Freedom Betrayed:

NGOs and the Challenges of Neoliberal Development in the Post-Apartheid Era

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I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

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05th October 2009

Abstract

This thesis explores transformations in South African NGOs in the Post-Apartheid era. It focuses on two areas in particular that are often neglected in the study of NGOs: auditing and partnerships are increasingly core activities of NGOs and impact on their logic of operation and their location in wider civil society. In applying a governmentality framework to the neoliberalisation of development in South Africa, this research investigates how development provides a context for governmental technologies and what forms of NGOs they produce. A multi-method, multi-sited research strategy was employed that included in-depth interviews, observation research and other ethnographic techniques.

South Africa's democratic transition and subsequent funding crises gave birth to a new, more streamlined NGO model which can be characterised by flexibility, fluency in auditing techniques and the ability to maintain multisectoral partnerships. Partnerships transform the activities and values of NGOs and provide a cross-sectoral context for the circulation of particular auditing technologies and types of expertise. Indeed, it is argued that the entanglement of NGOs in intersectoral spaces is not only heightened by the prevalence of the partnership agenda in global development and in the new South Africa's reconciliation project, but that NGO activity very much produces these kinds of intermeshing spaces.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is shown to be a key demand of partnerships, thus further reinforcing an audit culture. NGOs, by acting as experts and translators of these apparently mundane techniques to other civil society organisations (CSOs), actively shape practices of development and may come to substitute for civil society. There is continuity between the partnership practices by which — contrary to their emancipatory claims — NGOs become more strategically and structurally embedded in the neoliberal order, and their own governing of CSOs such as the country's strong social movements. It is contended that this is particularly dangerous given the vast developmental challenges facing South Africa and the deeply felt betrayal of freedom's promises by the majority population.

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Acknowledgements

Ph.D. years and my absences haven't always been easy for you. Thank you for being there, staying there and always believing in me. Mandisa's arrival has certainly put anxieties over the Ph.D. into perspective. But it has also made so much more urgent the task of telling better stories and providing better explanations of the world. I am so excited we are on this journey together.

List of Abbreviations

APF	Anti-Privatisation Forum
ARV	Anti-Retroviral
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BIG	Basic Income Grant
CfA	Commission for Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CSI	Corporate Social Investment
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSI	Corporate Social Investment
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GONGO	Government-operated Non-governmental organisation
GRO	Grassroots organisations
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and communication technology
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
Jipsa	Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition
MNC	Multinational Corporation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNGO	Northern Non-Governmental Organisation
NPM	New Public Management
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NSM	New social movement
PMCTC	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approaches
SMI	Social Movement Indaba
SNGO	Southern Non-Governmental Organisation
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
UDF	United Democratic Front
WCAR	World Conference against Racism
WHO	World Health Organisation
WID	Women in Development
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Chapter 1:
One Foot in the Shanty Shack, One Foot in the Boardroom

1.1. Introduction: The view from Constitution Hill

One Saturday afternoon a few weeks after arriving in Johannesburg for my fieldwork, a friend took me to Constitution Hill, one of the city's few landmarks. There is an amazing view over the city, taking in the shiny skyscrapers of the Central Business District and the leafy green suburbs stretching all the way north. The mine dumps in the far distance that scar the landscape serve as a reminder of what the city was built on. Con Hill at once signifies South Africa's past, present and future. The grounds today house the highest court of the country, which guards what is widely seen to be the most progressive constitution in the world. But the Constitutional Court is built on the foundations and incorporates some of the walls of the Old Fort, a high security prison erected by the Boers in the 19th century. During the Apartheid era the prison tracts were used to detain political activists and criminals but also many ordinary people, under notoriously inhumane conditions. Most notably, the Rivonia Trial defendants were held here when they were accused of treason in 1963/ 1964. The court building itself is beautiful: there are lots of windows, sculptures and open spaces. It showcases the work of South African artists and it uses a traditional African system for cooling. Its huge doors are decorated with wood carvings depicting constitutionally guaranteed human rights in all the eleven South African languages[1]; the stairs are covered with tiny bronze ornaments, each individually designed.

It is quite indicative of the new South Africa to build this symbol of democracy and equality on a site that stands for some of the country's most notorious history and its gravest violations of human rights. Old sites, memories and identities are allowed to stand side by side with new, Post-Apartheid ones, seemingly without an attempt to revise or erase history. On the contrary, Con Hill shows how architecture and public history are purposely being refashioned to forge a new democratic

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[1] See appendix 6.

identity. Yet, from the height of Con Hill the inequalities that persist after more than a decade of freedom are also clearly visible. The overcrowded inner city neighbourhoods, the empty buildings downtown deserted as capital has fled elsewhere; the tower of Sandton City that dominates the 'new' business district, the suburbs of Parktown and Westcliff with their gated communities of faux-Tuscan houses guarded by electric fencing and privatised security. Right ahead is Hillbrow, its crumbling facades telling a familiar story about immigration, destitution and crime, and the progression from 'whites only' to brief cosmopolitan heyday to current decay.

