial debate about the usefulness of the concept. In defining and explaining social capital, this study contributes to the debate and delivers empirical results. The thesis links social capital with political participation. The objective of the study is to investigate empirically whether social capital as part of networks could promote political participation of interest groups in the policy formulation process. One of the questions considered is how far social capital is instrumental in supporting political participation of interest groups.

The empirical part of this dissertation focuses on South Africa. Political participation that goes beyond the participation in elections and membership in parties was a principle of the new South African Constitution. But today, in early 2006, political participation of interest groups in the policy making process is still limited. Social capital in the form of networks between interest groups and government actors is considered as one way to overcome this problem. NGOs are chosen as representatives for interest groups and government departments as political actors. A case study investigating the existing networks between civil society and political actors in the Western Cape Province provides empirical results for the topic.

The thesis includes a theoretical perspective which is based on an assessment and selection of theoretical material as well as fieldwork. In order to answer the research question, qualitative research was conducted to gather primary data. An interview guideline was designed as a tool to conduct qualitative research. During the field research 32 interviews were conducted with staff from selected NGOs and department officials in the Western Cape Province. The results are linked to the theoretical framework to draw conclusions and to form a practical set of recommendations for decisions makers and practitioners.

The results indicate that social capital as part of networks influence positively the cooperation between government and NGOs. Social capital in networks promotes political participation in policy making and it facilitates and enhances the cooperation among them. It has also been found that social capital, in terms of strong bonding, has the negative effect of excluding some NGOs.

INTRODUCTION

Social capital is a concept that gained popularity over the last fifteen years in debates about developmental theories. The difficulties to define the concept and to develop useful indicators did not hinder politicians, global developmental actors and civil society from adopting the concept. Social capital has become a fad in developmental programmes and projects. It is used to mobilize funding and to reformulate old ideas using new terminologies. The social capital approach was not clearly defined, but was applied as a loose term, adaptable to any kind of developmental intervention.

Because of these problems there is an urgent need for academic work and empirical studies to carefully consider the concept of social capital. This study hopes to contribute to a deeper understanding of the social capital approach. It carefully considers various definitions of the approach, and then focuses on social capital in relation to political participation. This relationship is illustrated by a South African case study.

The enhancement of political participation is always desirable. This is especially true in developing and transitional states, because it should enable citizens to improve their living conditions.¹ Apart from elections, participation can take various forms, for example, participation in policy processes.

There are various ways how this type of participation can be improved. If an appropriate institutional framework is provided, individuals as well as organized groups could take the initiative and participate in policy making processes. Furthermore, government could promote political participation and create, in addition to the legal framework, incentives for alternative means of participation. Classically, scientists correlate individual socio-economic status to the level of political participation.²

Notwithstanding other important explanations for the lack of political participation in the policy making process in South Africa, the thesis concentrates on the lack of trust and cooperation.

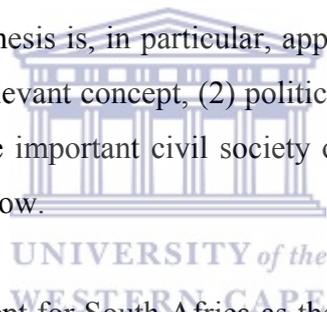
The intention of the thesis is to focus on how trust and cooperation in networks enhances the political participation of interest groups in the policy making process. The emphasis is placed on networks between different societal actors. It is assumed that cooperation between members of the network can enhance political participation. Social

¹ Thermann, 2005, pp. 4-15.

² Naßmacher, 1998, pp. 27-29.

capital is an approach that looks at networks and addresses issues of trust and cooperation. The social capital approach speaks about building trust, the interaction between actors, individuals as well as organizations and institutions, and their potential for collective action.³ Networks are the key component of social capital through which social capital can become tangible. The thesis does not address social capital in all forms of networks. It focuses on networks between Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and governmental actors because in South Africa participation in policy making is often facilitated through these relationships. This is the case because governmental actors are legitimated through the elections to govern and responsible for public policies. NGOs interact with governmental actors because they represent a part of civil society and they are dedicated to advocate for social, humanitarian, ecological and developmental issues.⁴ They are organized interest groups and therefore they should be able to participate in policy making and lobby for their interests as well the interests of their beneficiaries.

The approach chosen for the thesis is, in particular, applicable to South Africa because (1) social capital could be a relevant concept, (2) political participation apart from elections is low and (3) NGOs are important civil society organizations. These statements are each explained in detail below.



Social capital is a useful concept for South Africa as there are local concepts that have similar meanings and ideas. Some of the traditional concepts existing in South Africa such as ubuntu⁵, vukuzenzele⁶ and Letsiema⁷ have similarities with the social capital approach. South Africa has a strong history in network formation particularly in the apartheid years where communities came together to fight and work against the apartheid government. Strong bonds inside the different racial groups were created because trust was possible only within the same racial group. Therefore the post-apartheid South African society was one where people mistrusted organisations, structures and individuals outside their racial group and community.⁸

³ Carroll, 2001, pp. 1-5.

⁴ Nohlen, 2001, p. 325.

⁵ „humanity to others“ and „I am what I am because of who we all are“ and „humanity, caring and harmony“

⁶ „do it yourself“

⁷ „let's work (plough) together“

⁸ Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, pp. 3-10.

In 2006, nearly 12 years after the first democratic elections in South Africa the question arises whether political participation other than voting in elections takes place, especially political participation in the policy making process. The new Constitution, drafted and adopted in 1996, laid a foundation to overcome the social and racial division created through apartheid and to transform South Africa into a democracy where every citizen has the right to participate politically.⁹ The possibility to participate in fair and equal elections and to join any political party was one way to achieve this.¹⁰ Moreover, the South African Constitution provides further options for participation. The Constitution states that the National Assembly, the National Council and the Provincial Legislatures have to “facilitate public involvement in the legislative and other processes”¹¹ and “make rules and orders concerning its business, with due regard to representative and participatory democracy, accountability, transparency and public involvement”¹². In addition, the Constitution compels the same above-mentioned organs “to receive petitions, representations or submissions from any interested person or institution”¹³.

Although the Constitution includes these alternative means of participation for participation, the implementation of these provisions do not seem to be in place. Venter and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) find in their research that political participation of interest groups play an important role in the transitional South Africa but the degree of political participation is still not satisfactory. They argue that except for elections, political participation is at a low level. Unorganized and disadvantaged people as well as small and under resourced organisations have difficulties in accessing the process of policy making.¹⁴

NGOs play a major role in creating a vibrant South African civil society.¹⁵ The precarious living conditions of a large number of South Africans result in the need for advocacy organisations. South Africa is one of the countries with the highest Gini-coefficient¹⁶ (0,58) in the world.¹⁷ Racial and social division still play a role in the South

⁹ Venter, 2000, pp. 3-19.

¹⁰ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 19.

¹¹ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 59 1(a)/ 72 1(a)/ 118 1(a).

¹² The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 57 1(b)/ 70 1(b)/ 116 1(b).

¹³ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 56 (d)/ 69 (d)/ 115 (d).

¹⁴ Venter and IDASA in: De Villiers, 2001, pp. 92-97.

¹⁵ Greenstein, 2003, pp. 10-23.

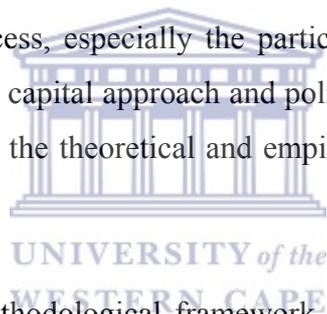
¹⁶ The Gini coefficient measures the degree of inequality in society. A Gini coefficient of 0 signifies absolute equality and 1 indicates absolute concentration. (May, 1998, p. 23)

¹⁷ May, 1998, p. 23.

African society.¹⁸ NGOs are civil society organisations that lobby, in particular in developing countries such as South Africa, for this disadvantaged part of the population. This thesis examines NGOs as representatives and ‘voices’ for the poor in particular in policy making.

In summary, the thesis addresses networks between the state and societal actors and the role they play in political participation. This study attempts to determine, whether these networks between NGOs and government actors could support the political participation of people through the NGO’s. The thesis will test this in the empirical context of the Western Cape Province (South Africa).

In chapter one, the theoretical framework is established. The different definitions and concepts of social capital are compared and discussed. In a second part NGOs, as part of civil society, are presented and the relationship of NGOs towards government actors and towards their clients is highlighted. A third section deals with political participation in the policy formulation process, especially the participation of interest groups. The relationship between the social capital approach and political participation are shown as well. Finally, proceeding from the theoretical and empirical discussions, research questions are developed.



Chapter two considers the methodological framework for the research. Chapter three presents the case study of the Western Cape Province of South Africa: firstly, the context and background related to the theoretical approaches are given, and, secondly, the data collected and the results are presented.

In the final chapter of the thesis, the relationship between the research conducted and the theoretical framework is investigated and a number of conclusions are drawn.

¹⁸ Kaußen, 2005, pp. 32-39.

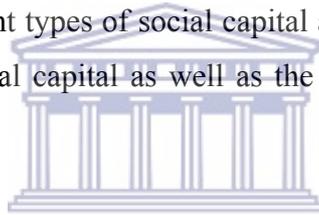
CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main theoretical approaches and concepts used in the thesis are introduced in the chapter which follows. The three parts of the chapter elaborate on social capital, civil society including NGOs and finally political participation. Definitions of the most important terms as well as problems and challenges of the different theoretical concepts are presented. The chapter concludes with a research question posed in the light of the theoretical framework developed.

1.1. Social Capital

Social capital is the major theoretical concept employed in the thesis. Therefore, social capital and its various definitions are highlighted in combination with critiques on social capital. The terms trust, norms and networks are introduced in relation to the social capital concept and the different types of social capital are discussed. Finally, favorable conditions for developing social capital as well as the link between social capital and development are discussed.



1.1.1. Definitions and concepts of Social Capital

Social capital (SC) has been defined in various ways and used extensively in various disciplines. For the World Bank for example, “Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society – it is the glue that holds them together.” or “it is not what you know but who you know”.¹⁹ Even though these phrases are neat and seem to be easily understandable, a deeper academic perspective of the concept will be applied here.

Woolcock in a web article posted by the Canadian Policy Research Institute noted that a West Virginian school superintendent, Lyda J Hanifan, was the first person to use the term SC in 1916.²⁰ The term disappeared subsequently from the academic field and re-appeared in the 1980s through the works of three authors namely, Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam.

¹⁹ The World Bank Group on social capital, 2002.

²⁰ Woolcock, 1998, p. 154.

Pierre Bourdieu in 1986 defined SC as

the aggregate of the actual and potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition, or, in other words, to membership in a group.²¹

For Bourdieu, SC is therefore not only about the resources that an individual has, but it is also about the resources that an individual has access to through his/her networks with other people.²²

James Coleman in 1988 defined SC as

a variety of entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspects of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of the relations between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals nor in physical implements of production.²³

Compared to the definition of Bourdieu, Coleman's definition is wider and was the basis for further definitions of SC applying different aspects of social life. The critique of this definition is that Coleman includes "under social capital both the causes and consequences of social capital- that is both the mechanisms that generate social capital and the benefits that accrue from it."²⁴

Robert Putnam in 1993 argued that SC refers to features of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust that increase a society's productive potential. SC refers to the connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness. The core idea of the SC approach to him is that social networks have value; social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups.²⁵

In addition to the three most well-known definitions a large number of definitions of SC arose. Fukuyama defines SC as

an instantiated informal norm that promotes co-operation between two or more individuals. The norms that constitute social capital can range from a norm of reciprocity between two friends all the way up to complex and elaborately articulated doctrines like Christianity or Confucianism. They must be instantiated in an actual human relationship: the norm of reciprocity exists *in potentia* in my dealings with all people, but is actualised only in my dealings with *my* friends. By this definition, trust, networks, civil society, and the like, which have been associated with social capital, are all epiphenominal, arising as a result of social capital but not constituting social capital itself.²⁶

²¹ Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248.

²² Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248.

²³ Coleman, 1988, p. 98.

²⁴ Quibria, 2003, p. 4.

²⁵ Putnam et al., 1993, p. 167.

²⁶ Fukuyama, 2001, p. 7.

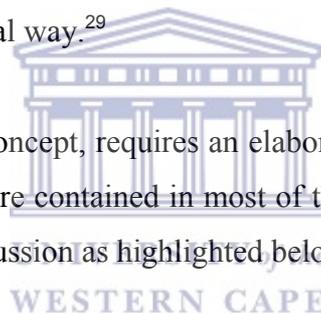
For him SC interactions occur mainly in the radius of trust between people. Fukuyama criticises other definitions of SC because a distinction is often not made between the results or outcomes of SC and SC itself.

The wide range of definitions of the SC concept is also one of the reasons why the SC approach has been criticized by various academics.²⁷

Short of dismissing the term altogether, one possible resolution of these concerns may be that there are different types, levels, or dimensions of social capital, different performance outcomes associated with different combinations of these dimensions, and different sets of conditions that support or weaken favourable combinations. Unravelling and resolving these issues requires a more dynamic than static understanding of social capital; it invites a more detailed examination of the intellectual history of social capital, and the search for lessons from empirical research that embrace a range of any such dimensions, levels or conditions.²⁸

Even if most of the definitions include the same terms like trust, norms, networks and social organisations, nuances in the usage of the terms alter the social capital concept which makes the term vague for outsiders. This has resulted in a call for more clarity within the academic community in order to define outcomes of the SC approach and to apply the concept in a beneficial way.²⁹

Unpacking the social capital concept, requires an elaboration of terms such as trust, social norms and networks that are contained in most of the definitions for SC. Therefore the concepts require more discussion as highlighted below.



Trust refers to a level of confidence that is established when the behaviour of the other individual can be predicted and when they act in an expected manner. It develops over time through repetitive interaction.³⁰ Moreover, trust evolves if reliability and accountability are present in human interaction. Trust lubricates social life.³¹ An accumulation of social trust allows groups, communities and even nations to develop tolerance that is needed to deal with conflicts and differing interests.³²

Norms are societal rules. They are common and more or less binding prescriptions for human action. Norms develop over time and through repeated exchanges and interaction

²⁷ One further main critique on the concept of SC is the question if SC could be considered as capital. This point is not relevant for the context of the paper but for further readings Quibria (2003, pp. 7-13) is recommended.

²⁸ Woolcock, 1998, p. 159.

²⁹ Quibria, 2003, p. 6.

³⁰ Landry, 2001, p. 75.

³¹ Putnam et al., 1993, pp. 169-171.

³² Cox, 1995, p. 15.

in the process of socialization.³³ Norms have to be instantiated by relationships between human beings.³⁴ Through socialization individuals learn about the social norms existing in their society expressed in customs, values and practices that enable them to interact with other members of their social group. The norms referred to in SC are those which support collective action and encourage cooperation such as honesty, solidarity, fulfilling duties and reciprocity of support.³⁵

Networks can broadly be defined as ‘a set of interconnected nodes’³⁶ where one person interacts with two or more persons. In relation to SC, an exchange or flow of information and interaction takes place at these nodes.³⁷ Networks seem to contain SC if they are able to mobilize resources or beneficial outcomes. ‘Networks of civic engagement’, as Putnam refers to it, are relationships between different actors that are an outcome of the norm of generalized reciprocity. In other words, networks are built on (both formal and informal) interpersonal communication and exchange.³⁸ Networks also support the building of trust and the establishing of norms of collective action. Therefore, networks are an outcome of social capital as well as something that facilitates the building of social capital. In the social capital approach, networks always refer to relationships between individuals and not to networks among organisations themselves. Networks, as an outcome of SC, lead to social connectedness in communities, organizations and individuals. Through these networks, positive or negative changes are possible. The quality and quantity of the networks determine the positive or possibly negative outcomes of SC.³⁹

However, summarizing the definitions and terms, SC enhances the connectedness between people that enables mutual benefit, specifically a sense of giving and receiving. SC is a resource to achieve something but not owned in a formal sense⁴⁰ that arises in personal, community and organizational relationships. Looking again at Bourdieu’s definition, in essence, SC is a resource derived from a social structure. Coleman

³³ Schäfers, 1995, p. 228.

³⁴ Fukuyama, 2001, p. 7.

³⁵ Putnam et al, 1993, pp. 171-176.

³⁶ Castells, 1996, in: Baron et al, 2000, p. 19.

³⁷ Baron et al, 2000, pp. 19-22.

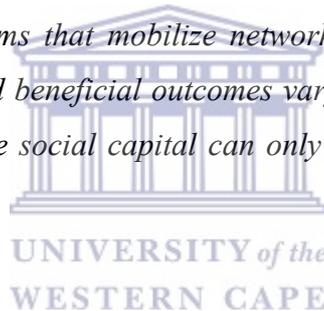
³⁸ Putnam et al, 1993, p. 174.

³⁹ Productivity Commission, 2003, pp. 7-8.

⁴⁰ „Whereas economic capital is in people’s bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships. To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is these others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage.” (Portes, 1998, p. 7)

broadens the definition in saying SC consists of social structures and it facilitates actions of individuals for personal benefit. For Putnam, the networks themselves have a value because networks consist of social contacts which in turn affect the productivity of each network member. In contrast to cultural capital⁴¹, SC is a relational concept rather than a psychological concept embedded in individuals, which means that networks are mobilized through relationships. SC sojourns in other people and is inherent in relationship with others.⁴² Reviewing the above definitions, the following working definition was derived and will be used for the purposes of this paper.

Social capital is the capacity of networks to mobilize resources to obtain beneficial outcomes for individuals. These networks are built between individuals and they are able to mobilize resources if individuals have developed the following common features in relating to one another. Firstly, the most important feature is trust, secondly, individuals must have instantiated common norms, (reciprocity, solidarity, honesty, mutual support) and thirdly, they need to communicate frequently with each other. Depending on the level of trust and the norms that mobilize networks the relationship between the network actors and the desired beneficial outcomes vary. Networks are the key term in defining social capital because social capital can only become tangible through these networks.



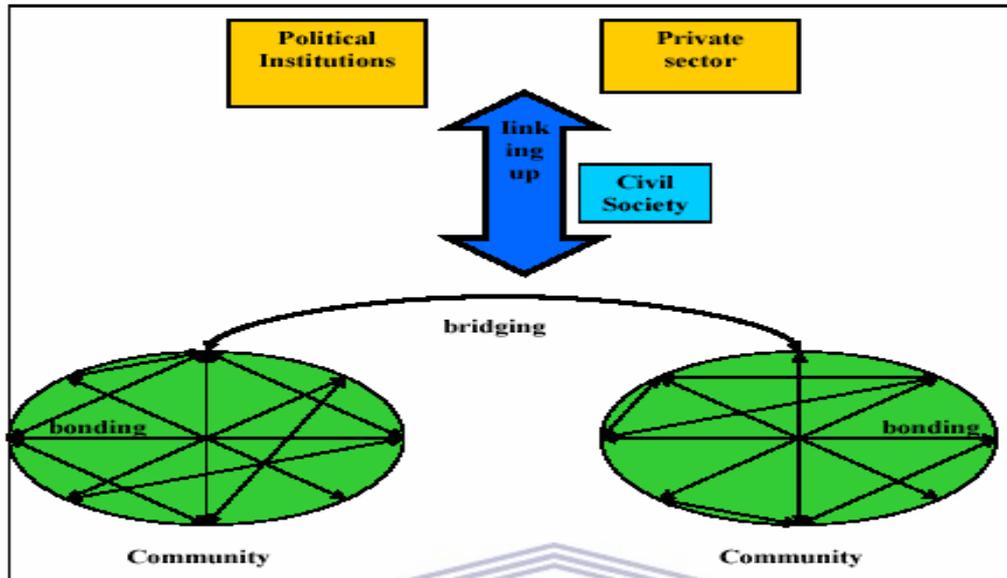
⁴¹ Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital in its fundamental state as the acquisition of cultural characteristics (such as education, culture, and language) by an individual. In particular, this definition is not completely satisfactory because it coincides with aspects of human capital. A better definition of embodied cultural capital would be the value to an individual of the ability to participate in society. The ability or skill possessed by an individual to perceive norms and coordinate with others, for example to employ coordinating behaviour and to follow norms, falls within this category of cultural capital. (Johnson, 2003, p.5)

⁴² Johnson, 2003, p. 5.

1.1.2. Types of social capital

There are different types of SC in society as shown in Figure 1.

Fig. 1: The vertical and horizontal dimension of Social Capital



Source: author's illustration

Clubs, local organisations and associations are seen as indicators of SC. A high number of these organisations and groups in a community help to increase the welfare in a community. The community members can manage risk and vulnerability by themselves if strong social ties exist inside the community. Social ties do not exclusively refer to organized structures such as clubs and associations but also to strong relations among neighbours and families. The density of these types of networks within a community is also called *bonding*.⁴³

The existing negative outcomes and effects of SC are often related to this type of SC. Costs and negative effects and outcomes of SC are often ignored in the literature, so that SC is perceived as merely good. Strong bonds inside a group such as in the mafia and gangs are extreme examples to show that strong bonding can also have negative effects. Being a member of such a group, one could find a usage of the stock of SC inside the group. Negative consequences are restrictions on individual freedom and on productive investment outside the group as well as a demand for conformity and restriction in hu-

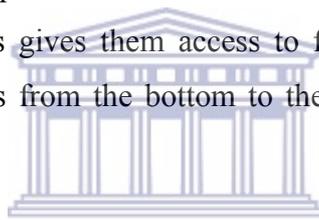
⁴³ Woolcock et al, 2000, p. 226.

man capital accumulation⁴⁴. Exclusion of groups or persons to the access of existing SC stock also leads to higher costs.⁴⁵

Social capital has a “downside” in that strong, long-standing civic groups may stifle macroeconomic growth by securing a disproportionate share of national resources of inhibiting individual economic advancement by placing heavy personal obligations on members that prevent them from participating in broader social networks.⁴⁶

The inter-community networks called *bridging* are also a type of SC. The solution of complex problems of a community could become easier through networks with other communities, because they could support each other in a complementary and co-productive way.⁴⁷ Bridging refers to networks with homogenous structures on a horizontal level as for example between communities.

SC does not only refer to relations on a horizontal level but also refers to links on a vertical level. This type of SC, called *linking or scaling*, is related to networks among communities, government, the private sector and other social actors. Linking communities with the mentioned actors gives them access to formal structures and integrates them with institutions. Besides from the bottom to the top the linking can take place from the top down.



To build networks among heterogeneous structures an intermediary is often needed to facilitate these processes. Civil society organisations are seen as these intermediary actors. In the same way civil society could act as a ‘voice’ for communities in relation to government. On the other hand government actors as well as the private sector can use the close proximity of civil society to the communities to access the communities more easily.

1.1.3. Favorable conditions for social capital

As indicated before, the different types of social capital are important in a society, but also the different levels (high / low) of bridging and bonding can have different outcomes as presented in figure 3.

⁴⁴ To be conform with the educational level of the other group members it is possible that higher education is not wished.

⁴⁵ Carroll, 2001, p. 12.

⁴⁶ Woolcock, 1998, p. 158.

⁴⁷ Carroll, 2001, p. 19.

Fig. 2: Integration and linkage in bottom-up dilemmas of development

		Bonding (inter-community ties)	
		Low	High
Bridging (extra- community networks)	High	<i>Anomie</i>	<i>Social opportunity</i>
	Low	<i>Amoral individualism</i>	<i>Amoral familism</i>

Source: Woolcock, 1998, p.172

The ideal combination, namely social opportunity, is achieved if there is a high level of bonding and bridging. The outcome is called social opportunity. In other words, strong intra-community ties in combination with strong extra-community linkages can bring a high outcome for the community.

If there is only a high level of bridging – strong extra-community networks - the outcome is called anomie. Under such circumstances individuals have a strong possibility to participate in a wide range of activities but the base and integration is missing. This phenomenon is often found in urban settings and among migrants from rural to urban regions.⁴⁸

In the case of a high level of integration or bonding but a low level of bridging, Teye and Colclough speak about ‘amoral familism’.⁴⁹ It shows that SC can have costs and negative effects as well and not only benefits as mentioned before.⁵⁰

‘Amoral individualism’ is the outcome of a low level of bridging and bonding. It leads to isolation and towards communities without trust, trust between individuals and trust towards the community.⁵¹

Furthermore, not only the level of bridging and bonding is important, but also the existing institutional framework. The ability of a group or community to act collectively depends on existing institutional frameworks. Companies, communities and civil society can develop successfully if the state supports them and creates an environment where SC can flourish. The quality of political, legal and economic institutions is important.

⁴⁸ Woolcock, 1998, p. 173.

⁴⁹ Teye, 1987 & Colclough, 1991 in: Woolcock, 1998, p. 172.

⁵⁰ Carroll, 2001, p. 12.

⁵¹ Woolcock, 1998, p. 172.

For the political institutions, this can be summarized under the banner of ‘good governance’ as an important condition for a high level of SC.⁵²

The main argument for the importance of an institutional framework is that positive developmental outcomes of SC also depend on the ‘prevailing combinations of the state’s organizational capacity, and its engagement with and responsiveness to civil society’.⁵³

A high level of organizational integrity⁵⁴ and synergy⁵⁵ leads to cooperation, accountability and flexibility and therefore to a developmental state. An engagement of organizations at the community level is necessary for their credibility and effectiveness to be institutions made for the citizens.⁵⁶

As mentioned above good connections intra and inter communities, among state, civil society and the private sector are important pre-conditions for SC to flourish. To achieve these connections, complementarity and embeddedness must be present.⁵⁷ *Complementarity* refers to mutually supportive relations between government and society actors. In a complementary relationship, the private and the public sector deliver public goods in a complementary way so that a greater output could be achieved. The actor who is able to provide the goods most efficiently should deliver these goods. In the case of complementarity, the actors referred to are organized groups such as bureaucratic government organizations, civil society organizations, communities, enterprises etc. of society.⁵⁸

Embeddedness refers to the nature and extent of relationships between citizens and public officials. If citizens generally have a negative perception of government officials/employees (e.g. street workers, social workers, community workers, health agents etc.) personal relationships between community members and officials could change

⁵² Woolcock et al., 2000, p. 234.

⁵³ Woolcock, 1998, p. 176.

⁵⁴ Organizational integrity refers to institutional coherence, competence and capacity. It presents the need for an institutional framework as a bureaucracy, an administrative system where the performance of this system is important. (Woolcock, 1998, pp. 169-170)

⁵⁵ Synergy refers in this context to the state-society relation. It is based on the definition of Weber who defined it as “ties that connect citizens and public officials across the public private divide”. (Woolcock, 1998, p. 170)

⁵⁶ Woolcock, 1998, p. 177.

⁵⁷ Woolcock et al, 2000, p. 236.

⁵⁸ Evans, 1996, pp. 179-185.

this view. The other way round, personal relationships between officials and citizens can also be beneficial. Officials who know the situation of the people might be more motivated to render an efficient service to them. Through the building of SC, the official becomes part of the community.⁵⁹

The networks of trust and collaboration that are created span the public-private boundary and bind state and civil society together. Social capital inheres, not just in civil society, but in an enduring set of relationships that spans the public-private divide.⁶⁰

The concept of embeddedness can be criticized for promoting corruption, rent-seeking and favouritism but the relationships between government officials and individuals only refer to trust and common norms of collective action.

Complementarity and embeddedness are not competing concepts of synergistic relations, they are themselves complementary. Complementarity can be initiated through embeddedness. Personal relations could be useful to minimize the start up costs of a new relationship, to gain the trust of the people participating and to mediate conflicts. Complementarity is necessary to institutionalise projects and to make them sustainable.⁶¹

Through the presentation of definitions, concepts and types of SC it was shown where and how SC can be found in society. The dimensions and outcomes of the approach were shown as well. However, the next section answers the question why SC is often closely linked with positive developmental outcomes.

1.1.4. Social Capital and Development

The discussion about SC and development is often centred on whether SC supports development or if development supports the building of SC. Reviewing the definitions and types of SC one could come to the conclusion that both are possible.

The drive for SC to develop is simply a need. If there is a lack of economic, social or political resources, individuals normally seek for help. Depending on the type of need, individuals search for support in their immediate environment (such as family and friends) or in broader structures (as churches, welfare organisations or the state). The

⁵⁹ Evans, 1996, pp. 179-185.

⁶⁰ Evans, 1996, p. 184.

⁶¹ Evans, 1996, pp. 187-188.

existing relationships and networks or the building of new networks is then the stock of SC that individuals have created. They develop trust and common norms and strengthen in that manner their networks.

Living on the margins of existence, the social capital of the poor is the one asset they can potentially draw upon to help negotiate their way through an unpredictable and unforgiving world. As Dordick astutely notes, the very poor have “something left to lose,” namely each other. While much of the discourse surrounding poor people and poor economies is one of deficits, a virtue of the social capital perspective is that it allows theorists, policy makers and practitioners to take an approach that recognizes the assets of poor communities.⁶²

SC can bring about positive developmental outcomes because the networks in place can mobilize resources. These resources do not only refer to economic assets such as income or employment but also to information, personal support, political participation and enforcement of rights. Connected people can improve their social and economic status because they have partners in their network they can rely on and refer to for assistance.

On the other hand SC does not only support developmental outcomes, but development can increase SC. If individuals have better living standards they also have more resources to connect with other people and organisations. A more developed society, for example, could offer its citizens a number of established networks. In other words, a rich person might be able to simply purchase what is needed whereas a poor person relies on membership in a group where mutual support by other individuals is available. In addition, networks that broaden participation can be expected to have progressive effects, extending to poor people the kind of political influence and access that the rich tend to have in societies.⁶³

So, can SC be built to achieve better developmental outcomes? The SC concept is a people-centred approach. It requires individuals to build up networks to mobilize resources. In other words, the development of SC can only be supported externally through the following: Firstly, networks can be built externally in which the individual can engage with others. Secondly, individuals can be shown how to relate with others in order to establish networks which can lead to beneficial outcomes. These two possible interventions show that the socio-economic status of individuals can determine which methods are used for the formation of SC. In order to achieve positive developmental

⁶² Woolcock, 2001, p. 15.

⁶³ Knack, 1999, p. 23.

outcomes, individuals should be supported in building networks on the horizontal and vertical levels.

For Woolcock, the integration of a community's economic and non-economic resources with other communities as well as with government or the private sector are the best conditions for development of a poor community. Woolcock points out the following three beneficial outcomes of strong bonding and bridging:⁶⁴

- Economic and non-economic claims of community members can be resisted when they undermine the group's economic viability and expansion
- Entry to more sophisticated factor and product markets can be secured
- Individuals of superior ability and ambition within the business group itself are able to insert themselves into larger and more complex social networks

SC becomes an asset for an individual through the networks the individual has with others.

In sum, SC enables people to mobilize networks for a beneficial outcome. Focusing on the beneficial outcome, the SC concept can be embedded in the development discussions but in applying the concept, the concrete beneficial outcomes have to be defined. Assuming that political participation is a beneficial outcome, the thesis wants to determine whether a network between civil society and government enhances opportunities for political participation in policy making. Hence, the following sections will explore these network actors and deepen the concept of political participation in policy making as a positive developmental outcome.

1.2. The role of civil society in networking between society and governmental institutions

The second part of the chapter illustrates the role of civil society in networking between society and governmental institutions. The reasons for assuming that NGOs could be intermediaries in linking communities with government are also explained. This section starts with a definition of civil society and NGOs. The features of the relationship between government and NGOs as well as the characteristics of the relationship between

⁶⁴ Woolcock, 1998, p. 175.

NGOs and their clients are highlighted to show the role and position of NGOs in society.

1.2.1. Definition of civil society and non-governmental organisations

In the process of linking different actors in society, a ‘mediating agency’ is needed to make collective action possible. In the SC literature, some authors see civil society as this agent.⁶⁵ To understand why civil society organisations have this role, it is important to define the term civil society.

The London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society defines civil society as:

Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trades unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.⁶⁶

Political parties are often excluded from the definition because they are too closely related to the quest to obtain public positions.⁶⁷

This thesis focuses on NGOs as one of the main actors in civil society. NGOs are organisations that are embedded in civil society. They delimit themselves from the state and private sector by declaring themselves autonomous and independent from the government and not being profit oriented. NGOs are financed by private donations and state grants. In addition, non-monetary contributions are derived from voluntary work from its members, supporters or beneficiaries.⁶⁸ They are founded through private initiatives of persons. NGOs can be distinguished from social movements and citizens’ action groups because they normally have a different organisational structure.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Krishna, 2002, p. 9.

⁶⁶ London School of Economics, 2004.

⁶⁷ Nohlen, 2001, p. 593.

⁶⁸ Mabe, 2002, p. 142.

⁶⁹ Nohlen, 2001, p. 325.

Besides the fact that they work as non profit organisations it is quite difficult to identify any other characteristics that are valid for every NGO.⁷⁰ NGOs embody a rich diversity in terms of purpose, size, structure, and capacity. They could be classified by membership, size, internal structure, area and level of intervention, and by their functions in society.⁷¹ The literature makes a functional distinction between operational and advocacy NGOs. Operational NGOs are regarded as NGOs whose primary areas of activity are directed towards the contribution or delivery of development or welfare services, including emergency relief, and environmental protection and management. Advocacy NGOs work primarily in the field of advocacy of policies or actions that address specific concerns or interests. In the context of development, advocacy NGOs work to influence the policies and practices of governments, development institutions, the public and other actors in the development arena. Advocacy NGOs often serve as a voice that would otherwise not be heard in social, economic, and political processes. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish clearly between operational and advocacy NGOs because most NGOs are involved in activities of both types.⁷²

The number of NGOs has increased globally during the last decade as has their role and influence in the global arena. NGOs as representatives of civil society participate in nearly every debate and political decision making process; moreover they are frequently invited to do so.⁷³ A central strength of NGOs is their ability to access additional financial, technical, and often political resources. Particularly when the state is weak or absent, NGOs can be critical in helping poor people meet everyday needs. NGOs are organizations in society that claim to advocate for the needs and rights of the people. Therefore, NGOs often play a major role, especially in developing countries, where a high proportion of the population lives under precarious conditions which result in a high demand for supportive organizations.⁷⁴

The numerous NGOs operating in society also creates conflict that requires scrutiny. NGOs have to seek funding and sponsorship which often means they compete with each

⁷⁰ There are other forms of organizations closely related to NGOs as International non governmental organisations (INGOs), quasi-non governmental organisations (QUANGOs), Community based organisations (CBOs) or Grassroot organisations (GROs), Governmental organized non governmental organisations (GONGOs) etc. (Nuscheler, 1996, pp. 505-511)

⁷¹ Nohlen, 2001, pp. 324-325.

⁷² Asian Development Bank, 2005.

⁷³ Nohlen, 2001, pp. 325-326.

⁷⁴ Mabe, 2003, p. 142.

other for money and funding. This applies particularly to NGOs that work in the same field. They face the dilemma of, on the one hand, competing for funding. On the other hand cooperation and networks among those NGOs would be desirable, to promote efficiency and effectiveness. The lack of cooperation among NGOs frequently leads to duplication in service delivery. NGOs often struggle to receive enough funding so that a sharing of capacities, resources and skills could be beneficial. In addition, if civil society organisations work together, civil society itself could have a stronger role in society.⁷⁵ However, NGOs normally try to avoid showing their inefficiencies because each organisation needs a positive image to receive funding.

Further problems could arise within the organizational structure of a NGO as the staff of a NGO could over time divide into several (hierarchical) groups. The original common interest and goals of the individuals, that started these NGO, get lost. Here the ‘iron law of oligarchy’ defined by Robert Michels could have relevance. He states, that large, complex organizations develop a clique of leaders that tends toward oligarchy⁷⁶. A clique of leaders arises because there are certain individuals within an organisation who have more information than others. These advantaged individuals can use this information to strengthen their position. In addition, when the organisations grow normally an extra demand for individuals with leadership skills arises. Individuals with these skills would then be selected by other members of the organisation so that they become part of the clique of leaders. With increasing power, this clique of leaders becomes more interested in preserving its own power than in furthering the original objectives of the organisation.⁷⁷ As NGOs grow over time their management staff could tend to build an elite inside the organisation and take decisions based on their personal as opposed to organisational interest of the NGO. An example could be that NGO managers regardless of the objectives of the NGO accept any kind of donation.

As mentioned, the thesis emphasizes the role of NGOs as intermediaries, particularly in networks between NGOs and government. Therefore it is important to understand which conflicts occur and which interests exist in the relationships between government and NGOs and in the relationships between the ‘clients’ and the NGOs.

⁷⁵ In particular in the field of social development the problem of doubling of delivery and lack of cooperation are the causes that resources and money are wasted. The lack of cooperation among developmental actors is one of the big challenges development cooperation faces in terms of efficient resource allocation.

⁷⁶ Oligarchy is defined as a type of authority where a small group of people govern a state or the phenomenon that even in a democratic state decisions are made just by a small group leaders. (Schubert et al, 2001, p. 204)

⁷⁷ Schubert et al, 2001, p. 204.

1.2.2. Relationship between government and NGOs

NGOs are usually not totally independent from government because NGOs work within an institutional framework which is set by governments.⁷⁸ The responses of states towards NGOs differ and are related to historical traditions, the strength and legitimacy of the state. This relationship can vary from support and cooperation to NGO's being ignored and/or repressed. Governments sometimes tolerate NGOs but can also create an enabling environment for NGOs.⁷⁹ Tandon classifies three types of relationships between government and NGOs namely: (a) dependency and clientelism, (b) adversarial, in which the state may encourage NGO dependency, attempt cooptation of the NGO, enforce regulations or resort to intimidation tactics and (c) collaborationist.⁸⁰

NGOs and government are normally in contact because the NGOs want to lobby / advocate for rights and needs of people to improve conditions in society. As a consequence, NGOs mainly involved in advocacy for social policies as well as human and political rights.⁸¹

NGOs fulfil the roles of complementing (through rendering services neglected or lacking in public services), reforming (through advocacy and dialogue) and/or opposing (through holding the state accountable and being watchdogs) the state. They are important in political processes such as policy making where they contribute to the policy formulation process as well as in the implementation phase of new policies. NGOs need a voice or a powerbase to be heard to take over these mentioned roles.⁸² There are several possibilities of how NGOs could access this powerbase.

NGOs with enough funding through external donors, management capacities, good communication skills, strategic knowledge and lobbying experience are in a better position to lobby for and market themselves and access this powerbase.⁸³

NGOs can also achieve recognition if an emergency or a problem arises. NGOs, originally working to address these issues, might have more expertise and experience than

⁷⁸ Lillehammer, 2003, p. 10.

⁷⁹ Trivedy et al, 1996, pp. 39-40.

⁸⁰ Tandon in: Motala et al, 2001.

⁸¹ Fisher, 1998, pp. 75-79.

⁸² Lillehammer, 2003, pp. 7-8.

⁸³ Fisher, 1998, pp. 91-98.

government actors. These NGOs have then the possibility of becoming important partners with government. They are then positioned to exercise their 'voice' thereby influencing government.⁸⁴

If NGOs act as service providers for government they can also access a powerbase and use it beyond the service provision agreements. A good relationship can be built between NGOs and government if NGOs deliver (a) in the given time frame, (b) good quality services and (c) within the financial framework. If NGOs fulfil these conditions they are more likely to be asked for input in the policy making process, even if the submissions are critical of government. If the NGO has a large client base or strong community support, government is not likely to ignore the NGO because the NGO would represent citizens who are potential voters for government.

SC is another factor that could also influence the relationship between NGOs and the government. Existing SC could contribute to NGOs establishing a powerbase, because factors such as trust, common objectives and common norms have a positive influence on the relationship between government and NGOs.⁸⁵ Trust is related to time and personal relationships. Through cooperation and connections between government and NGOs, relevant staff may develop trust.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, SC is related to interaction between people. The relationship between staff members of NGO's and government officials could also facilitate cooperation. Through personal relationships, the access for a NGO to government is easier. If there is a good relationship between individuals they are more likely to listen to each other. In transitional societies for example this relationship is often a given as former NGO staff sometimes became part of the new government in the phase of transition. In this case negative SC can arise, because relationships between individuals in NGO and government imply a danger of clientelism and favouritism. Because of existing strong bonds between individuals, other NGOs could be excluded from certain processes, information and funding.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Newmann, 2000, p. 2.

⁸⁵ Motala et al, 2001.

⁸⁶ Roniger, 1994, pp. 13-15.

SC does not only play a role for NGOs in the process of building a powerbase. NGOs are also mediating agencies in the top-down and bottom-up linking between government and the population as presented in figure 2. A function of NGOs is to articulate the needs of the population. Because they have an organizational structure they can access government better than individuals. To network from the top down to communities, government frequently approaches NGOs as mediators to facilitate a process between government and communities. The reason for this is that NGOs are supposed to be closer to the people. They assist government in implementation processes, in communication and sometimes in conflict resolution. The evidence for the role of SC in terms of the relationship between government and NGOs will be tested in the empirical part of the thesis.

Considering the fact that government and NGOs cooperate raises the question of whether NGOs are still independent organisations. NGOs define themselves as both independent and autonomous. A relationship based on funding and/or contracts between state and NGOs leads to NGO dependency on government. This can be related to grants NGOs receive from the government as well as to the tasks or service provision NGOs fulfil on behalf of the state. There is a danger that NGOs lose credibility with their 'clients' if they seem to be executive organs for the government rather than independent agents.⁸⁷ A distinction between operational and advocacy NGOs could provide solutions. An operational NGO possibly can still reach its objectives in providing the needy with certain services even though they receive a large amount of funds from government. On the contrary, advocacy NGOs would give up political independence and, as a type of executive structure for government, lose their ability to fulfil their objective of providing independent information about political issues and that of being a political 'watchdog'.⁸⁸ As mentioned above this problem is exacerbated by the difficulty of making a clear distinction between operational and advocacy NGO's.

1.2.3. NGOs – the 'voice' of the poor?

NGOs claim to promote the interests of a certain part of the population but in this process NGOs could start to favour a segment of their potential 'clients'. This problem of

⁸⁷ Judge, 1994.

⁸⁸ Nuscheler, 1996, pp. 502-505.

clientelism⁸⁹ could lead to certain parts of their potential clients being excluded by the NGO. The NGO can use its influence to favour the clients that have the most desirable characteristics for them that require minimal effort to reach them or which are able to organize themselves best to claim their needs. Which are these groups of clients that are able to organize themselves best and claim their interests?

Mancur Olson's theory of collective action could provide answers to this problem. Olson points out, that small groups have the best conditions to claim their interests because a small number of people is more willing to organize themselves due to low mobilization costs. For this reason it is easier for them to lobby for their interests through different activities such as monetary support, rent-seeking, public relations and election campaign support. The free-rider problem⁹⁰ is low due to the possibility of reciprocal control of the group members. Every member of the group can see its immediate influence on the group.

The collective action of big groups is hindered by higher cost of mobilization and the free-rider problem. Big groups could nevertheless organize themselves if they were able to offer their members additional selective incentives. Selective incentives encourage people to join a group since the members have to receive additional benefits. These incentives could either be positive or negative.⁹¹

Applying the theory to NGOs⁹² and their clients, it shows that a small group of 'clients' might be in a better position to receive support of a NGO. Lobbying by this kind of group would be less through monetary support but through informational activities. If a small group manages to organize itself it also has advantages for the NGO. The NGO already has a group of organized people with a common interest thereby minimising the organisational effort required for finding new clients and additionally, the services are shared among all group members.

⁸⁹ Most of the literature about NGOs focuses on the relationship between state and NGOs. It is mostly described how NGOs perform under certain conditions as 'clients' of the state e.g. in Bierschenk (1998), Clayton (1994) and Motala et al. (2001). Very few studies were published about the relations of NGOs and their 'clients'.

⁹⁰ The free-rider problem refers to, that individuals receive benefits from a good even so they did not pay for it. A person who recognises that he/she cannot be excluded from the consumption of a good, has no incentive to offer to purchase it. The usual example of a free rider problem is National Defence : no person can be excluded from being defended by a nation's military and thus free riders may develop who refuse or avoid paying for being defended, but are still as well guarded as everyone else in the nation. (Schubert et al., 2001, p. 260)

⁹¹ Olson, 1965, pp. 47-64.

⁹² The following paragraph is based on the Olson's book 'the logic of collective action' from 1965 but the application to the specific situation of NGO and their clients was done by the author of the thesis.