The legacy of Apartheid is ever present in Johannesburg's geography; residential segregation is inscribed into the psyche of the city. Post-Apartheid urban development seems only to have increased the city's spatial, racial and class contradictions, some calling it the 'quintessential neoliberal dystopia' (Bond 2007a). Like the rest of South Africa, Johannesburg remains deeply unequal and exclusionary 15 years after the country's transition to democracy. In addition to the legacies of the past, new inequalities have emerged. The restructuring and liberalisation of the South African economy have caused living conditions to be worse than under Apartheid for millions of black people, a fact that is almost impossible to grasp. For instance, South Africa performs very poorly in terms of its Human Development Index (HDI): it is placed 125 out of 179 countries, compared to its ranking in 76th place based on income (UNDP 2008). Unemployment stood at 38.8% in 2008 (SAIRR 2008), with millions of people unemployable due to the skills gap. The HIV pandemic and the belated response of the democratic Government have severely affected all sectors and have reduced life expectancy at birth to 50 years. In addition to these developmental challenges, xenophobia is rife and reached a violent climax in 2008 when tens of thousands of immigrants fled their homes in Gauteng and elsewhere. Post-Apartheid race relations also continue to be troubled. In short, the challenges the new South Africa faces are huge, both in terms of development and poverty reduction and in terms of the consolidation of its democracy. In each instance, 'civil society' is seen as absolutely central. In particular, national NGOs provide a window not only on to the country's civil society sector or the field of development, but constitute a way of exploring the juncture at which this no-longer-so-young democracy finds itself today.

This thesis explores transformations in the organisational form of South African intermediary NGOs in the Post-Apartheid era. It analyses the significance of

partnerships and auditing practices as two central elements of NGOs' infrastructure that impact on their positioning in civil society and in the transnational development domain. My analysis is situated in the wider political economic context of South African democracy and of what can largely (but certainly not exclusively) be termed neoliberal development. In using South Africa as a case study, the research investigates how development provides a context for governmental technologies and what forms of NGOs they produce.

This thesis thus focuses on areas that are usually neglected in the study of NGOs – namely the impact of partnerships and audit culture on such organisations. Conversely, this work aims to contribute new knowledge to development sociology by critically examining partnerships and auditing as essential activities of NGOs in the contemporary era. As such, it argues that the study of NGOs' logic of operation can provide insights into contemporary forms of power and governance in the development domain. The thesis also seeks to advance theoretical debates on governmentality in development by applying the framework to the analysis of civil society dynamics and relations of power.

1.2. The importance of NGOs in Post-Apartheid development

NGOs are key actors in the development industry of most Majority World countries. They may provide services in lieu of weak states, carry out lobbying and advocacy and fulfil a 'watchdog' role keeping government in check. Despite a crisis of legitimacy in recent years, they are still seen by international agencies, governments and an increasingly ethically-oriented private sector as the preferred agent to deliver pro-poor development. This is due to their supposed advantages over governments, typically including greater flexibility and efficiency, informality, commitment and proximity to communities. Accountability practices have emerged as ways of dealing with their crisis of legitimacy whilst seeking to make them more efficient. Notwithstanding, NGOs remain largely unaccountable to the constituencies they work with and are often highly dependent on their funders or partners.

South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994 has brought about substantial transformations in the role of non-profit organisations. Most obviously, NGOs' relations to the state have changed from an adversarial to a potentially collaborative

mode. South African democracy has thus provided an environment in which to investigate how state-NGO relations change when there is a transition of authoritarian to democratic regimes. Formally, the Post-Apartheid legislative environment is now very favourable to the existence of a vibrant civil society. But the NGO sector has been in crisis for some time: international donor funding, initially abundant after the transition, has shrunk dramatically, both as a consequence of a global decline in development funding and due to the re-classification of South Africa as a middle-income economy. Accordingly, the state provides the majority of funding to the NGO sector, effectively outsourcing services it does not have the capacity to deliver.

South African NGOs are moreover involved in increasingly complex relationships and governance arrangements with international funders, civil society partners and Government[2] agencies. As such, the NGOs in this research are located between different types and scales of actors. Being at least in part funded by international development agencies, they remain closest to their 'global' agendas, at times performing governance functions. This positioning between 'local' and 'global' actors attributes them a role as broker and bridge-builder. This location provides a fascinating window from which to research the modalities and technologies characterising NGO-led development in South Africa and to examine their relationships with other development actors across multiple sites and scales. The interplay of 'local', 'national' and 'transnational' spheres in the development domain – and often within one organisation or project – is a central issue in this research. At the same time, the essentially multi-level and trans-scalar character of the development domain implies that labels such as local and global are insufficient on their own to meaningfully situate NGOs and other development actors.

Yet, progressive South African NGOs have also experienced a crisis of identity. Developmental challenges continue to be huge whilst the state has taken on an ambivalent role. On the one hand, it can be described as developmental with welfare programmes having been extended to the poorest; on the other hand, it marginalises and often represses popular resistance to its policies. Many NGOs seem to be caught in the middle, claiming alignment with social movements that protest neoliberal policies and the persistent inequality in South Africa whilst needing

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[2] A note on spelling: I have followed the convention of capitalising 'government' only when I refer to a specific government, for instance the South African Government.

to access government funds and corporate monies for survival – a location captured well by the image of having 'one foot in the shanty town shack and the other in the boardroom', as one NGO professional described it. This metaphor seems to me to point to some of the key issues surrounding NGO-led development in the contemporary era. Accordingly, researching national NGOs can provide insights not just into the South African civil society sector and the neoliberalisation of its development domain; it is also one way of exploring the state of South African democracy 15 years after the transition.

Indeed, the story of NGO transformation in South Africa cannot be told without reference to South Africa's rapid move to neoliberalism after liberation. The speed with which processes of neoliberalisation have taken hold is breathtaking and the consequences clear to see, not least in the fierceness of resistance they have provoked. How NGOs have reacted – or failed to react – to these consequences has called into question their very role and legitimacy. Moreover, on the level of organisations, neoliberal techniques have impacted on the way NGOs are organised, what work they carry out and how they relate to their partners. Calls for increased NGO accountability have necessitated the adoption of a range of technologies and types of expertise broadly in line with neoliberal forms of organisation. Chapter 6 addresses the way in which auditing procedures such as Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) render organisational models more alike. Adherence and proficiency in homogenised formats are considered an indicator of improved capacity of NGOs. Carrying these concerns over to chapter 7, I specifically explore how the resultant technologies and hierarchies of expertise impact on NGOs' relations with other civil society actors.

Partnerships are integral to a new development consensus that sees cooperation and harmonisation as the most effective way to ensure broad-based growth (Craig and Porter 2006, Abrahamsen 2004). I refer to partnerships in this thesis as collaborative arrangements of NGOs with other actors in the development domain, my definition reflecting the language that was used by my informants and in NGO documents. My analysis considers partnerships as one way in which development is talked about, thought about and often practiced. It asks what mode of governance of development such partnerships bring about and what understandings of civil society, democracy and development this mobilises. The focus of this research on partnerships as an essential characteristic of NGOs thus

reflects their emblematic status in terms of a reflexively neoliberal project of global development: a subtler neoliberalism that understands the importance of governing through consensus-building whilst further extending the reach of the market into social areas (Harrison 2005). I demonstrate in this thesis that what might be called NGOs' essential form has changed in conjunction with these above-described transformations in their role and identity. NGOs' modes of operation can be seen as an effect of power relations that are characteristic of the practices of governing in development (Sending and Neumann 2006). In the following section, I summarise the objectives of this research and the methods chosen to explore the research questions.

1.3. Overview of research aims and methods

This thesis explores transformations in the organisational form of NGOs in the Post-Apartheid era. Whereas many critical studies ask how NGOs can be made more accountable or effective, this work centres on NGOs in order to analyse modes of governance in development. I take the partnership idea and auditing culture as two discursive elements which are central to the operation of NGOs in the present era. Both are governmental in that they produce certain types of NGOs that are appropriate to a specific kind of power in development. They employ certain technologies, assume or enable particular roles for NGOs, shape values and impact on organisational structure. Despite this focus on rationalities, technologies and vocabularies of governmental power, the analysis presented here is sensitive to dimensions of exclusion and inequality that characterise South Africa and structure the very field in which NGOs operate. Moreover, this thesis draws attention to processes of marginalisation and homogenisation in civil society. Ultimately then, the research aims to reveal processes at the heart of the governance of development and civil society, both in Post-Apartheid South Africa and with respect to modes of governmentality in transnational government.

Accordingly, my research questions were concerned firstly with the partnership discourse and its impact on the practices of the NGOs in this research, and secondly with the impact of auditing demands and techniques. What are the global and national referents of the partnership agenda? What are the conditions

under which the discourses of multisectoral partnerships or accountability can flourish in South Africa and how do they structure NGOs' relations with their partners? How do NGOs frame these discourses and how are they reworked in the context of civil society relationships? How are auditing technologies understood, negotiated and contested? How have they discursively impacted on each organisation's structure and activities? More broadly, what is the organisational perspective on the role of NGOs in South African development?

I addressed these questions by employing a mixture of qualitative research methods, primarily in-depth interviews (see chapter 3, which discusses my research strategy and methodological approach in more detail). I interviewed 32 NGO staff at 23 different organisations, as well as carrying out 8 expert interviews with other development practioners and 3 biographical interviews. I took the interpretations of NGO leaders and development practioners as central to my enquiry because they gave me an understanding of how discourses were understood, negotiated and circulated by people in the field. Moreover, getting a sense of individuals' histories and experiences through in-depth interviews illuminated in rich and complex ways the way their work and life had changed over the past decade and a half. This data was supplemented by carrying out some observation research in organisations, participation at events and the analysis of documentary sources. These methods provided a different perspective on NGO practices and helped me to develop a more holistic understanding of the research problem.