Big groups could be favoured by a NGO if they are able to create a selective incentive through an immaterial selective incentive e.g. working for the goal improving the living conditions of a community.

The relationship between NGOs and their clients differ among the NGOs and the arguments presented are not generally applicable for the relationship among NGOs and their clients. For example, vulnerable people, as one target group of NGOs, might not be able to organize themselves but still receive funding and/or support from NGOs.

In the introduction it is stated that NGOs are often intermediaries between citizens and government. This indicates that NGOs represent the poor which is partly true, but this view needs to be revised critically. Studies from several countries around the world indicate that NGOs are not as widely prevalent as sometimes appears. On the positive side, there are many localized examples of NGOs reaching groups of the poor with highly valued services. They bring goods and services of formal institutions into poor communities and they are often better able to respond to local priorities. Communities describe that they perceive the work of NGOs as positive because in some areas NGO staff are viewed as more compassionate than government officials. There are also increasing examples of NGOs working in partnerships with government to scale up their outreach, particularly in education and in health. For these reasons, NGOs enjoy a measure of trust and confidence which poor people do not generally extend to formal institutions.⁹³

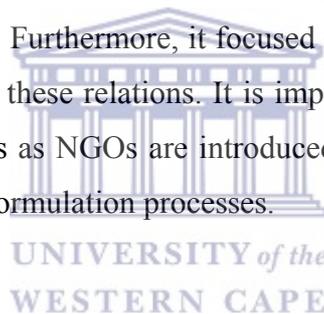
But the role of NGOs is often also perceived as problematic by community members in terms of NGO coverage, implementation, and effectiveness. It is unclear whether NGOs are more successful than formal institutions in reaching the poorest areas. In addition, as with other institutions, NGOs are not immune to mismanagement or corruption, or to actions that inadvertently skew local priorities and power relations. Although NGO presence is uneven, in areas where NGOs are active they often receive more positive ratings than state institutions. Some of the trust and confidence in NGOs stems from having extended contacts in particular communities. While there is little confidence in any of the government agencies to adequately address the needs of poor communities,

⁹³ Narayan, 1999, pp. 104-106.

NGOs that have established an ongoing relationship with particular communities enjoy a level of trust denied to most other “outside” organizations.⁹⁴

Even though the role of NGOs is ambiguous, they are the organizations that often have a better outreach to the poor than government and they are able to represent interests of communities. NGOs can be labelled as intermediaries because they represent the interests of a certain group of citizens and at the same time they are facilitators in the communication processes between government and communities. The empirical part of the thesis will focus particularly on the relationship between government and NGOs in the policy formulation process. The relationship between NGOs and clients will not be proved empirically but the results of recent local studies will provide observations about the relationship between NGOs and their clients.

This section addressed the role of NGOs as part of civil society and society in general. In addition, reasons why NGOs are seen as intermediary agencies between government and the population were given. Furthermore, it focused on the inter-societal relations of NGOs and possible conflict in these relations. It is important to have an understanding of this particular role of NGOs as NGOs are introduced in the thesis as intermediaries for the participation in policy formulation processes.



1.3. Political participation

The following section introduces the concept of political participation. It firstly presents a definition of the concept as well as a discussion of features of political participation in the policy formulation process. In addition, the role of various actors in the process is characterised. Finally, political participation is linked to the social capital approach.

1.3.1. Definition of political participation

In order to understand why the term ‘political participation’ is considered a desirable positive outcome in the thesis, it is necessary to inquire about the broader concept of good governance. As already mentioned, SC is often connected with the concept of good governance. Good governance is one of the tools used to achieve sustainable development. The UNDP defines governance as “the exercise of economic, political and

⁹⁴ Narayan, 1999, pp. 106-109.

administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences"⁹⁵ The World Bank operationalised "bad governance" as personalisation of power, lack of human rights, endemic corruption and unelected and unaccountable governments'. Consequently, 'good governance must be the natural opposite'.⁹⁶

Good governance comprises of eight major characteristics: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness in combination with efficiency and accountability.⁹⁷

Good governance defines an ideal which is difficult to achieve in its entirety. However, to ensure sustainable human development, actions should be taken to work towards this ideal. Major donors and international financial institutions, like the IMF or World Bank, are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms, ensuring good governance, are undertaken. The thesis examines one of the eight characteristics, namely political participation and focuses on the extent to which political participation of citizens in the policy formulation process can be strengthened.

Political participation can be defined functionally, as a voluntary participation of citizens influencing political decisions directly or indirectly. Political participation is then used as an instrument, by individuals or groups, to carry through certain interests.

Political participation can further be used in a normative way so that political participation itself becomes a value. In this case, participation is not only about influencing but also about self-realisation and being a stakeholder in various social and political spheres of society.⁹⁸ In the thesis the functional definition of political participation is utilised because it is difficult to measure political participation with its normative meaning.

Political participation needs to be informed and organized. This requires freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organized civil society on the other hand.⁹⁹ The means of political participation are manifold. Political participation is par-

⁹⁵ UNDP, 1997, p. 2.

⁹⁶ Weiss, 2000, p. 801.

⁹⁷ UNESCAP, viewed 05.03.2005

⁹⁸ Nohlen, 2001, p. 363.

⁹⁹ UNESCAP, 2005.

ticipation in elections as well as standing for political office or even violent activities. One example is political elections where citizens participate and transfer their vote to another person. People often participate politically when a group of the population has an important need, is disadvantaged in certain ways and wants to achieve a change. To facilitate participation, civil society organisations may try to participate in the political process to carry through the interests of a certain group. Furthermore, political participation can take place through membership in a political party but also through civil disobedience like some of the Greenpeace activities.¹⁰⁰

Political participation is exercised directly or through legitimate intermediate representatives. Except for elections, citizens often do not have the possibility or ability to participate directly because of limited time and restricted individual influence. Consequently, intermediate representatives play a major role in political participation. They bundle up interests and represent them for a group of citizens. Political parties as well as interests groups are examples of these representative intermediaries. Political parties have to be distinguished from interest groups in their function as intermediate representatives, because besides the expression of popular preferences and seeking to carry through certain interests, political parties are directly or indirectly (as government or opposition) involved in political decisions or at least seeking for this involvement.¹⁰¹

Interests groups include NGOs, private sector associations, scientific institutes, trade unions, church associations and others. These are organizational structures that represent certain segments of society. Interest groups participate through lobbying for their members or 'clients'. Focusing on the functional definition of political participation these organisations try to use their organisational power to ensure that their interests are heard and incorporated in the political process.¹⁰² The discussed political participation of interests groups shows that citizens who do not form part of any organisational structure that lobby for their interests, are possibly excluded from this kind of political participation.¹⁰³ The articulation of interests becomes easier and more effective if intermediaries facilitate political participation because then interests are bundled and organized to a

¹⁰⁰ Nohlen, 2001, pp. 363-365.

¹⁰¹ Nohlen, 2001, p. 351.

¹⁰² Thermann, 2005, pp. 45-46.

¹⁰³ Nohlen, 2001, p. 211.

greater degree. Moreover, the participation of individuals in interest groups is one way to overcome the complexity of modern societies.¹⁰⁴

1.3.2. Political participation in the policy formulation process

Policy formulation forms part of the policy process; But before presenting the policy process a definition of policy will be introduced.

Policy is a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. It focuses on what is actually done instead of what is only proposed or intended, and it differentiates a policy from a decision, which is essentially a choice among competing alternatives. Policy is a process as well as a product.¹⁰⁵

Policy making consists of several steps and various processes. It normally includes a wide range of activities and an involvement of a large number of actors. Some academics introduced models to classify the different steps of the policy making process. Dunn's model presents the process consisting of agenda-setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, policy implementation and policy assessment.¹⁰⁶ Muthaba et al summarize the whole process in only three steps: policy formulation, policy implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Each of these three steps comprises several activities.

For example, if the policy formulation process is defined according to Muthaba's model, it consists of the identification of a problem as well as the generation of data, expertise and the accumulation of opinions and information. Thereafter, follows the analysis of the collected information and a bargaining process about different alternatives and preferences. The final step to this process is the decision making about a policy by the legitimate authorities.¹⁰⁷ The thesis concentrates on political participation in the process of policy formulation because this is the stage of policy making where a policy could be influenced before the decision about a policy is taken by policy makers.

The timing of participation in the policy making process is an important factor because there is a predisposition that the influence of participatory input increases the earlier and more frequent it takes place in the process.¹⁰⁸ Depending on the government's tradition of policy making, the involvement of role players other than the elected bodies in the

¹⁰⁴ Alemann, 1975, pp. 42-43, 56-57.

¹⁰⁵ Anderson, 1997, p. 8.

¹⁰⁶ Dunn, 1994, p. 15.

¹⁰⁷ Muthaba et al, 1993, p. 49.

¹⁰⁸ Thermann, 2005, p. 36.

policy making process vary. Whether the political structure is shaped by corporatism¹⁰⁹ or pluralism¹¹⁰ provides an indication of the role of other role players in policy making.¹¹¹

Policy making is complex, in terms of the actors or role players involved in the process. Thus, to understand participation in the process it is important to comprehend who plays which role. The term role player or actor in the policy process refers to individuals but also groups or organizations that are involved in the policy process. The following section will introduce the most important actors in policy making processes and their involvement in policy-making.

For any policy making process it is important to understand who the ‘policy makers’ are. This term refers mostly to the politicians that are determined by the constitutional framework to ‘make’ policies.¹¹² Through elections, the electorate transfers a mandate to the elected representatives so that they are legitimized to shape and formulate public policies. The elected representatives are the role players who take part in the policy making process from the beginning to the end.¹¹³ The elected representatives are responsible for placing issues on the agenda, evaluate which policy might be the best and to ensure the implementation of policies. It has also to be taken into consideration that politicians are involved in the power balance between the legislature and the executive. Depending on the political system, both the legislative and the executive participate in the policy making process. The group of elected policy makers is not homogenous and different interests play a role in policy-making processes.¹¹⁴

Closely related to the elected politicians is the state administration which is managed by bureaucrats. Politicians are responsible for the policy making while the bureaucracy is bound to implement the policies. These two fields often overlap so that, in particular, bureaucrats are involved in policy making and implementation. Bureaucrats administer the state and in that way also policies. Officials working in government departments are

¹⁰⁹ “A way of organising public policy making involving the close cooperation of major economic interests within a formal government apparatus that is capable of concerting the main economic groups so that they can jointly formulate and implement binding policies.” (Newton et al, 2005, p. 172)

¹¹⁰ „A situation where power is dispersed among many different groups and organisations that openly compete with one another in different political arenas.” (Newton et al, 2005, p. 274)

¹¹¹ Newton et al, 2005, pp. 273-279.

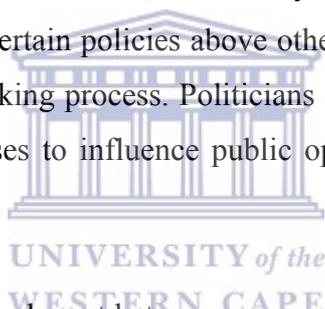
¹¹² Newton et al., 2005, pp. 273-279.

¹¹³ Cloete et al, 2004, p. 102.

¹¹⁴ Grindle et al, 1991, pp. 18-20.

involved in policy making, because they have to prepare input and information for politicians on policies. Policy drafts are mostly formulated by bureaucrats as well. The function and role of officials in the political system is a controversial issues that will not be dealt with in this thesis.¹¹⁵ It is however important to acknowledge that officials are part of the policy making processes.¹¹⁶

The media is another actor that might play a role in policy making. In democratic states the media is considered important to educate the public and to create a critical consciousness about political, social and economic issues. The media provides information and has the task of criticizing politics as well. A free and independent media is a precondition to fulfil these functions.¹¹⁷ In most countries, the media is able to shape public opinion and raise important issues because they have the necessary resources, ubiquity and a passive audience. The media has the ability to reach many people in a short time. It is a role player that is generally not directly involved in policy making. It draws the attention of their audience to certain areas, in this way the media has the ability to create, for example, demand for certain policies above others. The media can also become an instrument in the policy making process. Politicians as well as interest groups could use the media for their purposes to influence public opinion and consequently public policies.¹¹⁸



Interest groups are the largest and most heterogeneous group in the policy making process. They, as mentioned before, represent certain segments of society. Examples are professional and business organisations, NGOs, consumer groups, youth clubs, sport clubs, environmental groups, churches etc. By expressing and defending their interests, interests groups, on the one hand, provide input for the political system, and on the other hand, are considered as output agencies because they support the implementation of public policies.¹¹⁹ Moreover, they are involved in policy making because most of the democratic constitutions contain not only the freedom of expression but also institutions to involve interest groups in the policy making process. The immediate influence of interest groups in the policy making process depends on the extent to which the consti-

¹¹⁵ Especially, the social sciences are concerned with the role of public officials. The publication of 'dictatorship of the official' by Max Weber is one famous example. It considers the role, power and influence of public officials in the state.

¹¹⁶ Newton et al, 2005, pp. 122-124.

¹¹⁷ Naßmacher, 1998, pp. 48-49.

¹¹⁸ Cloete et al, 2004, pp. 103-104.

¹¹⁹ Newton et al, 2005, pp. 159-161.

tution or law includes non-elected role players. Governments often request interest groups to participate, for example in committees, working parties, advisory groups and commissions. They do so to obtain advice, information and expertise from different perspectives.¹²⁰ The indirect involvement of interest groups in policy making occurs through the influence on other role players who are directly involved in the policy making process.

The manner in which interest groups participate, particularly in policy formulation, is presented next. Firstly, policy makers could initiate the participation of interest groups in the policy formulation process. In the policy formulation process, policy makers, normally through legislation, are able to include input from other role players regarding options and alternative policies.¹²¹ It could be necessary for policy formulation to obtain input from outsiders in the form of insights (as subjective judgments about goals and objectives) and through scientific themes (in terms of applying new ways to deal with old problems). Moreover, the assessment of needs, beliefs and values of the targeted group of the population might be important to formulate an informed policy. Useful information for policy making could be accumulated through searching for best practice in the international context and analogies of other policies.¹²² Policy makers are able to define the problem, consider alternatives and solutions by consultation with society's different role players to make the process of policy formulation participatory.¹²³

Secondly, interest groups themselves initiate participation in policy formulation processes. Interest groups frequently contribute to the process of policy formulation through submissions and proposals for policies.¹²⁴ They often induce governmental actors to draft a policy about a certain problem. Interest groups use their influence and power to lobby for the interests of their clients. Here participation takes place to create awareness about a problem and demand the formulation of a policy in the political arena.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Newton et al, 2005, p. 174.

¹²¹ Mutahaba et al, 1993, p. 49.

¹²² Cloete et al, 2004, pp. 119-121.

¹²³ De Coning et al, 2000, pp. 39-41.

¹²⁴ De Coning et al, 2000, pp. 39-41.

¹²⁵ De Coning et al, 2000, pp. 39-41.

1.3.3. Political participation and its link to social capital

Political science identifies the legal framework, the socio-economic status as well as personal characteristics and social connectedness as decisive factors that influence levels of political participation. Moreover, education, profession, gender, income, prestige and power, leisure time and the political and social framework are determinants that scientist normally investigate in relation with political participation.¹²⁶ Why is SC then linked to political participation in this study?

In 1993, Putnam presented a study about the performance of Italian regional governments in relation to the economic development of the region. It is one of the first approaches where SC was linked with political science. He reveals that a good performance of political institutions is closely related to the existing stock of SC measured through the density of associations.¹²⁷ This study shows in the first place only that SC has an influence on the performance of democratic governments but political participation is not mentioned explicitly.¹²⁸

Other authors linked political participation and SC directly. Relating different concepts to the SC approach, Carroll argues in his book about SC that the concept of participation has the closest affinity with SC, because “both deal with interpersonal and inter-institutional relationships, and both stress the instrumental and intrinsic value of cooperation, mutual accommodation, trust building and problem resolution”¹²⁹. However, empirical evidence is not given to support this argument.

Gabriel et al conducted a study in 2002 to test various statements and definitions of SC empirically through comparing various democratic industrialized countries. A section of the study concentrates on the influence of existing SC on the democratic and systemic performance of states. Based on their theoretical framework, they conclude that a stock of positive SC (measured through voluntary organisations) can influence politics and society. Furthermore, they point out that existing SC, in theory, does not only lead to political activity but also transmits norms and values that motivate for participation and provides the possibility to meet other politically interested and involved persons. Con-

¹²⁶ Naßmacher, 1998, pp. 27-29.

¹²⁷ Putnam et al., 1993, p. 182.

¹²⁸ Gabriel et al, 2002, pp. 229-231.

¹²⁹ Carroll, 2001, p. 24.

sequently, SC provides individuals with resources for political participation, motivates them to be involved in participatory activities and mobilises them to integrate in social networks. The hypothesis derived from this was: higher levels of SC in societies contribute to more extensive political participation. Political participation is defined in their study as participation in elections and membership in political parties. The empirical results show that there is only a correlation between the availability of SC and the extent of political participation.¹³⁰

In the book 'Active social capital' Krishna presents a study about the relationship between political participation and SC in rural north India. Krishna defines political participation as all those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of politicians and/or decisions that they make. In communities, where the stock of social capital is high, participation in politics is also higher. Krishna tried to test this through the involvement of people in processes of governance and public decision-making. With reference to previous studies, Krishna designed a survey questionnaire where people were asked about their participation in elections, campaign work and contacting of others to discuss political issues including protest. The results indicated that the level of participation was quite different from village to village. In addition, political participation was related to societal variables (population, distance to the next market, infrastructure, number of different caste groups and others), agency variables (caste associations, patron-client linkages etc.) and the stock of social capital. The study elucidated that there is a positive relationship between existing SC and political participation. No other variable was as significant as SC.¹³¹

The case studies described above presented some examples of how SC and political participation are linked and why SC is relevant in the process of political participation. The thesis addresses the relationship between SC and political participation particularly in the process of policy formulation. As presented in the studies, SC may have a positive influence on political participation. It is considered whether there is a positive relationship between networks, as an outcome of SC and political participation of interest groups (NGOs) in the policy formulation process.

SC could be a factor, in particular, in policy formulation processes because political participation is about the interaction of different actors. During policy formulation, es-

¹³⁰ Gabriel et al, 2002, pp. 229-239.

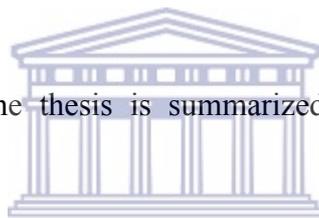
¹³¹ Krishna, 2002, pp. 141-162.

Establishing relationships among state and society actors is important because at this stage policies are drafted through input from different role players. Their relationship and means of interaction, based on trust and common norms, could be decisive for this type of political participation. A positive relationship could lead to the non-elected role players involved, enhancing their level of participation, which could probably be more effective than through the legal framework. This aspect should be explored through empirical data. The choice, to investigate the policy formulation phase, was made because it is the first phase of the policy making process.

The thesis focuses on political participation of interest groups in the policy formulation because it is the first phase of the policy making process. Furthermore it will investigate whether existing levels of SC between civil society and government actors leads to more regular and greater depth of participation by NGOs in the policy formulation process.

1.4. Conclusion

The particular approach of the thesis is summarized below, taking the theoretical framework into consideration.



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Firstly, the vertical level of SC is the major concern of the study. SC debates often focus on the community level, social networks inside the communities and the existing stock of SC, but the shift to exclusively focus on networks between civil society and government actors is rarely seen. A reason for that might be that it is more difficult to draw boundaries between the various actors within these networks. Furthermore, it is empirically more difficult to measure and very few comparable studies exist to evaluate results against. To minimize these problems, the study focuses on concrete networks, which are networks between NGOs and government actors such as government departments. The networks built between NGO staff and government officials are assumed as decisive for the participation in policy formulation processes.

Secondly, SC is linked to political participation, specifically that of interest groups in the process of policy formulation. Due to time and resource limitations, the empirical collection of data is restricted to only one phase of the policy-making process, namely policy formulation.

Thirdly, only the input of NGOs into the policy-making process is investigated. NGOs are deliberately chosen as examples of intermediary organisations and as a kind of interest group because they are one of the most important role players in civil society. The output, meaning the influence or impact on the formulated policy, is not taken into consideration as it exceeds the framework of the thesis.

Fourthly, the thesis focuses on policy formulation of social policies. These are the policies in which NGOs mostly engage to influence the policy process to achieve positive changes in the lives of poor or disadvantaged citizens

The theoretical framework discussed the concepts of social capital and political participation of interest groups in policy making as well as the role of NGOs in society. Through these theoretical discussions the research question was formulated. The research question is the basis for the following empirical part of the study where firstly the methodological framework is presented and then secondly the collected data.

Research Question: *Do networks between NGOs and government actors containing social capital enhance the participation of NGOs in the process of policy formulation?*

The following sub-questions are based on the research question.

Sub- Questions:

- What are the main characteristics of networks between NGOs and government?
- Does social capital form part of those networks ?
- How does political participation of NGOs in the process of policy formulation take place?
- What are the functions of these networks for the political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process?
- Do these networks lead to exclusion of other NGOs in the policy formulation process?

The theoretical framework presented the theoretical concepts and theories which are necessary to conduct empirical research. SC as an innovative approach, in particular in developmental debates, was discussed broadly. The role of NGOs in society as well as political participation of the latter in the policy processes were considered. The theory was narrowed down for the particular approach of this work to the potential role of SC

in relation to political participation in networks between government and civil society. The research question explores this assumption.

The sub-questions indicate which specific aspects the empirical research has to focus on to conclude with an answer to the research question. Firstly, the research focuses on the characteristics of the networks and the extent to which they are social capital networks. The second part investigates in which ways NGOs are engaged in the policy formulation process. The last sub-questions consider in how far social capital networks influence the political participation in the policy formulation process. In particular, the last part enables the researcher to draw conclusions and to answer the research question. The succeeding chapter comprises the methodological framework for the research and thereafter the situational context as well as the empirical results are presented.



CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE STUDY

This chapter presents the methodological framework for the thesis. The data needs, derived from the research question, and the operationalisation of the latter are illustrated in this part of the study. Thereafter, the motivation for using semi-structured expert interviews, to collect qualitative data follows. Furthermore, the methods of data collection and data processing are described.