Much of the research into NGOs in development has been carried out by NGO professionals. Consequently, it is often characterised by a utilitarian reading of projects' intended effects or by micro analyses of their successes or failures (Bryant 2002). Contrary to research dealing with the effectiveness and efficiency of particular NGOs, this thesis uses a discursive-analytical approach and explores how South African NGOs situate themselves in relation to regimes of development governance and which forms and modalities may distinguish them. In-depth ethnographic studies have also examined how development discourses and accountability practices are negotiated and adopted within a single organisation (Ebrahim 2003, Hilhorst 2003). I draw on such scholarship but believe that a multi-sited study, exploring how the partnership mode and impact measurement requirements impact on NGOs across multiple sites, can illuminate wider social and political issues.

Carrying out multi-sited research into NGO practices requires an ongoing sensitivity to the heterogeneity of the South African NGO sector and the great diversity of NGOs considered in this research (also see appendix 2 and the narrative account of participating NGOs in chapter 3). Organisations have different and often contradictory policies, both internally and compared to one another – this acknowledgement of differentiation being precisely the point of a multi-sited research strategy. While the partnership agenda or monitoring and evaluation procedures may be experienced negatively by some NGOs, they may lend certain types of capital to others. For example, particular technologies and vocabularies were being adopted strategically and indeed 'empowered' some of the NGOs in this research.

My research focuses on a subset of national NGO that I refer to as 'intermediary NGOs' (Sanyal 2006, Carroll 1992).[3] Within this set, my selection criteria were broad because I wanted to consider as wide a range of NGOs as possible. The criteria in narrowing my choice were that NGOs had some international linkages, and that they identified partnering as one of their activities or strategies. It is easier to explain what I mean by the term 'intermediary NGO' in the negative: they are not service delivery NGOs, nor survivalist CBOs, nor activist social movements. They are active in the fields of organisational development, capacity building, research, advocacy, training and so on; they provide a link between national or transnational actors, and organisations directly serving communities. The term importantly directs attention to their location between various types of authority (often the state, but it may also be other actors in the international development system) and the citizen or community.

This is not to assume a self-evident verticality. On the contrary, I take intermediary NGOs to occupy what is a trans-scalar development domain (Gould 2004b). This assumption draws on the scholarship on transnational governmentality which has been very relevant for my reading of the development terrain in South Africa. James Ferguson (2006a) for instance rejects what he calls a vertical topography of power, arguing that it is not only important to study NGOs and their interrelations with the state but also how modes of operating within civil society and

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[3] Sanyal (2006) uses the term differently; I find it useful because of the structural location it evokes but I do not fully go along with her usage of the term. Carroll's (1992) study assessed the performance of thirty Latin American national NGOs in the late 1980s; his definition of intermediary NGOs as national organisations that support the grassroots is more similar to the selection criteria for the subset of NGOs in this research, but nonetheless describes a very context-specific type of organisation at the end of the Cold War.

state reconfigure relationships of power and governance (also see Walsh 2008, Ferguson and Gupta 2005). I will speak more directly to the theme of civil society below. Here, it is important to emphasise that this research is concerned with national NGOs, as opposed to international ones operative in South Africa. This focus differs from the scholarship on global development that has otherwise influenced my work. The latter conceives of international NGOs (INGOs) as actors in transnational governance regimes that are capable of penetrating national development arenas, but sometimes bypasses national non-profit organisations as though they were not a part of transnational development networks. The question of how national NGOs are involved in development partnerships that are implicated with but also transgress the level of the state is less frequently posed. One of the original contributions of this research therefore lies in charting how particular discourses and practices in global development map onto national concerns in South Africa. As such, this work begins to develop a contribution to debates about how political power operates across different scales, providing insights into contemporary forms of power and governance. As Sinha (2008) has shown, transnationality itself is not a new phenomenon but rather has been present from the beginnings of developmental modernity. The focus of this research is to explore some of the technologies and discourses that enable and enhance such transnational regimes in the context of national Post-Apartheid development.

The following section discusses Johannesburg as a powerfully evocative setting for the project I have undertaken. The city encompasses vast contradictions of poverty and wealth, joy and despair, and the almost unbearable tension between the hopes for a democratic new South Africa and the realities of the Post-Apartheid globalised economy.