2.1. Data Needs & Operationalisation

In order to answer the research question data is needed about the existing networks and about political participation in the policy formulation process. Therefore, the networks between NGOs and government as well as political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process have to be operationalized. Moreover, data has to be collected to investigate the relationship between these two components.

There is a broad and controversial debate about the measurement of SC. The major challenges are that the measurement depends on the manner in which SC is defined and that it is difficult to measure SC directly.¹³² To collect data about SC the development of proxy indicators is necessary.¹³³ SC has been measured in numerous ways using a variety of indicators but because SC is a relatively new, multifaceted and imprecise concept, little concrete and comparable data is available yet.

As mentioned before, Putnam conducted a study in 1993 about SC and governmental effectiveness in Italy. He developed an index of ‘civic engagement’ with four indicators; 1) density of clubs and associations in each region, 2) newspaper readership, 3) voter turnout and 4) preference voting in general election.¹³⁴ Putnam was one of the first scientists who did empirical research on social capital. His study is considered as groundbreaking and stimulated others that followed. Krishna for example, whose work is relevant for this study, based his conclusion for the measurement of SC on Putnam’s study. In an analysis of Putnam’s measurement of SC Krishna makes two claims.

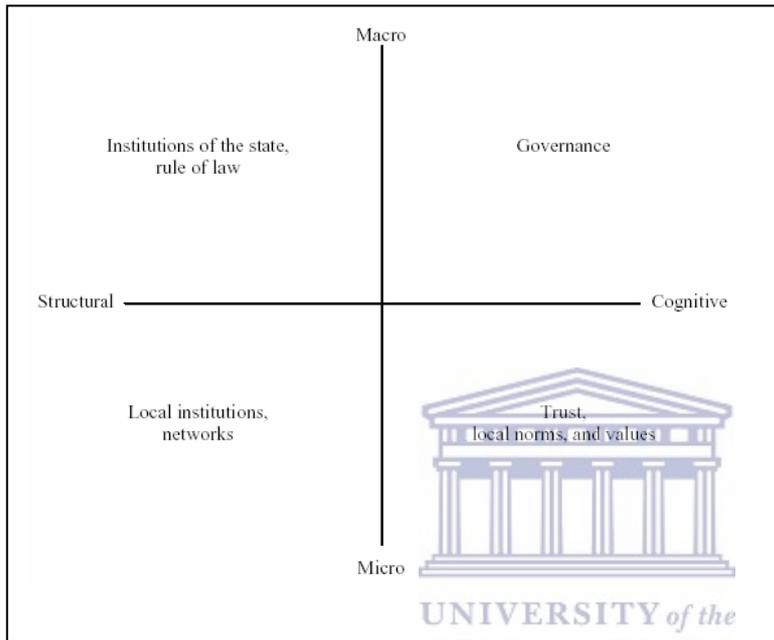
¹³² Productivity Commission, 2003, p. 25.

¹³³ For deeper insight in the measurement of social capital see Grootaert et al (2001) and Stones (2001).

¹³⁴ Productivity Commission, 2003, p. 28.

Firstly, he concludes that indicators to measure SC have to be developed in culturally specific settings because the empirical reference will vary in different cultures. Secondly, Krishna argues that norms form part of the measurement of SC but they are incorporated into other indicators which refer to networks. For this reason Krishna draws the conclusion that networks are the only important variable to be operationalized when measuring SC. However, Krishna does not clearly define the type of network to be measured.

Fig. 3: The ideal approach to measure social capital



Source: Grootaert et al., 2001, p. 38.

In 2001, Grootaert et al. summarized different studies which measured SC and which developed indicators for SC. Moreover, they highlighted the related problems and challenges of each study in terms of measuring SC. They recommend that SC should be measured on all levels and in all quadrants (shown in figure 3) even

though they admit that this is an ambitious goal. Most of the SC studies take only two dimensions into consideration. Methodological diversity is in their opinion the best way to approach the measurement of SC.¹³⁵

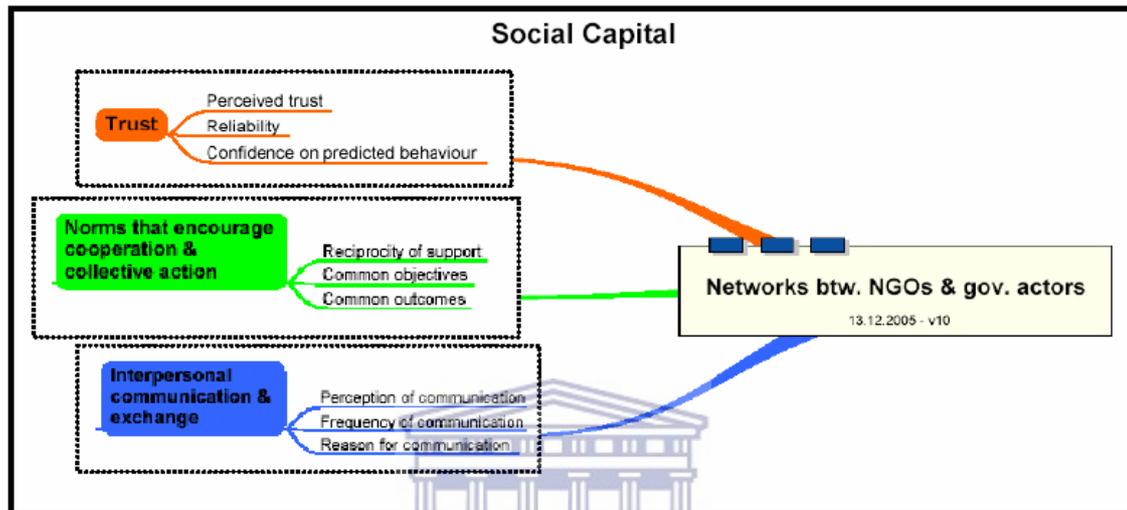
In attempting to develop indicators of SC, this case study faces the same challenges mentioned above. The complexity regarding the measurement of SC requires an explanation for the choice and development of indicators.

Considering Grootaert et al., this study limits the measurement of SC to only one quadrant of the figure. This choice was made to reduce the complexity of the concept. Similar to Krishna, this study examines networks in relation to SC, though the research does not operationalize networks itself. Referring to the definition of networks in chapter 2.1.1., Networks contain SC if they are built on trust, based on norms that encourage cooperation and collective action and when regular interpersonal communication and

¹³⁵ Grootaert et al., 2001, pp. 43-45.

exchange, both formal and informal, occurs. The study investigates the degree of trust and communication and the extend of common norms observed by members of the network. SC is operationalized according to the features of their relationship as shown in figure 4. This research examines, exclusively, the perception of key persons within the NGO-Government networks.

Fig. 4: Operationalisation of networks between NGOs and government actors as an outcome of social capital



Source: author's illustration

For the networks under scrutiny among NGOs and governmental actors, trust is operationalized as follows. Networks are based on trust if the network members 'perceive trust', if the partners can rely on each other and if they have confidence that the partners will show the predicted behaviour. The operationalisation does not distinguish between different levels of trust. This would have led to unnecessary complications, and such detail is in any event not required by the analysis undertaken. The definition of norms, that refer to and enforce SC, states that those norms support collective action, such as honesty, solidarity, fulfilling duties and reciprocity of support. These norms, adapted to the networks between NGOs and government actors, are operationalized as reciprocity of support, common objectives and common outcomes.

Interpersonal communication and exchange between the network members also indicate whether these networks are an outcome of SC. The frequency of communication, the perception about communication and the reason(s) for communication are important for the relationship between the network partners.

The indicators will be weighted as follows. According to the theory, trust and norms that encourage collective action and cooperation are important features of SC; therefore SC networks have to be based on them. Interpersonal communication and exchange also play a significant role but only in combination with the other two factors.

The definition indicates that SC networks are based on relationships and cooperation between different actors but they are not determined by the number of actors. The networks in the present research are determined by NGOs networking with government actors. The study focuses on NGOs who are part of a network with government actors and government actors who are networking with NGOs. Networking as such, rather than any specific network is the central focus of this thesis.

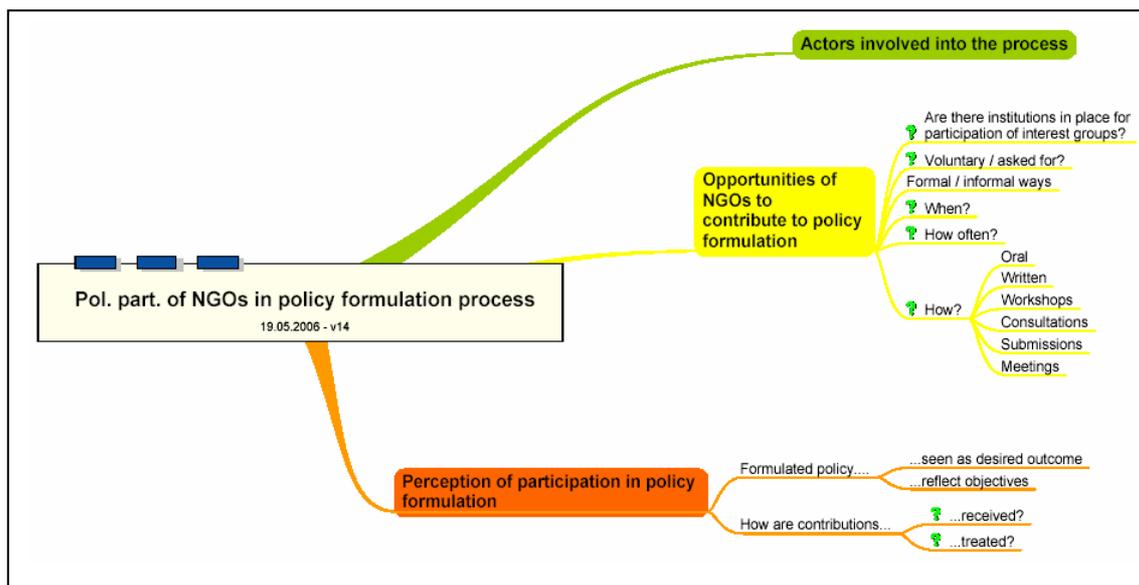
The second part of the research question refers to political participation of NGOs in policy formulation processes. Research on political participation has a long tradition and empirically comparable results; numerous indicators and studies are available as well.¹³⁶ But there does not seem to be any research on the political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process. Therefore, the Public Participation Questionnaire, developed by IDASA in 2000, was taken as a starting point for the operationalisation. Even though the aim of the latter questionnaire was to collect quantitative data about the general public's participation, the questions on participation in the policy making process could be applied in this study. These questions were adopted for the purpose of the thesis.¹³⁷

Figure 5 indicates how the political participation of NGOs in the process of policy formulation was operationalised. This operationalisation is based on the definition of political participation of interest groups in the policy formulation process as described in chapter 1.3.2. As presented above, political participation in the policy formulation takes place through negotiations between and contributions of various role players.

¹³⁶ Nohlen, 2001, pp. 364-365.

¹³⁷ De Villiers, 2001, pp. 163-170 (Appendix 3).

Fig. 5: Operationalisation of 'political participation of NGOs in the process of policy formulation'



Source: author's illustration

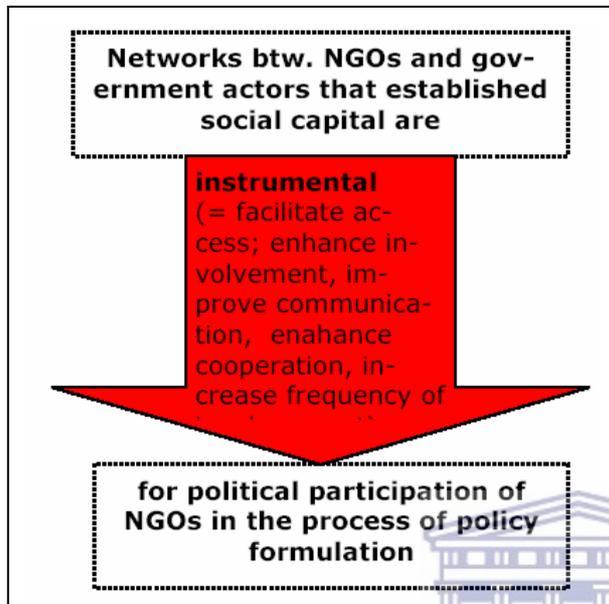
The operationalisation reflects the specific approach chosen for this study, focusing specifically on the relations between NGOs and government actors. The political participation of NGOs is explored through the following operationalisation. The actors involved are an indicator of NGO participation in the policy formulation process. Moreover, opportunities for NGOs to contribute to the policy formulation process as well as the perceptions of NGOs about their participation in policy formulation indicate whether political participation in the policy formulation process takes place. Does the policy as formulated reflect the objectives of the respondent's organization and is it perceived as a desired outcome? In addition, the ways in which contributions are received and treated are also important for the perception of political participation in the policy formulation process.

If the data collected confirm 1) that NGOs are among the actors who are involved in the process, 2) that there are a variety of opportunities for NGOs to contribute to the policy formulation process and 3) that NGOs themselves perceive that they can participate in the policy formulation process, then political participation in the policy formulation process by NGOs takes place.

The research questions inquire whether networks are instrumental for the political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process. These are instrumental if the networks fulfil functions that lead to a different kind of involvement of NGOs in the policy

formulation process compared to the usual involvement, required in the constitution. This will be proved empirically through the comparison of networks that are an outcome of SC and networks that are not. The research will investigate whether NGOs, belonging to different networks, differ in their political participation in the policy formulation process.

Fig. 6: Research Question



Source: author's illustration

In the second phase, the research will examine whether NGOs are excluded from certain information or phases of the policy formulation process as a result of belonging to a particular network. This will be investigated by empirically considering who is involved in the policy formulation process and for which reason.



2.2. Research Method & Research Design

The objective of the thesis is to explore the link between SC and political participation. Therefore, a survey with a representative random sample was rejected. Instead, through a case study, the thesis will examine the relationship between networks and political participation of NGOs at a regional level, in the Western Cape Province in South Africa.

Perceptions, impressions and opinions about the networks as well as about the political participation in the policy formulation process are needed to answer the research question. This requires qualitative data which could be gathered best through semi-structured expert interviews with network members. Consequently, these interviews had to be conducted with key persons of these networks, which are officials in government and NGO managers.¹³⁸ The methodological framework set for the thesis is also appropriate due to the available resources and the time constraints.

¹³⁸ Diekmann, 1999, p. 444.

Semi-structured interviews for qualitative research have certain features that are important for data capturing. During the interviews, respondents have the opportunity to speak about the topic in depth. Moreover, the researcher seeks to create a situation which is closer to a normal conversation to minimize inhibitions. The respondents should feel comfortable and participate freely as well as provide input from their own perspective.¹³⁹ Openness and flexibility are two important principles of the qualitative approach. Thus, during the interviews, the interviewer can react immediately to the respondent and adapt to the interview situation.

The interview framework of the current study was designed using a mixed approach of open and closed questions because the combination of both types of questions enables one to collect appropriate data. The open ended questions are important to obtain personal experience and perceptions for analysing the relationship between different actors of the networks. Open ended questions were used so that the perspective of the interviewee could be captured more fully and accurately because the interviewee can use his/her own words to give a recount of his or her own experience.¹⁴⁰ The closed ended questions are applied to guide the respondents through the interview themes. The responses of most of the closed questions are an introduction to an open question where the respondent has to justify and confirm why a particular response of a close question was chosen.

The interview framework, developed for the semi-structured expert interviews (see annex A), comprises three parts. The introductory section consists of questions about the organization the interviewee is representing. The responses of this part classify the respondent's organization. In addition, it assisted in developing a good rapport with the interviewee. The interviewees were allowed to talk about their work and present the organization they are working for. The interviewee was able to familiarize himself or herself with the situation. In this way possible doubts and fears, concerning the questions and content of the interview, were diminished.

¹³⁹ Diekmann, 1999, p. 445.

¹⁴⁰ The theoretical background for the conclusions for the appropriate methods to collect data on the topic are derived from Cresswell (2001, pp. 3-26) and Neuman (2003, pp. 169-187).

The second part of the questionnaire focuses on the characteristics of the networks between NGO and government actors through indicators, presented in figure 4. Finally, lastly, in the third phase the interviewees were asked to respond to questions about the political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation processes. In addition, this section focuses on whether networks are instrumental for political participation. During the interview, the interviewer encouraged the respondents repeatedly to describe their own perceptions and reasons for political participation in the policy formulation process. As mentioned above, semi-structured interviews are characterized by openness and flexibility. Therefore, the interviewer had to allow sufficient space for the answers and the interviewer had to be open to shift the questions, if necessary.

2.3. Sampling and Data Collection

The objective for the field research was to conduct semi-structured expert interviews with the determined network members in the Western Cape Province, South Africa. Consequently, a sample had to be drawn from government officials and NGO staff. The drawing of the sample was not random but pre-selected to compare and relate both sides of the networks.

The six departments of the social cluster¹⁴¹ of the Western Cape Province government were selected as representatives of government actors because they are responsible for policy making in their sector, mainly social policies. The Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation (DSSPA) agreed to support the research process and provided the researcher with contact details of the potential respondents in the other departments of the social cluster. Interviews were conducted with directors and executive directors of departments involved in policy making. It was not possible to conduct an interview with someone in the Department for Community Safety. Instead, an interview with an official of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning was conducted. The replacement was considered as NGOs are also strongly involved in the policies of this department and the policies of this department are often partly social policies.

¹⁴¹ Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation, Department of Health, Department of Community Safety, Department of Local Government and Housing, Department of Education, Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports (referring to the provincial government structure in 2005)

Even though the departments all form part of the same government sphere, the structures and working environment are dissimilar. Some departments have directorates that are exclusively dedicated to policy and programme design, while others incorporate the policy making into different sectoral directorates. The structural dissimilarities in the different departments made it difficult to identify persons who could provide valuable information for the research.

Besides the department's staff, interviews with NGO managers had to be conducted. The sampling for these interviews took place in two steps. Firstly, the researcher requested the departments to provide databases and stakeholder lists of the NGOs with whom they cooperate. Then NGOs were randomly selected from these stakeholder lists and service provider databases. These lists and databases were utilized as a source to guarantee that interviewees of the NGOs are networking with the departments.

Secondly, other NGOs were identified through internet research and through the cooperation with the Democracy Development Programme (DDP). The DDP itself is a political NGO and was willing to provide the researcher with a list of NGOs in the Western Cape Province. This procedure was applied to consult an additional group of NGOs for the research.

The initial idea of the research was to divide the interviews with the NGOs in two groups namely social/operational NGOs and advocacy/political NGOs. However, a neat classification of the NGOs in this manner turned out to be problematic because most NGOs are dedicated to both, advocacy and to service delivery. Only a very few NGOs are exclusively social service providers or exclusively involved in advocacy. This holds also true for the diverse NGO sector in the Western Cape Province. Only half of NGOs participating in the study could be categorically classified as social or political/advocacy NGOs. Therefore, the distinction between the NGOs is not applied in the analysis of the results. The most significant characteristic of the NGOs included in this research was that the NGOs were networking with government departments. This condition was fulfilled by each of the NGOs interviewed..

In total, 32 interviews were conducted; 9 interviews were with officials in 6 departments of the Western Cape Province government and 23 with managers or coordinators of NGOs. Three of the interviews with NGOs are not analysed in the data processing

because they do not match the criteria for inclusion in the study (2 NGOs did not have an official NGO status and the third is only working on a national level). The interviews were conducted without major difficulties. In general, the interviews took about 20 to 30 minutes. Each interview was recorded after the respondent gave consent. Subsequently every interview was transcribed.

In addition to the primary data collected, secondary data was provided by the interviewees. Organisational information such as annual reports as well as protocols, invitations and working papers from workshops and consultations in the policy formulation process were provided.

2.4. Data processing

According to the literature, most of the qualitative research is inductive in an exploratory way, meaning that themes, indicators and concepts are not given and explored during the research.¹⁴² For this case study the theoretical framework already provided the necessary background to formulate a research question. Through the operationalisation of the research question, indicators were developed and data were accordingly collected. The analysis of the data was therefore not used to generate indicators, research questions etc. but to answer the research question.

The processing and analysis of qualitative data could be done in various manners. The aim of processing data is to simplify or reduce complexity. Moreover, the data should inform the research so that the research question can be answered and conclusions can be drawn.

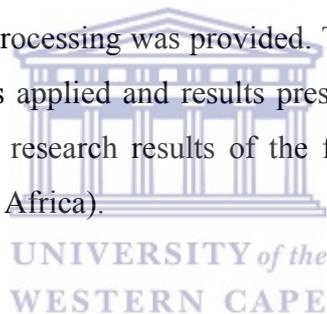
To reduce the complexity of the data collected, the most important statements and words of each interview were highlighted. The marked words and statements were organised in a table according to the indicators and according to the respondent group (NGO manager or department official). Thereafter, the data was coded and similar answers were summarized under keywords or key-statements. The NGOs could be grouped into three different types of NGOs according to formal characteristics of networking with the departments. The analysis focuses on the comparison between the responses from the NGO staff and the government officials.

¹⁴² Neuman, 2003, pp. 438-458.

As declared in the ethical statements of the study, the author of the thesis respects the rights and identities of the respondents. The recording of the interviews took place only with consent of the interviewees. The guarantee of confidentiality of information provided was considered in the analysis and the data presentation. The request of most of the respondents to stay anonymous is respected. Therefore, the data had to be processed without indicating the particular organisation / department the respondent belongs to.

The available secondary data was processed so that useful information concerning the research questions could be filtered and applied in the analysis of the data where appropriate.

This chapter discussed the methodological framework for the empirical research. The methods applied for the field research as well as the data collection process itself was described above. In addition, information about the particular characteristics of the respondents as well as the data processing was provided. This background is necessary to follow the research procedures applied and results presented in the following chapter. The next chapter presents the research results of the field research conducted in the Western Cape Province (South Africa).



CHAPTER THREE

CASE STUDY

Chapter 3 comprises the empirical results of the case study conducted in the Western Cape Province (South Africa). Firstly, the background and context for the case study in relation to political participation, social capital and NGOs is introduced. Political participation of interest groups in policy formulation in South Africa is discussed to present the link between this empirical study and real life. The section regarding SC in the South African context shows the research stance with respect to SC in South Africa. Moreover, the role NGOs play in South Africa, is outlined. Thereafter, the empirical results regarding the state-society networks in the Western Cape Province are discussed. This part is followed by conclusions and answers to the research questions.

3.1. Context and Background of the Case study

3.1.1. Political participation and policy-making in South Africa

The introduction indicated the role of political participation for South Africa in the post apartheid era and presented the role of the new constitution on public participation, beyond elections.

The post 1994 transition in South Africa was marked by active political participation of the population. The history of apartheid excluded people from the political process and thus in redressing this, a case can be made for strengthening participatory processes in South Africa. During Apartheid, political participation of other racial groups was not allowed.¹⁴³ Because of the political oppression, organisations were founded to fight in the struggle against apartheid. The struggle established structures for a participatory democracy¹⁴⁴ in South Africa. This specific historical context explains further, why political participation has such a strong role to play in the new South African constitution.¹⁴⁵

The South African Constitution creates a requirement that government engage with citizens when making the decisions that affect their lives. (...) Broadly, they provide for a right to participation in the legislative and policy making-processes that goes well beyond the right to vote in periodic elections. Not only must citizens be

¹⁴³ Only during the last decade of the tricameral parliament “Coloured” and Indian participation was allowed in a limited way.

¹⁴⁴ Participatory democracy is not the same as direct democracy and it is defined as a form of representative democracy in which citizens are actively involved in political decision-making processes. (De Villiers, 2001, pp. 22-24)

¹⁴⁵ De Villiers, 2001, pp. 22-24.

given the opportunity to speak on issues that affect them; there is also an onus on the legislatures and the executive to take their views seriously.¹⁴⁶

The new South African democracy has entrenched a number of processes and established a variety of institutions for citizens to participate at every level of the different political spheres. For example, a number of consultative forums have been introduced since 1994 to engage civil society actively in the legislative, policy-making and planning process of government at local, provincial and national levels.¹⁴⁷

In addition to public participation instruments, the design of the policy making process itself reflects the participatory approach of the South African constitution/democracy. Policy making in South Africa is an ongoing, interactive process. It involves all three spheres of government on national, provincial and local level, albeit that the constitution of 1996 opted for the national government to have the leading role in policy making.¹⁴⁸ Venter describes the process of policy making in South Africa as a stream that is shaped by different policy actors, by clearing houses (through which draft policies are channelled) and by documentary stages (see fig. 7).



¹⁴⁶ De Villiers, 2001, p. 16.

¹⁴⁷ Houston, 2001, pp. 53-54.

¹⁴⁸ Venter, 2001, pp. 241-244.

Fig. 7: The stream of policy-making on national issues

→ **STREAM OF POLICY ACTIONS** →

Policy phases	Problem identification	Agenda-setting	Policy deliberation	Policy adoption	Policy implementation
Policy actors	Community, leaders, members of parliament, political party leaders; representatives of NGOs	Political partners, interest organisations , cabinet, cabinet committees, PCAS ¹⁴⁹	Cabinet member, Cabinet committees	MPs, Cabinet, provincial governments	Public servants and government Ministers
and participating influences	Communities speaking out, social movement action, government awareness	Party conferences, delegations to government	Public hearings, community forums, commissions		Feedback from communities
Policy clearing houses		Departmental task group, ruling party, NWC ¹⁵⁰ /NEC ¹⁵¹	Parliament, parliamentary committees, Minmec ¹⁵²	Cabinet, National Assembly, NCOP ¹⁵³ , constitutional court	State department, provincial and local governments
Documentary	Memoranda, informal communications	Petitions, commissioned research reports	Green papers	White papers, bills, legislation	Secondary legislations, departmental directives

→ **STREAM OF POLICY ACTIONS** →

* The yellow marked text in the table shows where interest groups are involved in the policy making process



Source: Venter, 1998, p. 246.

As presented in the theoretical framework, policy making can be operationalized in various ways. Venter chose to divide the policy making process into five stages: problem identification, agenda-setting, policy deliberation, policy adoption and policy implementation. The manner in which the process is divided is not as important for the political process as the fact that the policy making process comprises various steps in which different actors are able to influence the process at different stages.¹⁵⁴ Figure 7 reflects why policy making is a process in South Africa. The process has elements of direct participation of interest groups, which are particularly strong in the first three sub-phases of the policy making process. The most common activities for public participa-

¹⁴⁹ Policy Coordination and Advisory Services

¹⁵⁰ National Working Committee

¹⁵¹ National Executive Council

¹⁵² Meetings of national cabinet ministers and members of provincial executive committees

¹⁵³ National Council of Provinces

¹⁵⁴ Venter, 2001, pp. 245-248.

tion are workshops, public hearings, committee meetings and as well submissions, which could be solicited or submitted voluntarily.¹⁵⁵

The nine provinces are one of the three political spheres of South Africa. Even though many functions and powers remain on the national level, the provinces were also afforded important mandates in order to participate in the political process. The principle of co-operative governance, based on the constitution, demands that the provinces should play an important role in the policy processes. The National Council of Provinces (NCOP) is the parliament's second house in which every province is represented. The NCOP enables the governments of the provinces to represent the needs of their inhabitants on a national level.¹⁵⁶

The importance of public participation was also included in the legislative processes of the provinces. The higher degree of proximity of the provincial government to its communities, in comparison to the national level, is a crucial aspect of the mandate of the provinces to receive public input on legislative and policy matters.¹⁵⁷ The constitution clearly indicates that the provincial legislature as well as its committees can summon any person or institution to give input to a certain matter. Furthermore, they have to accept petitions, representations or submissions from citizens. More importantly, the provincial government has the mandate to facilitate public involvement in the legislature and its committees. They have to do their work in a highly transparent manner; only in unusual circumstances the media and the public can be excluded.¹⁵⁸

One example, which indicates that a province tried to include various role players of society in the political process, is the provincial development council (PDC) of the Western Cape Province. The PDC is a structured model of representative participation in the Western Cape. The council engages with the societal actors and the provincial government. The societal actors comprise organised labour, organised business, and organised civil society. In 2004, the Western Cape Government adapted the provincial council with the following objective.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ De Villier, 2001, pp. 100-101.

¹⁵⁶ Bernstein, 1999, pp. 34-35.

¹⁵⁷ Venter, 2001, p. 176.

¹⁵⁸ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Section 115-118.

¹⁵⁹ Lomofsky, 2005, p. 14.

The objective of the Provincial Development Council is to serve as the platform for social dialogue in the province in order to generally promote an approach that integrates considerations of sustainable development, participation in the economy and social equity in order to redress the historical legacy of the provinces.¹⁶⁰

The PDC's primary task is to foster social dialogue between the social partners, organized labour, business, civil society and government. The PDC is linked to the Premier's office to which a quarterly report has to be submitted. The Premier himself discusses issues with the members of the PDC and brings them into the political debate. The PDC consist of 32 members 8 representatives of government, 8 representatives of organised labour, 8 representatives of civil society and 8 representatives of organised business. The representatives are all part of organized structures. Organized labour for example is represented by a person from the trade unions and civil society by NGOs. All of the partners have signed an agreement with the provincial government. Thereby the partners agree to support government through their input and participation in the committee meetings, to achieve the defined strategic objectives regarding development and growth of the Western Cape Province. This agreement, namely the 'framework agreement', was prepared through a participatory process by the stakeholders themselves. The PDC is an instance where a provincial government attempts to include different actors of society in the political process.¹⁶¹

The PDC is a very representative structure and a major challenge has been building in communication back to the constituents. The danger of this structure is that the information remains with the representatives and the 'people on the street' do not know about the participatory process. The PDC does fund the process of communication between the representatives and their constituency.¹⁶²

The perceptions of the PDC as an instrument of political participation will be presented in the empirical part.

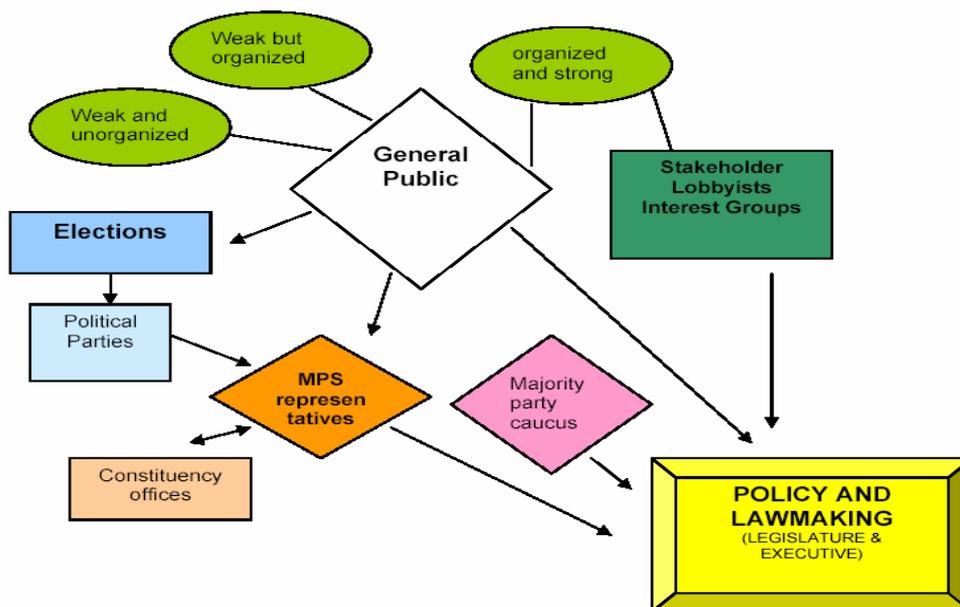
Even though the constitution includes public participation strongly; the right and the possibility to participate does not automatically initiate participation across society. The institute for Democracy (IDASA) has proposed a model for public participation in the South African context which they call the 'possible ideal' shown in figure 8.

¹⁶⁰ PDC, 2004, p. 83.

¹⁶¹ PDC, 2004, pp. 47-52; pp. 77-87.

¹⁶² Lomofsky, 2005, p. 17.

Fig. 8: The possible ideal of political participation in South Africa



source: de Villiers, 1998, p. 96.

This model shows how political participation could occur with reference to the constitution. This ‘possible ideal’ contrasts the reality because political participation, in particular, for the unorganized and weak people and also for smaller organisations is still difficult.¹⁶³ A large number of South Africans are still excluded from political participation apart from elections. In his State of the Nation Address of February 2004, President Mbeki pointed out this division in society. He mentioned that there are “two South Africas” and that the division of society is still a reality. There are those living in a first world economy that provides them with decent conditions, income and access to resources. The other part of society belongs to a third-world economy in which people are marginalised in low-paying work, with poor conditions, or unemployment.¹⁶⁴ Problems of accessibility of government, insufficient resources as well as a lack of awareness and information about public participation are some reasons for a lack of public participation.¹⁶⁵ Considering the high inequality in the South African society, networks between government and civil society organisations are probably another factor influencing public participation. Due to this, this study investigates whether SC in form of networks could make the policy process more participatory.

¹⁶³ IDASA in: De Villiers, 2001, pp. 92-97.

¹⁶⁴ Policy Co-ordination & Advisory Services, 2003, p. 104.

¹⁶⁵ Venter, 2001, p. 176.

3.1.2 The Social Capital approach within the South African context

As presented in the introduction, SC is a relevant concept for the South African context but very few publications and therefore reliable research on SC can be found. Only a few studies about measuring SC and its possible impact on development and poverty in South Africa are available to date.¹⁶⁶ In 2002, Haddad et al. published a research report called 'Trust, membership in groups and household welfare: Evidence from Kwa-Zulu-Natal'.¹⁶⁷ The author used data derived through the South African national household survey in 1993 and data from 1998 when households in Kwa-Zulu-Natal were resurveyed. The 1998 household questionnaire included questions on different dimensions of SC, including group membership, personal networks, trust, civic engagement, and violence. By using this data, the authors disaggregate groups by type of trust. He examines whether different types of trust are important for participating in different types of groups and whether different types of group participation play a role for generating different types of trust. The results indicate that local trust in neighbours and extended family is significant for financial-group participation. These groups appear to be locations of social interactions that generate trust in non-local agents, such as strangers, the media, and national government. The study indicates that group membership, as a proxy indicator for SC, has a positive effect, particularly, in the case of non-financial-group membership where no explicit financial benefits are envisioned.

In 1999, Piazza-Georgi, a lecturer at the School of Economics and Business at the University of Witwatersrand, published an article about the role of human and social capital for growth. In his paper he reviews the literature on human capital, institutions and social capital, extracting three sub-categories of human capital (human skills capital, stock-of-knowledge and entrepreneurship) and two of social capital (low- and high-rationalisation). Providing examples from the South African context, the paper primarily deals with the relation of growth and SC in general.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Following master theses have been submitted concerning SC, but the results are vague and not relevant for the thesis. 'Social capital and its prospects for development in South Africa' (Dilthage, 1998); 'Social capital, democracy and development: a case study of Civic Association in Galeshewe Township in the Northern Cape' (Mosang, 1999); 'A literature review on the effectiveness of policy networks in alleviating implementation failure: the need for public-civic social capital' (Rankoe, 2003). Furthermore, SC was investigated in South Africa in relation to aspects such as community health projects (Meth, 1999), women's participation in land reform (Pharoah, 1999), small business (Pingle, 2001) and the vulnerability of women in informal settlements (Thomas, 2004).

¹⁶⁷ Haddad et al., 2002.

¹⁶⁸ Piazza-Georgi, 1999.

In 2004, Harrison describes the role of SC for the urban context. The study reviews some of the challenges of investigating SC in the context of a complex urban environment, where, according to Harrison, the relationships and patterns between the state and society are often contrasting. The objective of the latter study is to demonstrate the complexities inherent within a concept such as SC and its application in an urban context. The author suggests that SC is not a packaged resource that can be automatically used by all members of society to achieve certain objectives. Instead, the inherent inequities in civil society and the possibility that different types of SC can coexist within one locality are critical considerations.¹⁶⁹

The summary of publications shows that very little substantive research and literature on SC can be found in South Africa to date. The SC approach has not gained much popularity in South Africa yet, for example institutes, research forums and internet platforms have not been established. However, in the Western Cape Province there is a tendency to look at the relevance of SC for the Province and further for the whole South Africa. The SADC social capital conference in September 2006 and the international social capital conference in November 2006 might change this.

The government of the Western Cape Province is one of the first government bodies in South Africa that draws on SC as a strategy for its work, because the approach is considered appropriate to address the developmental challenges. Consequently, the Western Cape government identified the organisations and institutes who are conducting or completed research relating to SC in the Western Cape Province.¹⁷⁰

- The Unit for Religious Demographic Research at the University of Stellenbosch is exploring the mobilisation of faith-based organisations in Paarl, George and Khayelitsha;
- The School of Economics at the University of the Western Cape is conducting research on social capital in the Drakenstein area, with an emphasis on economic aspects;
- The Human Sciences Research Council has established a new unit, the Social Cohesion and Integration Research Programme, to investigate a wide range of different facets of social cohesion;
- The Centre for Social Science Research at the University of Cape Town has, since 2000, been conducting an ongoing series of surveys in Cape Town. The surveys are modelled on the Detroit Area Study which has been conducted annually since 1951 by the University of Michigan, and focuses on youth. The 2003 study is of particular interest as it ad-

¹⁶⁹ Harrison, 2004.

¹⁷⁰ Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, p. 8.

dresses the issue of social capital and trust in communities in the Western Cape, and attempted to develop a methodology appropriate for measuring social capital in the local context.

Building SC is one of the eight pillars of the growth and development strategy for the Western Cape Province. The strategy namely iKapa elihlumayo¹⁷¹ was designed through a participatory process. From the perspective of the provincial government the SC approach supports the vision of the Western Cape Province “home for all”.¹⁷² The definition of the Western Cape Province of SC is:

Social capital is referred to as the institutions, relationships, norms and networks that shape the quality and quantity of society’s social interactions and enable collective action.¹⁷³

The social cluster departments of the Western Cape Province have the task to design programmes and projects in a cross sectoral manner applying the SC approach. In October 2005, the social capital formation strategy was launched by the Premier of the Province, Ebrahim Rasool.¹⁷⁴ Programmes and projects were initiated but monitoring and evaluation reports are not available yet. Two studies have been initiated by the DSSPA focusing, in particular, on SC in the province. The ‘Brawam-Siswam’¹⁷⁵ project, is a mentorship programme addressing the high level of school dropouts in the province. The second study is an exploratory analysis of the stock of SC among youth in the Western Cape Province. The results of the latter study will be the basis for public sector intervention aimed at building social cohesion among the youth.¹⁷⁶

The social capital strategy itself also addresses social capital and participation.

The country’s Constitution establishes the participatory nature of our democracy. This participation needs to extend beyond periodic voting for representatives. (...) The province’s understanding of social capital formation also sees participation as encompassing government working together with different actors within civil society to deliver services and generally ensure the population’s well-being. Accepting this approach will mean that government departments cannot continue doing ‘business as usual’. Government needs to see civil society as people who can help them achieve their mission, rather than an obstacle, interferers, or people to be feared. Government also needs to abandon any idea that it ‘knows best’ and instead work with and build on the strengths and knowledge of communities.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ “the growing Cape”

¹⁷² Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, p. 6.

¹⁷³ Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, p. 6.

¹⁷⁴ Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, pp. 20-37.

¹⁷⁵ Big brother, big sister

¹⁷⁶ Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, p. 7-9.

¹⁷⁷ Provincial Government of the Western Cape, 2005, p. 11.

The quote shows that the strategy connects SC with political participation. It points out that government should work together with different actors of civil society but there are no concrete aspects mentioned in the strategy how this could be implemented. Currently, the DSSPA is developing a database where all the political and societal role players in the Western Cape Province should be included. To facilitate the networking among the organisations every organisation can access the data. In addition, a provincial social capital web page is planned to support the social capital formation in the province and to create a platform for debate on an international level.

The thesis adds value to the SC research of the Western Cape Province, by evaluating SC in the form of networks and how far these networks improve political participation in policy making. It considers SC in the form of networks and in how far these networks could possibly contribute to political participation of NGOs, in the policy formulation process. This study partly fills a research gap that until now has not been considered in South Africa and its result could contribute to the project planning of the Western Cape Province government concerning SC.

3.1.3. Role of NGOs in South Africa

Civil society, including NGOs, is one of the main actors in the process of political and social change in post-apartheid South Africa. During apartheid, NGOs played a major role in fighting against the apartheid system. In addition, operational NGOs worked as service providers for the apartheid government.

Post 1994, most of the NGOs had to go through a conceptual shift and reorientation. One big challenge for NGOs was to redefine their relationship with the state. The resulting challenge is often described as "moving from protest to development". The struggle to move from resistance to reconstruction and to play a constructive role in development was a major challenge civil society had to face. Some organisations were unable to adapt and had to close down. Others made significant shifts in their orientation and began to embrace new roles with innovative means. This included a shift towards organisations participating in the policy-making processes and towards partners in service delivery, rather than as delivery agents on their own. A new task for them was also to

monitor the new government's performance within a constructive criticism framework.¹⁷⁸

In 1997, the Non-profit Organisation Act 71 was amended. It defines Non-profit organisations (NPO) as:

a trust, company or other association of persons: (a) established for a public purpose, and (b) the income and property of which are not distributable to its members or office bearers except as reasonable compensation for services rendered.¹⁷⁹

NGOs are part of the NPOs. This Act laid out the legal framework for NGOs in South Africa.¹⁸⁰

Nowadays, NGOs in South Africa play an important role especially as 'voices for the poor' and as service providers. They often fill the gap concerning issues where the state fails to meet the needs of the poor and marginalized in society. Additionally, many NGOs are mediators between government and communities.¹⁸¹

In South Africa, many NGOs are funded by government and provide services for them which lead to a controversial discussion about the role of NGOs and their watchdog function in society. Critical voices argue that the autonomy of the civil society organisations is lost and that they are compromised *vis a vis* government. This is the case if government is the main funder of NGOs. Moreover, some commentators postulate that the post-apartheid government tried to co-opt civil society groups by including them in state-led decision-making structures as for example the PDC.¹⁸²

Many NGOs are involved in advocacy work; through which they often play a role in the policy making process. As mentioned above, government has the responsibility to make political processes open and participatory so that the public, which includes NGOs, could engage in the process as well.¹⁸³

The previous sections illustrated the background and context for the empirical case study in South Africa. The discussion elaborated on how political participation in the

¹⁷⁸ Taylor, 1998.

¹⁷⁹ Department of Social Development, 2005.

¹⁸⁰ Department of Social Development, 2005.

¹⁸¹ Greenstein, 2003, pp. 21-23.

¹⁸² Friedmann et al., 2004, pp. 174-175.

¹⁸³ Bernstein, 1999, pp. 54-58.

post apartheid era takes place. This includes the role of civil society organisations participating in policy making processes. Furthermore, the overall role of SC as a new developmental concept as well as the research on SC in South Africa was summarised. The next sections will present the results and conclusions derived from the data collected towards the research topic.

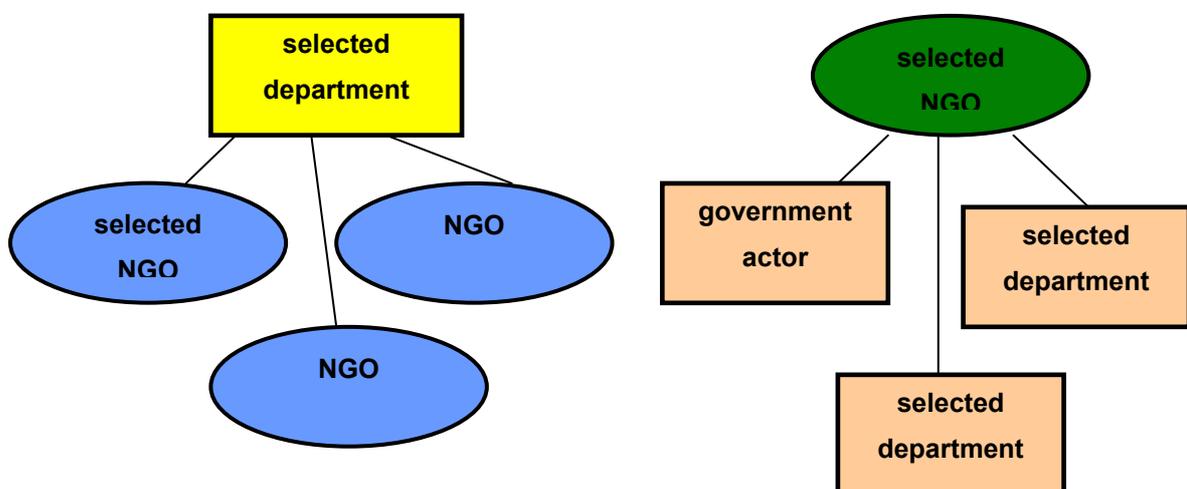
3.2. Networks between NGOs and government departments in the Western Cape Province

Section 3.2. describes the findings about the networks between NGOs and government. Firstly, the characteristics of the networks formed and investigated are presented in a mainly descriptive way. Thereafter, the researcher explores the networks considering the social capital indicators. The conclusion of this section summarizes whether SC is part of the examined networks.