1.4. I heart Jozi[4]: Place of contradictions

Given the aim of this research to produce an analysis of Post-Apartheid NGOs that takes into account the political economic context they operate in, I understood immersion and interaction as central to my methodological strategy. My research design has encompassed multiple sites, but I was physically located in Johannesburg for most of my fieldwork. 2007 was an interesting year to be carrying out fieldwork. It was a time of change, even given the 'short' history of Post-Apartheid South Africa. The presidential succession race in the ANC had begun to come into full swing and dominated the news; the policy proposals for the ANC's 52nd National Conference were finalised and seemed to denote a further commitment to a developmental state, with some commentators noting that the proposals were revealing a party that had 'jumped from centre to left' (M&G March 23 to 29 2007); tensions in the Tri-Partite Alliance were rising in the run-up to Polokwane where Jacob Zuma was eventually voted ANC president, spectacularly defeating Thabo Mbeki. The corruption charges against Zuma were dropped; the biggest public sector strike in Post-Apartheid history brought the country to a virtual standstill in June and July; Freedom Day was marked by riots in Khutsong, where a community had fought integration into the poorer North West Province from Gauteng for a year, reminding some of the 1976 Soweto uprising; a song about the Boer leader De La Rey had become a hit single.

I was initially extremely anxious about moving to a place that is so often portrayed as synonymous with crime and violence. Johannesburg is regularly proclaimed the most dangerous city in the world, so the paradox of my choosing to come to a place to do research that many South African (if they had the right kind of passport) were leaving was ever-present. Accordingly, in preparation for my fieldwork I did not need to learn another language, the traditional training for ethnographers, as much as I needed to become fluent in the 'rules' of my new temporary home. Negotiating access was as much about researching which model of hire car would have the least potential to be carjacked as it was about making

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[4] There is a bright-red banner on the top of a building in down-town Johannesburg, declaring boldly: 'I heart Jozi' (see Appendix 6). I It was the first landmark I recognised – especially important in a city like Johannesburg, which has no river or sea front to provide a point of orientation for new arrivals. I felt as though it followed me around; I could see it from my friend's rooftop across Mandela Bridge, and through the window of an NGO office where I was interviewing. From the 'glass bowl', the visitors' office space at WISER, I could see most of the skyline just ahead of me, with the sign perfectly placed in the centre of my vision.

contact with NGO staff. Whilst I may have been fascinated by being encouraged to run red lights at night or having a panic button on my key ring, there was a genuine urgency to familiarise myself with these peculiarities: an average of 50 people are murdered in South Africa every day, robberies, break-ins and carjackings are extremely commonplace. These sobering crime statistics need to be seen in the context of entrenched and deepening inequalities, massive job losses and rising poverty.

In the event, my anxieties dissipated very soon after my arrival and I became infatuated with the city's constant sense of emergency, its palpable energy and the way everything seemed in flux, on edge. I was lucky because I quickly met a heterogeneous group of writers, academics and artists who shared a love for Jo'burg and its incessant creative buzz. They introduced me to the city beyond its 'architecture of fear' (Ellin 1997) – high walls, electric fences, barbed wire, armed security personnel – and undoubtedly impacted on the knowledge I have produced with this research. Nevertheless, Johannesburg is a place of immense contradictions, where many of the problems at the heart of Post-Apartheid development are plainly visible.

Egoli (the city of gold), as Johannesburg is also known, was founded in 1886, when gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand where there were previously only a handful of homesteads and a few white-owned farms. Only 9 years later, the gold fields were producing 27% of the world's gold, supporting a population of 100,000 from all over Southern Africa and the world. The ever-expanding city quickly became the most cosmopolitan in Africa, containing a huge cultural mix and giving it a unique character and energy that it retains to this day, still attracting a great diversity of people seeking to make their fortunes. But the city does not just retain the character of the gold rush; its geography continues to reflect colonial and Apartheid residential segregation. Back then, racial mixing was considered dangerous, black neighbourhoods were constructed both as sites of degeneration and disease and of political mobilisation and resistance. Still, the Apartheid regime needed a constant supply of cheap labour near Johannesburg's Central Business District and its residential neighbourhoods. The townships in and around Johannesburg are a result of this 'dilemma' of Apartheid urbanisation.

15 years after the transition, these geographies of segregation have not vanished but have arguably been further augmented by the second, neo-liberal,

gold-rush of the 1990s and the associated effects of privatisation. A striking image that is often evoked is the juxtaposition of Sandton's 'world class' glitzy malls, skyscrapers and office blocks with the neighbouring Alexandra, an overcrowded and impoverished township with a considerable percentage of informal settlements, poor services and exposure to flooding. These binary oppositions can distract from the fact that considerable progress is being made by Government in terms of housing and improving of access to services. However, it is also true that these steps have been contradicted by the adoption of cost-recovery measures for service provisions, leaving township residents unable to pay water, electricity or rent.

Significantly, whilst the Government seems formally committed to poverty reduction as part of its recent discovery of a developmental state framework, the townships and shantytowns, which clearly played a central role in the crumbling and eventual demise of the Apartheid regime, are seen as eyesores that trouble the Government's new South Africa success story (Gibson 2008). Keeping the 'second economy' outside of the cities (or, as has been the case in Johannesburg, moving the city out of the city) maintains this official story of the world class location, the poor presumably serving as an unsightly reminder of the failed promises of the transition. As during Apartheid, they appear to be seen as uncivil and dangerous elements by the current elites. A far cry from the rainbow nation, that official narrative of reconciliation, South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world, with Johannesburg one of the most unequal cities.