3.2.1. Description of the formal characteristics of the networks

The formal characteristics of the networks are important in order to understand the empirical results. Figure 9 illustrates the networks examined through the empirical study. As mentioned in the methodological framework, the research did not focus on the specific networks but on the aspect of networking itself. The NGOs participating in the study are all related with more than one of the interviewed government departments. The selected departments are all networking with several NGOs, among them the NGOs selected. The responses of the departments are reflected in networks shown on the left side and the responses of the NGOs are displayed in networks on the right side.

Fig. 9: Investigated Networks



Source: author's illustration

The NGO respondents answered positively when they were asked whether they are involved in networks with the provincial government departments; but the type of relationship with the departments vary.

(1) 7 NGOs are regular service providers for the government and mainly funded by the government departments.

(2) 6 of the NGOs selected either run occasional projects, conducted research or training for the departments. Most of these NGOs are also doing advocacy work.

(3) 7 NGOs do not acquire any funding from the departments but they are related to government through their advocacy work and involvement in the policy making processes as well as information provision for government.¹⁸⁴ In the further analysis NGOs

(1) will be applied to NGOs of type 1, (2) to type 2 and (3) to type 3.

The officials of the 6 selected departments confirmed that they are networking with NGOs in the Western Cape Province and the NGOs interviewed are among them. The Department of Health, the DSSPA and the Department of Education, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports contract NGOs to do service delivery and/or projects as research, training etc. for them. These departments involve NGOs in the policy making process as well. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning concentrates its networks with NGOs on processes of policy making. The Department of Housing runs their projects through municipalities. NGOs are not directly funded by them but they are involved in policy processes and research.

3.2.2. General perception of the relationship within the networks

When the respondents of the NGOs were asked to describe the networks with government, 10 out of 20 responded that they have a “good relationship” with government. The positive perception of the networks from a NGOs perspective was underlined by the following terms: “supportive”, “cooperative”, “productive”, “efficient”, “strong”, “mutual understanding” and “close”.

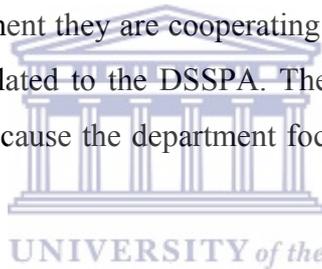
[The relationship is] supportive in a mutual sense. They are really encouraging us. They like our project and then the feedback we receive from them is always very positive and enthusiastic about what we are doing in the community. And from our

¹⁸⁴ Information about the funding situation could be confirmed through the interviews and secondary data, of some annual reports of the NGOs, where a list of revenue and costs is given. The lists show to which extend NGOs are funded by government. Black Sash, 2003, pp. 28-29; Development Action Group, 2005, pp.23-25; Surplus People Project, 2003, p.3; Social Change Assistant Trust, 2004, pp. 22-24; Triple Trust Organisation, 2005, pp. 17-19; Cape Town Child Welfare, 2004, pp. 21-24.

side we are always willing to serve. Obviously we would love to get more funding more than the 10% like at the moment. We definitely have a good relationship with them.¹⁸⁵

According to two NGOs the relationship with government improved through the length of existence of their networks. Furthermore, the networks were described as “effective”, “creative”, “open”, both “formal” and “informal”. Moreover, two NGOs pointed out that, in particular, their personal relationship with the key persons in the departments encourage their relationship with the departments. Five NGOs named “partnership” and “networking” as the most important characteristics of the networks. Eleven NGOs mentioned in addition “respect” as an important feature. NGOs also classified also transparency and accessibility as characteristics of the relationships with the government departments.

Furthermore, the cooperation was described as “functional”, “complex” and “critical” but “not confrontational”. The NGO interviewees stated that the type of relationship depends also on which department they are cooperating with. The terms “very cooperative” and “respectful” were related to the DSSPA. The Department of Education was perceived as “more distant” because the department focuses on aspects such as control and financial power.



NGOs characterized their relationships not only in a positive manner. Three NGOs perceive the networks as “difficult” and “strained”. “Slow”, “rigid”, “bureaucratic”, “challenging” and “not satisfactory” are terms for the negative perception of NGOs about the relationship with government as well as “antagonistic” and “tight”.

Relationship with government is challenging. Government does not necessarily understand the nature of NGOs and we understand that government is bureaucratic and they do not see the opportunity that the work with us could be creative. Government is quite rigid. They tend to be quite inflexible and rigid. There are also layers of accountability but low. So you might have a person in government who sees it as worthy to work with us but he might not have the position to decide on that. So it is a complex relationship and that it is also related to the fact that government is quite complex national, provincial, local and the districts.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ NGO A (In the following chapter for direct quotes it is only going to be indicated if the quote is from a department official or an NGO manager/director/coordinator. To differentiate the respondents letters are added e.g. NGO A, B, C, ..., T or Department A, B, ..., I but it is not going to be shown, which letter belongs to which respondents because the respondents want to stay anonymous.

¹⁸⁶ NGO D

The quote illustrates that NGOs perceive a lack of understanding among the government actors as to what the nature of NGOs are. This is why the cooperation with government departments was portrayed as difficult. In addition, NGOs characterized government actors as very complex. The complexity that the respondents referred in their interviews had to do with their relationship with specific individuals in the departments. Furthermore, NGOs responded that the continuous changes in the provincial government during the last few years were a constraint towards building a constant relationship with staff in the departments.

The department's perspective about the networks with NGOs was mainly positive. Four officials responded that their department has a "good relationship" with NGOs. In total, eight department officials used positive terms for their network with NGOs. They used words like "productive", "efficient" and "cooperative". "Robust", "dynamic", "extensive interface" and "trust" were characteristics named by other department officials. One department described the NGOs as their "second arm". NGOs are considered as partners for government to formulate good policies and to deliver good services. The government officials characterized NGOs as necessary intermediaries between the communities and themselves. They see NGOs as their partners. Through NGOs communities start to trust in government because the communities notice that the NGOs cooperate with government for service delivery. Officials also used the terms "networking", "partnership" and "respect" in respect of the relationship with NGOs.

The officials considered NGOs also as "complementary" to government. Through the cooperation neither time, resources nor money are wasted. The nature of the relationship between government and NGOs is such that a tension between them is natural/normal so that there is "a healthy way of disagreement between the partners". The role of NGOs as watchdogs and voices for society can only be fulfilled if NGOs oppose government. A close relationship between government and NGOs could be perceived as counter productive because NGOs could lose their role of being a watchdog for society. To improve the relationship between the partners, the departments themselves have to be "less rigid, less bureaucratic and more flexible".

Only one official described the cooperation within the network as "difficult", "challenging" and "a strain".

3.2.3. Trust

Trust is the key indicator for networks enhanced by on social capital. Eighteen out of twenty respondents of NGOs indicated that the networks with the government departments are based on trust. In eight interviews with the government departments the networks were described as based on trust as well. The reasons for perceiving trust towards their partners vary.

Firstly, trust is seen as a necessary condition for a successful cooperation from both sides. Secondly, trust is developed because the government departments and NGOs depend on each other. Seven NGOs felt that their partners in the government departments trust them because they regularly make contracts with them. These NGOs have proven to government that they can deliver good services. Two government officials confirmed this argument. Their partners in the NGOs are perceived as trustworthy because the services are rendered in a satisfactory way. Fourthly, NGOs as well as the officials mentioned that trust develops over time and characterizes long-term relationships. The NGOs also perceived that their partners in the departments trust them because they are intermediary organisation between the communities and government. According to respondents from the departments their trust towards their partner NGOs increased because communities seem to trust the NGOs.

Moreover, NGOs feel trusted because their advocacy work is acknowledged by the departments. Mutual invitations to meetings and functions are also described as part of a trustee relationship built on trust.

One NGO stated that the existing trust is bound and confirmed through a contract. The officials of the departments commented on this as well. Even though there is trust, in particular, with their service providers, mechanism of control like quarterly reports etc. is needed. The officials mentioned explicitly, that the reports are not a sign of mistrust of the NGOs but an instrument to protect, monitor and justify their work and resource allocation towards the public. These reports and contracts also make NGOs accountable towards their beneficiaries.

The interviewees stated that there is a lack of trust in certain areas as well. NGOs have difficulties in trusting government because of the apartheid history. Not only the NGOs but also the department officials mentioned that the history of apartheid is a constraint

to the development of mutual trust. Officials responded that it would be “sad” and “hard” if government would not trust NGOs because of the apartheid history. Government has to consider NGOs as partners because previously civil society and government were on opposing sides.

The government officials described that they personally are often seen as ‘the government’. This causes that they, individually, often have to work hard to gain trust. The department representatives feel that they often have to overcome and ‘make up’ for their whole department. Officials of one department admitted that the networks between their directorate and NGOs are commendable and propitious but this might not be the case between other officials of other directorates in the same department.

Two respondents of NGOs disagreed that the cooperation they have with the government departments is based on trust. They feel that the relationship is only pragmatic. In addition, NGOs responded that government and NGOs have different agendas; hence, trust is difficult to develop.

The perception of trust was also operationalized through the confidence of predicted behaviour, meaning if NGOs think that their government partners keep their word. Eleven NGOs agreed to this question. They raised the point that this is only applicable for the current relationship established within and through their contact partners in the departments. Eight respondents in the government departments feel that their NGO partners keep their word. Furthermore, NGOs confirmed that they have the confidence that their partners in government keep its word.

According to nine NGOs their partners in the departments do not keep their word. The inability and missing confidence to predict behaviour was blamed on the high number of political changes and lack of consistency within the departments. One official also disagreed that NGOs keep their word.

Eleven respondents of NGOs and eight of the departments stated that they could rely on their partners in the current networks. Both sides mentioned that they have to rely on each other if they want to work together. One official indicated that government has to rely on NGOs with caution because government has to control the work of the NGOs.

Nine NGOs disagreed with the statement that they could rely on government departments. They perceive it as damaging for the role of NGOs as civil society organisations because NGOs would then be counterparts to government which would not be appropriate for the nature of NGOs.

Table 1: Trust according to types of NGOs

		Type 1 (7)	Type 2 (6)	Type 3 (7)	Total (20)
Networks are based on trust	Yes	7	5	6	18
	No	0	1	1	2
Confidence of predicted behaviour: Partners keep their word	Yes	6	2	3	11
	No	1	4	4	9
Rely on their partners	Yes	6	2	3	11
	No	1	4	4	9

Source: author's interviews

Table 1 illustrates the presented indicators according to the type the NGOs belong to. As presented, 18 NGOs perceive that the networks with government were based on trust. Nearly all the NGOs of type 1 answered the questions concerning trust positively. Two NGOs of type 2 and 3 of the NGOs of type 3 believe that their partners keep their word and that they can rely on their partners in the departments. The results indicate that trust develops between the partners even with the NGOs that do not have a long-term contract with the departments.



3.2.4. Norms that encourage cooperation and collective action

Norms that encourage cooperation and collective action characterize networks that contain social capital. Reciprocity of support was operationalized through the question whether the government departments would be among the first contact partners for NGOs if a problem arises. Seven NGOs answered positively. However, 13 respondents of NGOs also responded in the negative to this question because the government departments are not their main funder or most important partners.

Four officials would contact NGOs if a problem would arise but only if the issue is linked to the cooperation with them. One department mentioned that the NGOs are the most important partners in policy making, in problems with service delivery and policy implementation. For the other departments NGOs are not in the position to support them in their work.

The common objectives of the network partners also indicate norms that encourage collective action and cooperation. The respondents were asked to assess if they feel that the objectives of their organisation are reflected in their partner's organisations. Both sides responded that in a broader sense NGOs as well as the government departments have the same objectives, like the elimination of poverty, overcoming inequalities, eradicating unemployment, improve the living conditions of the poor, and enhancing the capacities of families and communities. However, the manner in which to achieve these goals is quite different. Government departments are more output oriented and do not consider sufficiently the processes in achieving the objectives. The time frame, the political approach and the resource allocation of government to achieve the objectives diverge from that of NGOs.

For one department the objectives of the department are not reflected in the work of NGOs because NGOs do not understand the bureaucratic system.

If NGOs and government departments provide services mutually for each other, this supports cooperation and collective action. Services that are rendered by NGOs for government include training programmes, projects, research, monitoring, evaluation and improvement of services. The departments provide the NGOs with the policy framework, funding and support them in policy education.

NGOs and the government departments had to identify whether the networks produce common outcomes. Uplifted and empowered communities, protection for children, trained teachers, equipped Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres and improved delivery of services were named by both sides as common outcomes. Additionally, the cooperation lead to well formulated policies with the involvement of different stakeholders and strengthening of democracy were also mentioned. Furthermore, improved accessibility and the avoidance of service duplication are common outcomes of the cooperation.

Table 2: Norms that encourage cooperation and collective action according to type of NGO

		Type 1 (7)	Type 2 (6)	Type 3 (7)	Total (20)
Reciprocity of support → first contact partner if problems arise	Yes	5	2	0	7
	No	2	4	7	13
Objectives are also reflected in partner organisation	Yes	7	3	4	14
	No	0	4	3	6
Service providers	Yes	7	6	0	13
	No	0	0	0	7
Common outcome	Yes	6	2	3	11
	No	1	4	4	9

Source: author's interviews

Table 2 presents which type of NGO relates norms that encourage cooperation and collective action to the networks with the government departments. These results show again that not only NGOs, whose core business is funded by the departments, have norms for collective action and cooperation in common.

3.2.5. Interpersonal communication and exchange

Good communication between partners also indicates whether social capital is a feature of the networks. The network partners communicate through letters, emails, fax, telephone and face to face; email and telephone. More than half of the interviewees confirmed that they communicate “often”, “very often” or on “a regular basis” with each other. Reasons for communication are mostly invitations to functions/conferences, workshops and information exchange as well as service delivery or project related issues. Furthermore, the partners correspond with each other due to policy making and submissions. One department communicates frequently with their NGO partners to build up relationships and to keep them informed about their current work.

Concerning the information from government relevant to their organisation, the opinions among the NGOs were divided. More than half of them believe that information through and from government is easily accessible. Seven NGOs even used the terms “very good” for the communication with government. They perceive that their partners in government respond quickly. Good communication was related to long-term relationships and the fact that individuals get to know each other personally.

In contrast, eight NGOs were quite dissatisfied with the access and spread of government information. It was described as a strain to access the right person on the phone. In addition, they complained that information on the web pages is not updated regularly.

When the NGOs sent submissions or requests to the departments they received no responses.

Today is the local district committee meeting at 10h. And I knew that I had this appointment with you so that was made in advanced. And they faxed me that letter yesterday that the meeting is today that makes it impossible for me to attend because less than 24h notice was given.¹⁸⁷

NGOs complained that invitations often come too late making it challenging to allocate personnel for the meetings. In particular, if government expects NGOs to invite or integrate the communities, short notice is a big challenge.

The communication was mostly described as good by the departments. Correspondence is initiated from both sides. The departments themselves are also critical about their external communication. Poor communication could create mistrust and a lack of understanding between government and civil society. The South African apartheid history created mistrust towards government, for this reason government has to be sensitive in its communication methods. The officials acknowledged that they themselves have to be open. They have the responsibility that their partners receive all information needed.

But it is very important how you ask for the information you want to get. That is again history, because sharing information could have been very dangerous during apartheid, so some are still suspicious and if you just ask for information you won't get it. It is important to let them always know what you need, why you need information and for what it is going to be used.¹⁸⁸

It was indicated that good communication with NGOs might be a priority for the particular directorate in the department but other directorates in the same department might prioritise communication differently.

¹⁸⁷ NGO F

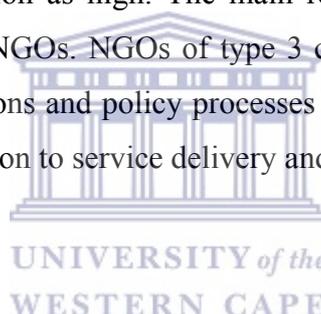
¹⁸⁸ Department C

Table 3: Interpersonal communication and exchange according to type of NGO

		Type 1 (7)	Type 2 (6)	Type 3 (7)	Total (20)
perception of communication	+	6	3	6	12
	-	1	3	1	8
Frequency of communication	(very) often	7	3	4	14
	rarely	0	3	3	6
3 main reasons for communication	Service delivery & project related issues	7	6	0	13
	information	2	1	6	9
	workshops	4	3	3	10
	Policy processes	6	3	5	14
	invitations to functions, conferences etc.	2	5	7	14

Source: author's interviews

The interpersonal communication according to the different types of NGOs shows that there are NGOs from type 1, 2 and 3 that perceive communication as positive and that the frequency of communication as high. The main reasons for communication vary among the different types of NGOs. NGOs of type 3 communicate mainly because of information exchange, invitations and policy processes while NGOs of type 1 and type 2 communicate mostly in relation to service delivery and project related issues.



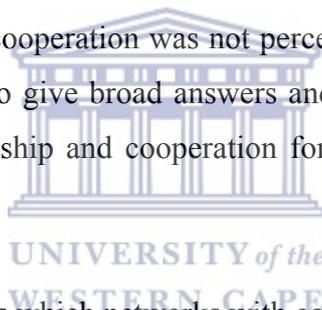
3.2.6. Conclusion

From the preceding data it can be concluded that SC forms part of eleven NGO networks. The general perceptions of these eleven NGOs are positive. They confirm a good relationship with their partners in the various government departments and describe the networks with positive attributes.

The respondents of these NGOs perceive trust as a basic principle of their relationships with the departments. They believe that they can rely on their partners in the government departments and/or that their partners in the departments keep their word. Common norms that encourage cooperation and collective action are in place. These NGOs share objectives with the departments and perceive that through the networks common outcomes could be achieved. Reciprocity of support was not confirmed by all of the respondents. The interview results show that the indicator chosen to prove reciprocity of support was not appropriate. The question related to reciprocity of support, 'whether the government departments would be among their first contact partners', was mostly answered negatively due to the fact that the government departments are not their most

important partners. The cooperation with other, non state partners, are closer and therefore also the first ones to approach for problem solving. The aspect of reciprocity could not be proven. The responses to the indicator used for ‘interpersonal communication and exchange’ confirmed that the same eleven NGOs are also among the NGOs that communicate regularly with the government departments through different communication channels. The communication is characterized by a vibrant and interpersonal exchange.

In contrast, in nine networks SC does not exist. Some of the NGOs of these networks gave contradictory responses. Seven of these for example perceive general trust towards their partners in the government departments but they did not feel that they can rely on government and/or that they can predict future behaviour of their partners. Most of these NGO’s objectives are not aligned with the ones from government departments. The communication is described as “difficult” and “unsatisfying”. Even though these NGOs answered positively to some of the questions about SC either ‘trust’ or norms that encourage collective action and cooperation was not perceived. Two of these NGOs indicated that it is quite difficult to give broad answers and responses generalizing all departments because the relationship and cooperation for them differ dramatically from department to department.



The following table 4 illustrates which networks with corresponding type of NGOs have developed SC. All the networks, except one, of NGOs, which are regular service providers for the departments, obtained SC. This could be explained by the regular funding over time which leads to the development of mutual trust. These NGOs rely on the department for their funding. The network partners communicate regularly, because of/ due to the regular funding. The immediate resolution of conflicts and problems is of interest to both sides for continued cooperation. Another explanation for respondents of type 1 NGOs answering positively is that they were afraid that answering trustfully might have negative consequences for the funding relationship. It was guaranteed that the interviews were anonymous, even though these NGOs might have been suspicious/ afraid, that the departments could hear about the interview and that this would influence, in particular, the funding relationship. It is interesting that SC forms also part of two NGOs of type 2 and three of type 3. It indicates that funding is not the decisive component for developing SC networks. Trust also develops without funding contracts. NGOs of type 2 and type 3 relate with the government departments because of advocacy work

and/or occasional projects. This indicates that the personal relationships between the network members are the determining factor that SC can be formed.

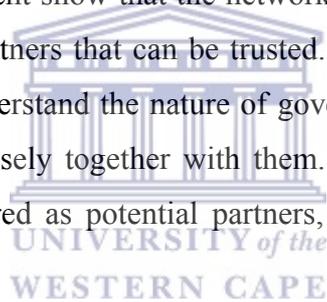
Table 4: Type of NGOs in relation to which networks they belong to

	Type 1 (7)	Type 2 (6)	Type 3 (7)	Total (20)
Networks including SC (NGO+)	6	2	3	11
Network without SC (NGO-)	1	4	4	9

Source: author's interviews

SC forms part of five of the existing networks among the six selected departments and NGOs. The eight respondents of these departments confirmed that the networks are based on trust and norms that encourage collective action and cooperation. They perceive NGOs as their partners and network with them. Communication is characterized as personal and regular.

The responses of one department show that the networking with NGOs is not based on SC. NGOs are not seen as partners that can be trusted. For this department NGOs are organizations that “do not understand the nature of government” and therefore government should not work too closely together with them. According to that department, before NGOs can be considered as potential partners, firstly have to understand bureaucracy.



3.3. Political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process

As presented in the methodological framework, political participation by NGOs in the policy formulation takes place if, (1) these organisations have various opportunities to contribute to policy formulation and (2) if they themselves perceive that they can participate in the process.