In addition to my fieldwork in Johannesburg, I also carried out some interviews in Durban and Cape Town and attended academic conferences in Pretoria, Mafikeng and Durban. I travelled in Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal and the Eastern Cape, encountering areas that were far removed from Johannesburg city life, despite the relatively heterogeneous spaces I moved in. Such journeys and encounters provided perhaps the most poignant reminder of the issues at the very heart of NGO activities. A weekend in Polokwane, intended to be a fun time away from the city with friends, had to be cut short because of the intimidating racism of some locals, clearly not used to a group of black and white men and women out together in public. My friends laughed about my shocked reaction – did I think South Africa was like our own little rainbow nation bubble? On a journey through what used to be called the Transkei, I was equally taken aback to see so many men, women and children on the streets in the middle of the day – apparently neither being able to

find work nor attending school. This was not the squalor of some of the urban townships, but it was the same poverty of infrastructure, education, employment and life chances. These were the forgotten provinces, too far from the centres of power in Gauteng or Cape Town to matter yet strategically evoked whenever necessary.

1.5. Civil society, governmentality, neoliberalism: introducing key concepts

NGOs and civil society

The South African non-profit sector is very large, with one study estimating it at 100,000 organisations (School for Public and Development Management 2002). It therefore encompasses a great variety of organisations that differ in size, scope, activities, political orientation, location and so on. I have found useful the typology brought forward by Habib (2003), who suggests that Post-Apartheid civil society is made up of three blocs: formalised NGOs, 'survivalist' community organisations (CBOs) and social movements. Whilst CBOs which numerically dominate civil society are concentrated in areas of service delivery at a local level, larger and more formalised NGOs are involved in intermediary activities and are structurally equipped to benefit from funding. An influential South African study of the non-profit sector further distinguishes between development non-profit organisations (NPOs), survivalist NPOs and oppositional NPOs (School for Public and Development Management 2002). According to that typology, all the NGOs in this research can be described as both oppositional and developmental: they are involved in lobbying and advocacy as well as in the direct improvement of social, cultural or economic well-being. As I will show, this may however not be how they think of or speak about their roles. Self-representation in relation to the state is an important way in which NGO leaders mobilise authenticity and legitimacy (see chapter 5 on NGO-state relations).

The above studies that classify civil society do so in relation to the state and to state power, employing the same state/ civil society division that much of the scholarship on Post-Apartheid development uses. On the contrary, the field of development in which NGOs are engaged is structured by a complex set of relations between state and non-state authorities and global, national and local networks of power. Likewise, the construction of civil society in much of the critical literature as a

site of struggle against the state oversimplifies what are in South Africa intricate and often highly personal relationships and interlinkages between state and civil society. On the level of staffing, NGO work can represent a stepping stone for a professional career in the public or private sector, and much of the capacity of NGOs continues to be absorbed by these two sectors. Moreover, the ruling ANC party is a powerful agent in articulating a particular vision of the liberation struggle and the goals of the national democratic revolution. NGOs are tied into these networks of power in complex ways, not least through a shared history of the struggle.

Whilst the present research does examine relationships of NGOs to the state (see chapter 5), it rejects a binary understanding of the two and situates the analysis in the context of the governmentality of state, NGOs and social movements. The research thus argues that, much like the state they are supposedly directly opposite to, civil society organisations govern, in Michel Foucault's well-known phrase, through the 'conduct of conduct' (Gordon 1991: 2) - they shape conduct by working through desires, aspirations and beliefs. In this way, NGOs, CSOs or the public sector all have to be understood as agencies of government. The following section and chapter 2 will discuss my usage of a governmentality framework.

Perhaps one of the most astonishing aspects of the literature on civil society is the frequent conflation of civil society organisations with highly formalised NGOs. This is not coincidental but rather reflects the language and policies of many funders. Nonetheless, as with NGOs themselves, there exist different and contradictory policies and discourses amongst the donor community active in South Africa. This is perhaps a reflection of the essentially contradictory notion of civil society itself. The global development concern with civil society has been integral to the legitimation of a contemporary version of neoliberal discourse and has arguably been constituted by neoliberalism. At the same time, real challenges against neoliberalisation continue to emerge from other forms of civil society (Sinha 2005).

Partha Chatterjee (2001) points to the problem at the heart of civil society: if civil society organisations are to conform to the normative model of western societies, they must exclude from it the vast majority of the population. He therefore defines as civil society in postcolonial societies 'those institutions of modern associational life set up by nationalist elites in the era of colonial modernity, though often as part of their anti-colonial struggle' (Chatterjee 2001: 174). Political society, on the contrary, captures parties, movements and non-party political formations.

Whilst I have chosen not to adopt the term 'political society' in this thesis, it is an productive distinction to bear in mind in terms of what Chatterjee describes as the framing question in debates over social transformation. In political society, the framing question is that of democracy; in civil society of the colonial period, it is modernity. As he observes: 'in the context of the latest phase of the globalization of capital we may well be witnessing an emerging opposition between modernity and democracy, i.e. between civil society and political society' (ibid: 178). This to me sums up well the contradictory meanings attributed to 'civil society' and the tensions between its different elements.

These essential contradictions that characterise civil society are a central concern of this thesis. There are clearly conflicting approaches to democracy and development within civil society, and NGOs' positions on these issues are structured by the multisectoral partnerships they increasingly form. For instance, chapter 7 charts the relationships between NGOs and social movements, and asks how NGOs might try to 'conduct the conduct' of their civil society partners. The present research differs from other studies of the South African civil society sector and contributes to the critical literature on NGOs in that it explores internal relations within civil society. The interest of this work in processes of power and governance beyond the state moreover necessitates a theoretical framework that can account for multiple forms and agencies of power in development.

Government and the governance of development: a theoretical framework

Development, wrote Pierre Bourdieu in *Algeria 1960* is 'the process by which dispositions and ideologies are adopted to imported and imposed economic structures, i.e. the reinvention of a new system of dispositions under the pressure of economic necessity' (cited in Jenkins 2002: 12). Bourdieu's definition precedes later scholarship that applies the Foucauldian framework of governmentality to development studies. Nonetheless, it directs attention to how agency links up with structure and shows how development projects aimed at the transformation and improvement of the citizenry encompass both economic growth and a transformation of mindsets. I already cited Foucault's definition of government as 'conduct of conduct'. Dean expands this by defining government as

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any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests, and beliefs, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, efforts and outcomes (Dean 1999: 11).

Governmentality studies hence acknowledge the existence of complex sets of power relations between state and non-state authorities and the plurality of governing agencies, authorities, effects and outcomes. They provide a framework that captures the intersection of technologies of dominating others and technologies of constituting the self. For that reason, some argue that the concept of governmentality itself represents a departure from Foucault's early, more radical view of power, in that it re-introduces the agency of the subject (Lukes 2005). I am less concerned in this thesis with Foucault's original formulation and the many ongoing debates about his theoretical legacy. Rather, I have drawn on the now substantial body of scholarship that applies the framework of Foucault's late work for a critique of development.

Using these theoretical tools, I have employed the notion of governmentality to examine South African NGOs in the context of transnationalised development, exploring their modes of operation and central practices, and how these have configured their relationships with other state and non-state actors. A governmentality perspective can transgress the binary of state and civil society that was encountered above, as well as the analytical separation between local and global. As Nikolas Rose has written, 'the force field with which we are confronted in our present is made up of a multiplicity of interlocking apparatuses [...] that cannot be understood according to a polarization of public and private or state and civil society' (Rose 1993: 286). This theoretical perspective allows capturing the power of civil society actors in development in relation to state actors, not as replacing or transferring it.

In line with this conception of power, NGOs are understood in this thesis as one amongst a multiplicity of actors that apply various forms of knowledge and expertise to shape behaviour, although not always consciously or intentionally. On the level of NGOs themselves, the notion of government also encapsulates practioners' genuine 'will to improve' (Li 2007), which cannot be reduced to class

interest alone. Likewise, power in development is often understood in terms of domination but this does not capture well the dynamics of NGO partnerships for development. A governmentality framework of power enables a conception of partnerships as form of rule that governs through inclusion (Abrahamsen 2004). Partnerships and impact measurements as the two elements of NGO operation that constitute the main focus of this research accordingly appear as political technologies that can reveal something about the changing logic of government in the development domain.

A governmentality framework has mainly been applied to development with an interest in what subjects are being produced by particular interventions. Where my approach differs from these studies is in the way I have engaged the above-defined theoretical framework to explore what kinds of organisations the partnership agenda produces, and through which channels, practices and technologies this occurs. My analysis emphasises how development relations provide a context for governmental practices across different levels. I am also not aware of any research that deals specifically with the impact of multisectoral partnerships on South African NGOs.

But I also recognise the limitations of such a perspective on its own to understanding the configurations of power in Post-Apartheid development. Governmentality studies explore technologies of rule and afford a view of neoliberalism in terms of tactics and practices of governing. Therefore they are not ideally suited to an analysis of the social exclusion processes of neoliberalism. Particularly, due to their focus on political discourse, they have a tendency to neglect experiences of material realities and of actors' ways of making sense of them. I draw in this thesis on what may be called non-dogmatic readings of Foucauldian governmentality, which are in fact troubled by the ignoring, in more orthodox versions of governmentality studies, of the 'messy processes of implementation' (Hart 2008: 19) – the fact that projects of rule are not necessarily accomplished in practice (see chapter 2). Even so, the governmentality framework is not primarily interested in the social exclusion effects of the power it investigates, but rather in its rationalities and modalities. I would find this perspective alone an untenable position given the devastating consequences that specific development policies – many of which can be called neoliberal, whereas others cannot – have had in Post-Apartheid

South Africa. Moreover, these policies cannot be fully understood without reference to a global political economic system of uneven development.