3.3.1. Actors involved in the process

The empirical results show that there is indeed political participation of interest groups and, in particular, of NGOs in policy formulation. Sixteen NGOs indicated that government departments had asked them to participate in policy formulation at least once. The officials of the departments confirmed that different stakeholders for policy formulation are consulted for example, departmental officials, NGOs, other departments, teacher unions, different levels of government, trade unions, higher learning institutions,

women and children groups, political parties, CBOs, lobby groups, civic organisations, and other stakeholders. Two departments admitted that consultations with NGOs about policies rarely occur. One department rarely involves NGOs or other interests groups in the process of policy formulation because most of the policies are drafted on the national level.

3.3.2. Opportunities for NGOs to contribute to the policy formulation process

As mentioned in the introduction, political participation of interest groups in policy processes is required by the South African constitution. As illustrated in the previous section, NGOs were asked by government departments to participate in policy formulation, while 15 NGOs indicated that their organisation contributed voluntarily to policy formulation. The department officials confirmed that they involve NGOs, which shows that NGOs are invited to contribute to the policy formulation process.

NGOs as well as the department officials confirmed that interest groups contribute formally to the policy formulation. They provide their input through written submissions, in stakeholder meetings, workshops, public hearings and policy reviews. Contributions are submitted in the form of written documents or oral participation in meetings. These contributions include opinions, work experience, recommendations, claims, research results and expertise. The respondents described the formal ways of contribution as follows:

- *Stakeholder meetings* are meetings where the stakeholders with an interest in a particular policy assemble to discuss the policy. Normally, one department or political actors identify the relevant stakeholders. These identified stakeholders are then invited to a meeting. Sometimes the stakeholder identification is also participatory, meaning that through the contribution and involvement of some role players, stakeholders are identified.
- *Public hearings* are announced in the government gazette¹⁸⁹ and in newspapers. Some departments also send out invitations to public hearings. Public hearings are held by individual departments as well as in cooperation with other departments concerning a policy. For public hearings a day is announced, a time and a venue. On that day, interest groups as well as individuals can contribute their

¹⁸⁹ The Gazette is an official publication of all Government notices, including the operation dates of Acts of Parliament. Once the notice in the Gazette is published, the public is deemed to have notice of it.

expertise and ideas on the policy. Any interest group or individual may contribute.

- The departments also request *submissions* and *policy reviews* to receive input from their partners. An already drafted policy is often attached to the request of submissions. The department officials explained that the drafted policy is like a proposal from the department to stimulate a discussion. The different stakeholders are asked to comment. The process is sometimes longer because departments distribute the draft policy several times for comment before the department takes the final decision. Policy reviews are similar to the request of submissions. The difference is that a policy already implemented will be reviewed. Submissions are the formal way NGOs use to contribute voluntarily to the formulation of policies.
- Policies are also discussed at *workshops*. Workshops are mainly organised for additional input to a policy. The respondents did not indicate clearly when, why and how often workshops concerning policies are held. Normally, different stakeholders are invited to these workshops.

The departments define which formal channel of contribution they want to use for policy formulation. Each department holds public hearings and accepts submissions. Workshops, stakeholder meetings and policy reviews are frequently used by three departments for participatory policy formulation according to the respondents.

In addition to the formal channels, the Provincial Development Council (PDC) was mentioned as an institution in place for participatory policy making. Two NGOs and four government departments mentioned that the PDC is an additional instrument where NGOs could participate in the policy making processes. According to the respondents, NGOs represent civil society in the PDC. The department officials indicated that the PDC is a platform for discussion. Important issues of society are considered by the PDC and the discussion has “direct impact” on policies because the PDC works closely together with the premier of the Province. It is questionable in how far the PDC really has a “direct impact” because its influence on the premier of the province and on the political debate is not measurable.

The NGOs were critical towards the PDC because the selection criteria of which NGOs represent civil society are not clear to them. According to one NGO, it is debatable if

the NGOs involved are really representatives of ‘civil society’ and if these NGOs are not biased towards government. In general, the existence of the PDC itself for political debate was perceived as positive. Further data about the PDC was not collected because the influence on policy formulation processes of the PDC is complex and goes beyond the participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process.

In addition to the formal involvement, interviewees were asked about the informal involvement in the policy formulation process. Various NGOs described informal ways to contribute to the policy formulation process. Five respondents of NGOs mentioned that they participate in policy formulation process through meetings or through personal contacts with officials. Sometimes, in these meetings, the partners agree on the next formal step; whether the official takes the process further or whether the NGO takes the initiative to do so. Two NGOs mentioned that at functions or conferences, where they meet department officials by chance, they sometimes discuss policy issues. In particular, the NGOs of type 1 indicated that at meetings, concerning other issues, policies are often discussed during breaks or after the meetings. Respondents from the departments confirmed the latter point.

None of the government officials answered positively, when they were asked about the informal involvement in the process of policy formulation. In contrast, officials indicated that informal phone calls and personal conversations with NGO staff concerning policies are part of their cooperation. This seems contradictory but it could be interpreted that the government officials want to maintain the view that they treat each partner in a consistent manner. In addition, there might be the fear that ‘informal contact’ would be seen as corruption or favouritism.

The interviews also investigated in which phase of the policy formulation NGOs mainly participate. The officials in the departments responded that any policy was driven by a need. NGOs are described as the organisations that often advocate for the need of the people. Therefore, the involvement of NGOs is perceived as important in the very beginning of the policy formulation phase when a problem arises and policy formulation is demanded. NGOs confirmed that they are often initiators of new policies but in contrast to the department’s responses they perceive that they are mostly involved in a later phase of policy formulation. According to them, they are mainly involved when policies are already drafted and the departments request more input, alternatives, opinions and

other perspectives on the policy. The respondents confirmed, as described in the context section, that NGOs are not involved in the decision making about how the policy is finally formulated.

Opportunities to contribute to the policy formulation process are also determined by the frequency of involvement. Two departments pointed out that no policy is made by government without the involvement of interest groups. Some of the NGOs interviewed could not answer this question satisfactorily because not every NGO is involved in the policy formulation of every policy. Five NGOs indicated that they feel that the department always involves them when a policy related to their working field is discussed. Six respondents were dissatisfied with the frequency of involvement of NGOs in the policy formulation.

The department officials described the role of the departments in the policy formulation process as the following: the departments have the responsibility to motivate as many stakeholders as possible for input to a policy. If too few role players are involved in the policy making the final policies would not be effective because NGOs and other interest groups would not support the implementation of the policy. According to the officials, the departments have the obligation to make this process as participatory as possible.

There are some details which indicate that participatory policy formulation still varies among the departments. The respondents were requested to respond to the following questions to obtain detailed information about how participatory the process is: How much time does the department allocate to write submissions? How much in advance are meetings, public hearings and workshop announced? Is it really possible for the various interest groups to participate in spite of time, resource and capacity constraints? Does the department allocate a part of their budget for participatory policy making? Do the departments consider the different languages when they request submissions and at meetings? The departments themselves did not answer all these questions and were somewhat evasive. Only one department could respond in a positive and clear manner to all these questions. Twelve NGOs responded that there is mostly enough time for themselves to participate but there is not enough time to consult their 'clients' or to organize and involve them in the process. The language issue was only raised by one NGO. The respondent mentioned that there have been events, in particular, recently where language was considered and everybody could contribute in his/her own lan-

guage. Material is also available in the three main languages of the province Afrikaans, Xhosa and English, but English clearly dominates in official meetings.

Box 1 presents an example of a participatory policy formulation process of the Western Cape Provincial government when developing the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Strategy. The information about this process was derived from the secondary data such as invitations, presentations and policy drafts provided by the DSSPA. Three of the interviewed departments¹⁹⁰ as well as several of the interviewed NGOs¹⁹¹ were involved in the formulation the ECD strategy. The ECD strategy formulation process illustrates the NGOs involvement in the process of policy formulation. In this case, workshops were the main source for policy formulation. The different phases of the policy formulation process can be followed as well throughout the ECD process. The problem identification was done by the DSSPA, the agenda setting in a broad participatory process and the decision about the final policy by the department followed by the decision of the politicians. The ECD strategy was presented to the politicians directly after the public consultations process without changes.

BOX 1: The policy formulation process of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) strategy

In the first budget speech (which is at the same time similar to a personal policy statement) of the Minister of the DSSPA, in June 2004, she indicated that ECD would be one of the key focus points of her work. The minister, in cooperation with the department's staff, defined the goals for the ECD strategy. Recognising that ECD covers work, done by the Department of Education and the Department of Health, the minister of DSSPA met with her counterparts namely the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education. They agreed that the ECD strategy will be a provincial transversal strategy that all three ministers will jointly drive and take responsibility for. Afterwards, the minister of the DSSPA and the director of the policy directorate called the Department of Health and the Departments of Education officials together to establish a task team to drive the development of the ECD strategy. The situational analysis was done by the departments in cooperation with key NGOs by using various research documents. This was followed up by workshops where the key NGOs participated as well. Key NGOs were defined by the departments. These are those NGOs that build the consortia of the early childhood training and support institutions. These NGOs are bigger NGOs that offer support to ECD community groups and train the teachers. They are service providers for the department/funded by the department.

A task team, consisting of the three departments' staff and key stakeholders, drafted the ECD strategy, which was the base for further discussions. The stakeholders are NGOs, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, district offices of the three departments, local government officials, other government departments, ECD centres, and community structures. The public consultation process ran from June – September 2005. Firstly, the strategy was presented to the staff of the 3 departments and distributed in the departments. Thereafter, the strat-

¹⁹⁰ DSSPA, Department of Health, Department of Education

¹⁹¹ Build a better society (BABS), Child welfare society cape Town, Early learning resource unit (ELRU), Grass-roots, Ikamva labantu, Centre for Early Childhood development

egy was discussed in smaller consultative workshops. These workshops were organized by the DSSPA through their 16 district offices throughout the Western Cape Province. Community structures and NGOs working in these districts were invited to participate in the workshops. The other two departments also held workshops with their role players. The strategy was presented at the Specialists Committee (SPESCOM) to the social partners of the DSSPA as well. The Specialist committee is constituted by the PDC and consists of representatives of labour, business, the private sector and civil society. Several social partners gave input to the strategy.

In July, invitations for a big stakeholder consultative workshop were sent out to all the NGOs that are cooperating with the departments including NGOs that are not funded by them. The 18th of August the stakeholder consultative workshop took place. Due to the input of the stakeholders on the workshop changes were made on the drafted policy. At the workshop the three MECs of the departments announced that a summit was going to be held in September. Invitations were sent out by the 3 departments to their key stakeholders, to all other provincial departments and to local government/ municipalities throughout the province as well as technicians and other teaching institutions who offer ECD courses. In addition, each of the 16 district offices of the DSSPA organised a delegation from civil society including ECD centres, ECD forums in communities and home-based crèches.

On the 16th of September 2005 the summit of the strategy was held. Before the strategy went to the cabinet around 600 people participated in the process of the policy formulation, with most of them were representing organisations and communities. The engagement of NGOs that are directly involved in the work of ECD made the policy formulation process quite participatory. The ECD strategy draft, lastly adjusted because of the inputs at the summit, was presented without further modification to the politicians.

The process in respect of engaging the politicians ran from September - November 2005. Firstly, the cabinet committee had to approve the strategy. The final ECD strategy was presented to the cabinet and approved by the provincial cabinet on the 16th of November 2005.

The ECD strategy is currently being translated into Afrikaans and Xhosa. Thereafter, it will be widely disseminated and a process of public participation for implementation embarked on. Public education and information process about the strategy will take place. A booklet will be printed for information of the public. There are still some stakeholders identified who must be engaged in terms of the ECD strategy namely the governing body of municipalities called SALGA and the individual municipalities themselves. However, they will be covered in the implementation and the extensive public education process which will be engaged in from January - April 2006. At the beginning of 2006 workshops are to be held to identify who are the partners that can support the implementation phase.

3.3.3. Perception of participation in the policy formulation process

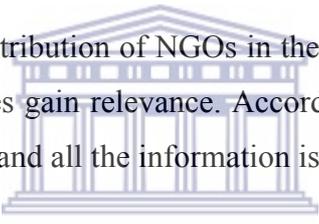
The process of policy formulation was in general described as participatory. Some interviewees of NGOs mentioned that they feel certain processes are only done to maintain the pretence of participation. According to NGOs, short notice for submissions indicates that participation in the policy formulation is not really desired. On the other hand NGOs also reported that there are certain policies and policy processes, as for example the ECD strategy process, where they feel that they are treated as partners and can really participate in the formulation. According to the respondents, with these policies, like the ECD strategy, they have a sense of ownership of the policy even though

they are aware of the fact that the final decision about the policy is made by the politicians and that additional constraints as for example the budget has to be considered.

The NGOs were requested to respond whether the final policies are a desired outcome and whether they usually reflect the objectives and position of the NGOs. These questions are indicators whether NGOs perceive that they can participate and if they felt acknowledged in the process. Six NGOs agreed that their objectives were reflected in the policies formulated and that the final policy is perceived as a desired outcome. Fourteen NGOs said that their contributions were considered. The general perception is that the departments acknowledge and include inputs from NGOs. The NGOs indicated that they understand that their individual contribution might not be reflected in the policy because it is an outcome of a participatory process of various actors and interest groups together.

It is not about appreciating their contribution or not, it is essential for policy making. Without them we can't do anything.¹⁹²

The officials appreciate the contribution of NGOs in the policy formulation process and argued that through this policies gain relevance. According to the officials interviewed every contribution is evaluated and all the information is recorded.



We try and collect all of them. But you see there are times where the contributions contradict each other, then we look at the majority view and also what the people saying mostly if there is very contagious stuff we will engage further. Obviously if the contagious stuff is out of our constitution or in contradiction with laws, then we will not be able to take that in. But most of the times our role players on provincial level, our role player functions is to look at what people say and how we could incorporate things. Sometimes people say: 'but I don't see my comments in the bill' but obviously not everybody's comments can be incorporated.¹⁹³

The quote shows that the department should have the role of collecting all the input and reviewing it. In a second step the departments decide how to formulate the final policy. The problem the departments face is the decision-making about a policy because the different stakeholders have conflicting views. Here, the departments have the role to mediate and take a decision. This quote also illustrates the difficulties in assessing to what degree the final policy was influenced by which organisation.

¹⁹² Department A

¹⁹³ Department F

3.4. Functions of networks for political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process

We have seen so far that SC forms part of networks between NGOs and government departments and how NGOs participate in the policy formulation process. The focus will now shift to the analysis and reasons for political participation of NGOs in this process. Functions and effects of these networks are presented.

3.4.1. NGO perspective

In the following analysis the results are not differentiated according to the various types of NGOs (type 1,2,3). Section 3.2.6. indicated that type 1 NGOs are more likely to belong to a network that includes SC. (In the following the abbreviation NGOs(+) represents NGOs whose network with the departments include SC and NGOs(-) stands for the networks without SC.) The results showed also that the funding is not the decisive reason why NGOs are NGOs(+).

The following table illustrates the differences between NGOs(+) and NGO(-) and their opportunities to participate in the policy formulation process.

Table 5: Opportunities to participate in the policy formulation process, NGOs(+) vs. NGOs(-)

Opportunities to contribute to the process of policy formulation		NGOs(+) (11)	NGOs(-) (9)
asked to		11	5
Not asked to		0	4
How were they asked to participate?	Stakeholder Meetings	8	0
	Public hearings	10	2
	Submissions	11	5
	Workshops	9	1
	Other	10	0
voluntary		9	6
Not voluntarily		2	3
How did they participate voluntarily?	Stakeholder Meetings	0	0
	Public hearings	4	2
	Submissions	9	6
	Workshops	0	
	Other		0

Source: author's interviews

Every NGO(+) was requested by the departments to participate in the policy formulation process and five of the NGOs(-) as well. When they were asked to participate,

NGOs(+) were involved through stakeholder meetings, public hearings, submissions, workshops and others. In contrast, the NGOs(-) only participated through public hearings, submissions and workshops. This illustrates that networks including SC provide NGOs with the opportunity to be involved in the process in various ways. Networks including SC diversify opportunities of contributions.

Nine of the eleven NGOs(+) and six out of nine NGOs(-) have participated voluntarily in the process of policy formulation. NGOs(+) as well as NGOs(-) participated voluntarily through public hearings and submissions. This shows that NGOs engage in the process independent of whether SC is part of the network they have with government.

As presented in the methodological framework, the frequency of contact, the question whether involvement is formal or informal as well as the question of at which phase of the policy formulation process the NGO gets involved, also determine the indicator ‘opportunities to contribute to the policy formulation processes’. Ten NGOs stated that they were involved informally in the policy formulation process as was presented in the previous section. These ten are reflected in the table under the aspect of ‘other’ ways of contribution. Only NGOs(+) described this informal involvement which indicates that networks including SC are functional to promote informal involvement in the process of policy formulation.



Comparing the aspect frequency of contribution with the SC networks, six NGO(-) stated that the frequency of involvement of NGOs is too low. In contrast, the eleven NGOs(+) feel that the involvement of NGOs is “sufficient” and “often”. Five NGOs(+) even perceive that they are always involved if a policy, relevant to them, is formulated.

The phase of involvement in the policy formulation process can not be differentiated according to NGO type (+) or (-). NGOs(+) as well as NGOs(-) perceived that their involvement in the process is particularly important in the phase when a demand for alternatives and information sharing arises. In this phase, the need for a certain policy was already spelled out and a decision has been made to formulate the policy on a certain topic. Then, NGOs contribute to policy reviews, present alternatives and raise implementation issues.

The comparison of the NGOs(+) with NGOs(-) elucidated that networks including SC have certain functions. The involvement of NGOs(+) in the process of policy formulation was stronger and more frequent.

We have all kinds of communication. There might be someone among our staff who knows someone in government and communicates informally and that might lead to formal communication. We submit a proposal to them quite formally. We interact in terms of writing letters. And then we have spontaneous interactions where they invite us to present seminars or workshops.¹⁹⁴

The quote illustrates that personal relationships and trust between the partners facilitate the communication between them. Informal phone calls for information exchange ease processes between the NGOs(+) and the departments.

One NGO(+) provided an example: When there is a problem, as for example the kidnapping of children in the Western Cape Province, then, the public demands government to do something promptly. Sometimes their partners in the departments call the NGOs working in this field and ask them for advice. Government is under pressure to act. Expertise from the NGOs is needed to position the departments to draft a policy quickly.

Furthermore, some of the NGOs(+) were requested to participate in preparations for workshops for policy formulation or policy review. This aspect shows that NGOs(+) are perceived as partners who can contribute actively to the process of policy formulation. NGOs(+) described their involvement as not only easy. Sometimes there was a feeling of being abused in the process of policy formulation because of the close contact between the partners. The departments realize that NGOs have certain competences and information that are useful for them and because of the close networking the NGOs(+) provide their information to the departments. Later, the departments present the information as if the ideas and information were all theirs and the NGOs were not acknowledged.

In summary, NGOs(-) can contribute to the policy formulation processes. Two of them mentioned that policy making is not their business and that they want to stay totally away from the political agenda. One NGO(-) mentioned that the organisation is not involved in the policy process because it is too small and too new. The organisation has a lack of capacity and resources needed to participate in the policy process. The inter-

¹⁹⁴ NGO J

viewee of this NGO(-) believed that the organisation could provide valuable input to policies if the departments would support the NGO further. The respondent of this NGO said that the organisation is excluded from certain processes because the organisation has not developed a relationship with the departments yet. This type of exclusion has a negative impact on the process of networking between the different partners. The latter, shows that trust is required to establish networks and in those network it has not been established yet, hence no social capital was developed.

The following table illustrates the differences between NGOs(+) and NGO(-) and their perception of participation in the policy formulation process.

Table 6: Perception of political participation in the policy formulation process in relation to NGOs(+) and NGOs(-)

Perception of participation in policy formulation		NGOs(+) (11)	NGOs(-) (9)
Perception if policy formulation is participatory	positive	11	6
	negative	0	3
Formulated policy seen as a desired outcome	yes	8	1
	no	3	8
Formulated policy reflects objective	yes	8	1
	no	3	8
How are contributions received / treated?	positive	11	3
	negative	0	6

Source: author's interviews

All the NGOs(+) perceived policy formulation to be participatory in contrast to only six NGOs(-). Eight respondents of NGOs(+) believed that their objectives are reflected in the final policies and the final policies are a desired outcome in contrast to only one NGO(-). The eleven NGOs(+) and three NGO(-) perceived that their contributions were acknowledged positively because they receive positive feedback in the department's responses. The NOGs feel in this manner even though the NGO are aware that their contribution is only one among many others and the input of the particular NGO might not be reflected. In particular, through personal exchange at workshops, meetings and public hearings, they feel that their partners in the departments acknowledge them and consider them as partners.

While the respondents were describing how NGOs participate in the policy formulation process, the interviewer motivated the respondents to indicate why NGOs are involved in the policy formulation process. Most of them pointed out that the new democracy and

the history of South Africa is an important reason. They explained that out of the historical context a democracy was created where participation is important and necessary, firstly, to overcome inequalities resulting from the past and secondly, to create a sense of belonging to the nation by all citizens. NGOs can fulfil this role on behalf of the disadvantaged population.

NGOs also described why, in particular, their organisations are involved in the process of policy formulation. Ten NGOs responded that they are involved in policy formulation because they have a good relationship with the departments. Main reasons for the involvement of NGOs(+) in the process are trust developed and the long-term relationship with the departments. Respondents of NGOs(-) answered that they are involved because the departments have to involve interest groups in the policy formulation process but they did not perceive that their contributions are acknowledged nor that their objectives were reflected in the final policies.

During the interview, respondents of NGOs were asked to comment on the statement whether they think that their relationship with their partners in the departments influences their participation in the policy formulation process. Thirteen NGOs indicated that the relationship with the departments influences their opportunities positively to participate in the policy formulation process.

Without the cooperation with the departments the participation in the policy process would only be sending submissions around. They would ask us for submission and we would probably send one but participation would not be real.¹⁹⁵

Through these relationships it is easier for the NGOs to lobby for their interests. The networks provide them with opportunities to be more involved in the process.

According to the interviewees, through their networks the NGOs(+) have better access to information about policy processes. If information is needed they call their partners in the department and ask them at what stage the policy process is at. The NGO(+) have the advantage of knowing who to contact in the department because it is difficult to access the right person for information in big government administrations.

¹⁹⁵ NGO L

NGOs mentioned that the departments requested their participation because there are certain issues and opinions that only NGOs can “bring to the table”. Interest groups have to be involved because government officials are often bound to political promises. Sometimes, bureaucrats cannot state openly everything like NGOs can. Here, the function of being a watchdog for society and independent from government plays an important role. Particularly, some of the NGOs(+) described that through their trustworthy relationships officials discuss issues with them during a phone call or informal meetings. Thereafter, the NGOs bring these issues up in formal meetings.

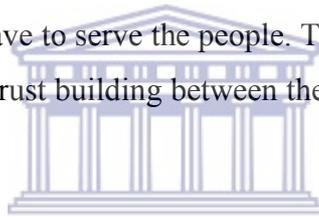
3.4.2. Perspective from the Departments

In general, the departments agreed that the networks facilitate the involvement of NGOs in the process of policy formulation. It was more difficult to acquire information from the officials on whether the networks including SC have special functions for participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process. This was the case, because the departments wanted to maintain the impression that they are always working in a participatory manner. They wanted to transmit that they regularly involve all their partners and all the relevant stakeholders. Nevertheless, it became clear that some of the networks established have further functions. The departments used the networks built as a mechanism to select and reduce the high number of potential NGOs for cooperation. Firstly, NGOs are selected for cooperation through the field they are working in (education, health, housing etc.). NGOs apply for funding to the departments depending which project they are working on, or the department consults NGOs for training, monitoring, evaluation and/or research.

So who are the partners the departments finally do involve in the policy process? Which are the NGOs they ask for submissions, and invite to their workshops and meetings? According to the departments, they have a list or database of NGOs they are networking with. These are the NGOs the departments cooperate with but these are also the ones that they involve in policy formulation. With most of the NGOs on the list the departments already have a long-term relationship. Two departments actively include new NGOs in their database. They update and enlarge the database regularly; one department mainly on the basis of service provision, but the other department also for the purpose of policy making. The other departments request and invite exclusively the NGOs they already have experience with. But what about other NGOs that are not part of their networks? The departments count on their partners they have an established relationship

with. These departments do not see a need to involve other NGOs. This shows that the existing networks have the potential to exclude NGOs that are not part of the network yet. Where SC forms part of the networks the departments tend not to engage new NGOs and partners. There is a danger that new or small NGOs, without the needed resources and capacity to lobby for themselves, are not involved so closely in the policy formulation process. This is an example where strong bonding between partners lead to exclusion of others.

The networks including SC have positive effects as well. The department officials perceived the NGOs they are cooperating with as partners. NGOs are intermediaries for them. The departments like to involve them in the process of policy making because they recognize NGOs as representatives for the communities. The officials stated that history had an impact on their perspective shift. The apartheid bureaucracy created a state administration that was far from the people, according to one respondent. Nowadays, the bureaucracy has to understand that the departments and administrations are working for the people; they have to serve the people. This shows that networks have an important role to play in (the) trust building between the departments and other interests groups of society.



In summary, the networks which include SC are not the only reason for political participation in the policy formulation process but an important reason. Particularly, the NGO(+) perspective indicates that their networks are functional to positively support the engagement in the policy formulation process. From the department's perspective, these networks have positive effects in terms of increasing trust towards NGOs. The department's perspective also shows that the networks are not only instrumental for political participation and policy making, but also produce negative effects. If the departments rely only on the NGOs they are already networking with, then they exclude newly founded NGOs as well as other NGOs that are not part of the existing networks. Furthermore, NGOs networking with departments have advantages through informal channels to access information easier and faster.

Chapter three summarized and analyzed the results from the interviews. The characteristics of the networks as well as the participatory policy formulation were described. The last part focused on the role of SC in these networks. The differences between NGO(+)

and NGO(-) in terms of accessibility and participation were discussed. The following conclusions summarize the results and provide answers to the research questions.



CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS

The thesis investigated political participation in policy making in relation to social capital. In the introduction, it was stated that political participation of interest groups could be improved if social capital is included in the cooperation between actors that participate in policy making. This was investigated through a case study in the Western Cape Province, South Africa. It was found that political participation is still at a low level in South Africa even though the constitutional framework supports the former. Additionally, it was argued that this lack of participation resulted out of an absence of trust and a lack of cooperation between government actors and civil society and that networks including social capital could change this. Derived from the theory, the research focused on networks between NGOs and government actors and whether these are instrumental for the political participation of NGOs in the process of policy formulation. The results show that networks including SC are indeed instrumental for the political participation in the policy formulation process, but with certain limitations.

In what follows, conclusions are drawn from the case study in the Western Cape Province, and then the question of transferability of the research and the relevance to the broader South African context are discussed. Finally, a number of recommendations are made.

Social capital matters for the networks between government actors and NGOs.

Networks between NGOs and government departments in the Western Cape Province also exist without SC, but results show that the members of networks which included SC are more satisfied with the cooperation. The mutual trust and the common objectives create an environment where members perceive each other as partners, who accept and support each other even though the relationships are often confrontational. The tension is a characteristic of these two types of organisations and their styles and functions, but it does not hinder cooperation and good communication to solve difficulties.

Political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation is different when SC forms part of networks. The networks including social capital are instrumental for political participation in policy making, because NGOs(+) have the opportunity to par-

ticipate more intensely and frequently in the policy formulation process. The NGOs(+) feel they can advocate for their interests through the participation in the policy formulation process. They are satisfied with the outcome of policies because their contributions are acknowledged and treated in an appropriate manner. Due to interpersonal communication and various opportunities to contribute to the process NGOs(+) feel that they are partners with the government departments in the policy formulation process. Mutual trust between NGOs(+) and the officials in the government departments ensure that confidential exchanges takes place. The informal involvement of these NGOs(+) facilitates the articulation of their interests. Moreover, the accessibility of government departments is enhanced through the personal relationships with individuals inside the departments.

In networks without social capital political participation in the policy formulation process is weaker and reduced to the engagement of interest groups through formal channels. The personal relationship established between NGOs(+) and government department officials gives their cooperation 'a face'. Due to the networks including social capital government officials are more likely to listen to their partners, because of common norms and respect of their partners. Contributions to policies by NGOs(+) are recognized. The theoretical parts indicated the importance of the need for a powerbase for NGOs. This powerbase supports them to fulfil their role in society, to having 'a voice' and being heard. NGO(-) do not have access to the powerbase needed and communication and accessibility of government becomes more difficult.

Networks which include social capital are not only instrumental for participation in policy making but also restricting. The research question can only be answered positively in part because networks including social capital also have negative effects. As indicated in theoretical framework (see pp. 10-14) a high level of bonding and a low level of bridging can have negative effects which also holds true for the networks investigated. These networks indicate that a high level of bonding among the partners cause the exclusion of others. The bridging toward new or other NGOs occurs only to limited extent. Some of the departments tend to rely only on their partners in the established networks. There is no effort to include new NGOs into the networks because of the positive relationship they have already established. Therefore, new NGOs and those that previously have had no interaction with government are excluded from informal involvement and certain information of the policy formulation process. This shows that the access to political participation of NGOs in the Western Cape Province is not equal.

Additionally, NGOs(+) also have the advantage that they access information easier and faster. The opportunity of NGOs(+) of making informal contributions to the process might hinder or deteriorate the opportunities of other NGOs to participate in the process of policy formulation. These are negative effects of social capital for political participation in policy formulation.

The South African context provides **favourable conditions for social capital to flourish**. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, embeddedness and complementarity as well as an institutional framework are important for building social capital. Complementarity is given in the relationship between government and NGOs because they deliver goods in a complementary way. The aspect of embeddedness was considered as important for the findings of the research. The personal relationship between employees of NGOs and government officials played a significant role in the networks. The constitution adopted of 1996 provided the institutional framework needed for social capital to flourish but the political, legal and economic institutions have also ought to be tested – a task which was outside the purvey of this thesis.

The apartheid history plays a major role in the networking between NGOs and government departments. The historical context was quite important for the research. The apartheid history created mistrust towards government actors which still causes a lack of cooperation and understanding between government and the citizens. Difficulties of NGOs to trust government were related to the past, where government was for most of the NGOs ‘the oppressor’ they were working against. Some NGOs still have difficulties to trust government officials, but the research showed that through a long-term relationship these obstacles can be overcome. Mutual trust was built through personal contact between NGO(+) employees and department officials. Most of the NGOs acknowledge the effort that government attempts to increase NGO participation. From the departments’ perspective, after 1994 the government administration had to understand that NGOs are their partners and important actors, in particular, for social development in South Africa. The officials in the departments had to learn to trust NGOs. The cooperation between government actors and civil society organisations is considered as important to overcome mistrust.

NGOs are perceived as intermediaries. The research results indicate that NGOs are perceived by government as intermediaries between government and the population. In

addition, NGOs regard themselves as these intermediaries. The interviewees of the government departments stated that they consider themselves as partners who represent the poor, weak and marginalized of society. NGOs were also chosen for the research because they are organisations that often play a major role in social development and they are considered as intermediaries between the population and government of society. The aspect of whether the population also perceives NGOs as their intermediaries was neglected in the empirical research. It is questionable if NGOs are always representing the interest of their clients in the process of policy formulation.

Not all our NGOs are very accountable to their communities. For example one of our organisation's working with children will always involve children in the policy process or the network on violence on women would also always involve women but the traditional welfare organisation won't necessarily go back to their clients. This is the challenge for government to engage the people more in the policy process.¹⁹⁶

The quote shows that one department official mentioned that not every NGO communicate with their 'client' in the policy formulation process and that NGOs themselves feel they are representing the people but without consulting with them.

Political participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process takes place with or without social capital. Political participation of interest groups in the policy making process is catered for in the South African constitution. Therefore, political participation of NGOs could take place with or without social capital. This was also confirmed by the respondents. Social capital in networks between government and NGOs is not a precondition for this type of political participation.

By evaluating the empirical section, weaknesses of the research design have to be considered. The thesis explained the existing lack of political participation of the public in the policy making process with the social capital approach. Even though social capital might be of importance it is questionable if it is sufficient to consider only social capital, particularly, considering the negative aspects of networks that include social capital.

¹⁹⁶ Department D

Moreover, the measurement of social capital has to be reviewed in a critical manner. As presented in the first chapters there are various ways of defining SC and hence, of measuring social capital. In this study, SC was measured between individuals as representative of certain organisational structures in terms of trust, norms that encourage co-operation and collective action as well as through interpersonal communication and exchange. The results indicate NGOs staff and department officials perceptions of their relationships and in how far they play a role for political participation in policy processes. It was decided to measure SC in this manner because SC is always built between individuals. The research was conducted with indicators that show the perception and experiences of the respondents. This aspect limits the results to subjective perceptions. This method was appropriate to obtain results of the role SC plays for these networks. Objective indicators are difficult to develop in terms of the social capital approach because trust can hardly be measured through objective indicators. The measurement is critically discussed by academics as presented in chapter two. Some scientists might argue that the lack of objective indicators weakens the applicability, in particular, in policy making. Others, particularly those that collected social capital data, argue that the results and data collected indicate the positive links between social capital and beneficial outcomes for individuals and society. The debate will not be solved in this study but it is a further contribution to present how social capital could be measured and recommendations could be derived although objective indicators are missing.

Additionally, the relationships between NGOs and their clients have not been considered in the empirical research. Although the theory provides many examples of NGOs that represent disadvantaged groups of society, empirical research would add value. The inclusion of the NGO beneficiaries would help to identify gaps and provide recommendations for improvement. The role of NGOs as intermediaries could then also be confirmed from the perspective of the groups they claim to represent.

Because the case study was limited to the Western Cape Province, South Africa, the transferability of the research to the rest of South Africa or other developing countries has to be proven. The constitutional framework for the political participation of interest groups is the same for the nine provinces and in every province NGOs are also part of civil society. This could be an indication of transferability to the whole of the South Africa.

As we have just discussed, there clearly is room to improve the research design. Nevertheless, the result of this research can be taken seriously. The recommendations which follow for NGOs as well as for government departments in the Western Cape Province result from this empirical study.

New or small NGOs are excluded from certain policy processes because the departments tend to rely on their networks established. Therefore it is recommended that the project initiated by the DSSPA to create a database with all the NGOs, CBOs, government actors on local and provincial level, trade unions etc. for the Western Cape Province should be put into practice. Every organisation or government actor that wants to cooperate with other actors of society could use the database. The database should facilitate networking between different actors of society without excluding any important role player.

In addition, NGOs should ensure that they are representing the interests of their clients in the policy process. Therefore measures should firmly be in place to check and assess the needs of their beneficiaries.

If the government of the Western Cape considers that a large number of NGOs should participate in the process of policy formulation, a common strategy for all the departments should be developed so that the participation of NGOs does not vary from department to department as is currently the case.

Even though social capital is only partly instrumental in enhancing the participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process, the positive aspects should be enforced. Participation of NGOs in the policy formulation process could amount to more than 'sending submissions around'. Positive relationships between individuals from different sectors of society are an opportunity to diversify the participatory policy formulation process. There is an opportunity to formulate policies in a more participatory manner by more broadly including NGOs in networks that embody principles of social capital.

In addition, social capital as an integral part of networks can be explored in fields other than political participation. Service provision, for example, is one area in which social capital could have a positive influence as well. Networks without social capital seem to

deliver less and mobilize fewer resources. In particular, the absence of trust limits cooperation which results in fewer positive outcomes.

The recommendations in this thesis concentrate on political participation in the Western Cape. This study has aimed to avoid the mistake of making generalizations concerning social capital. But it may have broader applications to other developmental processes. This study encourages the review of other developmental approaches through a ‘social capital lens’. Social capital will never be a ‘cure-all’ but it may provide new perspectives on how to enhance and improve development practice.



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ANNEX A
INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK

Part I: question about the organization itself

1. Which kind of organisation?

Organization (name/NGO?/government department?)	
Interview partner (name; position)	
Vision & Mission, objectives	
NGOs: Who are the 'clients'?	

(The presented order of the questions was not followed necessarily because the methodological approach of the thesis was semi-structured interviews. The respondent had the possibility to answer the questions as long as he/she wanted to. The interviewer therefore shifted questions or deleted them where necessary. Questions with an arrow → are questions that are going to be asked if the respondent does not answer them through the answer of the main question.)

Part II: question about the network between NGOs/government departments of the Western Cape Province

1. Is there a network with NGO(s) / government departments of the Western Cape Province?

2. How would you describe your relationship with the NGO(s)/ government departments in terms of funding?

3. Please mention two words that describe the relationships between your NGO/department and government departments/NGOs within this network?

4. (interpersonal communication & exchange) How would you describe the communication between your NGO/department and government departments/NGOs?

→ Who communicates with whom?

→ Which are the means used?

→ How often do you communicate?

→ Why do you communicate with each other?

→ How do you perceive the communication between your organisation / department and the government departments / NGOs?

5. (interpersonal communication & exchange) What are the 3 main reasons for interpersonal communication between your organisation / department and the departments / NGOs?

6. (common objectives) Do you provide services for the government departments/NGOs?

Yes → Which ones?

No

7. (common outcomes) What are the expected outcomes for your clients of the relationship between your NGO/department and government departments/NGOs?

8. (common objectives) Do you think that the objectives of your NGO/department are also reflected in the work of the cooperating government institutions /NGOs?

yes --> which ones?

No

9. (perceived trust) Now I'm going to read a statement. Please tell me if you agree or disagree:

The cooperation between your NGO/department and government departments/NGOs is based on trust

agree / disagree → Why?

10. (reliability) Statement: *I have the confidence that our partners in the government departments/NGOs keep their word.*

agree / disagree → Why?

11. (confidence on predicted behaviour) Statement: *I can rely on my partner in the government departments/NGOs I am working with.*

agree / disagree → Why?

NGOs:

12a. (reciprocity of support) Statement: *Problems that affect the work of your NGO arise. The government departments you are cooperating with would be among your first contact partners for help.*

yes / no → Why?

Government departments

12b. (reciprocity of support) Statement: *A problem in the field of (add a certain area where a cooperating NGO works in) arise. Would the cooperating NGOs be among you first contact partners for support / help?*

agree / disagree → Why?

Part III: question about political participation in policy formulation

NGOs

1a. (actors involved in the process) Who are the role players that are involved in the policy formulation process in the Western Cape Province?

2a. (possibilities of NGOs to contribute to policy formulation) Have you ever been asked by the government to participate in the process of policy formulation?

Yes

→ How often?

→ Which kind of contribution did they asked for?

Annex A: Interview Framework

→ At which phase of the policy formulation were you asked to engage in the process?

→ Which form of contribution do they asked for?

written ; oral ; recommendations ; expertise; practical experience

→ Are there possibilities to contribute as well informal to the process of policy formulation?

No

→ Why do you think they never asked you?

3a. (possibilities of NGOs to contribute to policy formulation) Did your organization contribute voluntarily to the process of policy formulation?

Yes

→ How often?

→ At which phase of the policy formulation were you asked to engage in the process?

→ Which form of contribution do they ask for?

written ; oral ; recommendations ; expertise; practical experience

4a. (perception of formulated policy) How do you perceive that your contributions to the policy formulation were received / treated by the government departments?

Please motivate

5a. (perception of formulated policy) statement: *The formulated policies normally reflect the objectives of your organisation and considered as a desired outcome?*

agree / disagree → why?

6a. How often are public hearings advertised? And where are they advertised?

7a. How would you judge the frequency of involvement of NGOs in the policy formulation process?

Frequently /often → why?

Too low → why?

8a. Are public hearings/ workshops / request for submissions/ meetings announced with enough time in advanced?

9a. What do you think are further aspects that have to be taken into consideration by the government departments if policy formulation processes should be participatory?

10a. Do you think that government also makes information of the policy processes available for the targeted and disadvantaged group of society?

Yes → how?

No → Why not?

11a. What do think are the reasons why your organisation get involved in the policy formulation process? Do you think that the kind of relationship you have with the department plays a role?

Governmental institutions

1b. (actors involved) Who are the actors the department involves in the process of policy formulation?

If NGO are not among the actors involved, ask why?

2b. (possibilities of NGOs to contribute to policy formulation) How does the contribution of NGOs in the process of policy formulation look like?

(encourage the interview partner to talk about the kind of participation, possible further questions...)

→ How do you involve NGOs in the process of policy formulation?

→ How often?

→ Which kind of contribution do you get / receive /asked for?

→ At which phase of the policy formulation do involve NGOs in the process?

3b. (possibilities of NGOs to contribute to policy formulation) Do you ask for contribution to the process of policy formulation or do NGOs contribute voluntarily to the process of policy formulation?

→ Which form of contribution do you ask for?

written ; oral ; recommendations ; expertise; practical experience, other

→ In which form do NGOs contribute voluntarily to the process?

4b. (possibilities of NGOs to contribute to policy formulation) Are there opportunities or occasions that NGOs could also contribute informally to the process of policy formulation?

5b. Statement: *I would appreciate the contribution of NGOs to the policy formulation.*

agree / disagree → why?

6b. Why do you involve NGOs in the process of policy formulation?

7b. (perception of formulated policy) How do you treat / receive contributions of NGOs?

8b. (perception of formulated policy) Do you think that the final formulated policies also reflect the objectives of your partner NGOs?

agree / disagree → why?

9b. Are there any methods how you categorize the NGOs who participate in the policy process? Do you have a database or list that you use when you want to consult NGOs for policy formulation?

→ How often do you include new NGOs into your database?

10b. How long in advance do you announce public hearings/ workshops/ request for submissions /meetings in advanced?

Annex A: Interview Framework

→ Where do they take place?

→ Do you think that it is possible for all the stakeholders to participate?

11b. Is some money of your of budget allocated to the public participation in the policy process?

yes

no → why?



ANNEX B
LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents of NGOs

When?	Respondent	Organisation
10.8.2005	Mr. Gert Combrick – General manager	Casidra
15.8.2005	Mrs. Carolin – Regional Manager	Black Sash
15.8.2005	Mr. Chris Ahrends – executive director	The Desmond Tutu Peace Centre
16.8.2005	Mrs. Joanne Cartmel – communication director	Social Change Assistance Trust
19.8.2005	Mr. Warren SMit – Programme manager	Development Action Group
22.8.2005	Mr. Themba Mlonyeni – Project Coordinator	Equal Opportunity Foundation
23.8.2005	Ricardo - Coordinator of the research unit	Surplus People Project
29.8.2005	Mrs. Judith Smith - Director	South Africa Media and Gender Institute
29.8.2005	Dr. Haynes - Director	DOCKDA Rural Development Agency
30.8.05	Moses G. Cloete – Deputy Director	Alternative Information and Development Centre
31.8.2005	Katja Schramm – Programme Officer	Democracy Development Programme
1.09.2005	Branda Martin - Coordinator	Goedacht Forum For Social Reflection
2.09.2005	Elena – community development practitioner	Fairest Cape Association
8.09.05	Joane Sampson - Director	BABS – Build A Better Society
13.9.05	Seth Tladi – Director: Development	Triple Trust Organisation
19.9.05	Ms. Unathi Loos – PR Marketing Manager	Learn To Earn
22.9.05	Ms. Ina Vermeulen	Child Welfare Society Cape Town
27.09.05	Mr. Eric Atmore - Director	Centre For Early Childhood Development
4.10.05	Ms. Tape	Grassroots
5.10.05	Jane Gallagher – executive assistance	Ikamva Labantu
6.10.05	Pepe Hendrick – Coordinator of NGO Coalition	Sangoco, Western Cape Province
11.10.2005	Linda Biersteker – Head of the research unit	Early Learning Resource Unit
25.10.2005	Charlene- Management	Contact Trust

Respondents of the Departments

When?	Respondent	Department
26.8.2005	Myrtle Stuurman - Deputy Chief education specialist	Department of Housing
5.8.2005	Ms. Follentine – Director of the directorate Policy and Programme design	Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation
2.09.2005	Dijon Berger – HR manager	Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport
14.09.05	Mr. Philander – Deputy Chief education specialist	Department of Education
15.09.05	Karren Bydell – Manager of the ECD governance and Management	Department of Education
28.09.05	Andre Damon – Head of adult education section	Department of Education
4.10.05	Mr. Mark Gordon- Director of environmental management and land planning	Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning
4.10.05	Debbie van Stade – executive director in directorate Policy and Programme design	Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation
11.10.2005	Juanita Arende – Coordinator for NGOs in the central district of Cape Town in the HIV/AIDS programme	Department of Health