Reflexive Neoliberalism and Partnerships

As I have written, the story of NGOs in South Africa's young democracy – and of the tensions in its civil society – cannot be told without reference to neoliberalism. After the negotiated settlement, the South African Government quickly adopted a set of macroeconomic policies that embraced the neoliberal agenda of the Washington Consensus: trade liberalisation, a shift to investment spending, export-oriented manufacturing, flexibility of the labour market and so on. Critique of and practical opposition to neoliberalism is probably stronger in South Africa than anywhere else on the continent. This is witnessed for instance by the high degree of popular mobilisation and social movement activity against neoliberalisation. At the same time, the term neoliberalism, whilst looming large in South Africa's political lexicon, is far from uncontroversial.

Firstly, since the adoption more than ten years ago of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), South Africa's 'homegrown structural adjustment programme' (Desai 2004), there have been significant changes in the way the Government has framed its poverty reduction strategy, most notably in shifting to a developmental state discourse that seemingly acknowledges that the growth-focused strategy of the immediate Post-Apartheid era has failed. Secondly, how is South Africa's mix of neoliberal and developmental policies comparable to what may be referred to as Neoliberalism with a capital N? Is it possible to read the local of the global in this way? Thirdly, is there such as thing as a universal 'N'eoliberalism in the first place? In practice, neoliberal policies have drawn on a combination of elements such as 'individualism, choice, market society, laissez faire, minimal government intervention in the economy, strong government in non-economic domains, social authoritarianism, disciplined society, hierarchy and subordination, and a cult of the nation' (Overbeek and van der Pijl, cited in Sinha 2005: 164). Focusing on international institutional discourse, I will argue that development has become more about participation of and consensus-building with civil society and the allocation of a large role to the state in enabling inclusive development. Is it then still justified to frame the discussion in terms of 'neoliberalism'

at all? These are complex issues which are elaborated in the next chapter in relation to a typology of theories of neoliberalism.

My understanding of the term is as reflexive, locally specific and contingent. Neoliberalism encompasses a range of development policies concerned with the shaping of the economy, the state and social relations and with the very re-articulation of the socio-political and economic spheres. This definition also draws attention to the fact that neoliberal programmes have renewed themselves in important ways since the doctrine began to become influential in the 1970s and that this reflexive neoliberalism plays itself out differently in different places. As Hart argues, 'the challenge [...] is coming to grips with how identifiably neo-liberal projects and practices operate on terrains that always exceed them' (2008: 4). In South Africa, a neoliberal ideology is differentially articulated with various other political projects, for instance African nationalism and the developmental state. In this respect my research, by using South Africa as a case study, aims to contribute to theoretical debates on the geographies of neoliberalisation, exploring how neoliberalism behaves in a particular setting but how it is also exceeded (Larner 2000, 2003).

One of the ways in which neoliberal forms of governing have affected the relationships between individuals and governmental agencies has been through what Burchell (1993) has called a new form of responsibilisation. Individuals and collectives are to be actively involved in issues that were previously the responsibility of the state or other governing agencies:

> The price of this involvement is that they must assume active responsibility for these activities, both for carrying them out and, of course, for their outcomes, and in so doing they are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the appropriate (or approved) model of action (Burchell 1993: 276).

This conception of 'technologies of agency', to use Dean's (1999) phrase, is integral to my understanding of the significance of the partnership agenda as denoting a new modality of power in the development domain.

In the existing academic literature on NGOs, partnerships are typically understood as North-South partnerships between NGOs. In policy terms, on the contrary, multisectoral partnerships are sometimes seen as synonymous with 'hard

development' (such as infrastructure) or health interventions (particularly in the field of HIV/Aids). But the language of partnership has come to encompass the whole spectrum of development institutions precisely with the claim of reversing the power differential present in the structures, institutions and practices of global governance. Development relationships have been redefined in terms of the participation of poor countries in 'owning' development strategies, thereby making states responsible for their development. Responsibilisation is a key aim of neoliberal government in the development domain that is not limited to states or individuals. Rather, through partnerships at all levels, it is individuals, organisations, communities and states that are to be made efficient, responsible and entrepreneurial. In the present research context, I focus particularly on their potential to produce appropriate civil society organisations that can be enlisted into government or corporate agendas as partners. I therefore examine the partnership discourse in terms of transformations in the logic of governance in transnational development: partnerships ensure the inclusion of disparate development actors into shared projects.

However, how the language of partnerships has been understood, employed and contested by the NGOs in this research also provides a way of exploring issues at the heart of Post-Apartheid democracy, such as nation-building and political mobilisation, and must be understood in the specific context of South Africa's history.

1.6. Outline of the thesis

To recap from the above, the subsequent chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature, discussing the evolution of neoliberalism in more detail and outlining the theoretical framework I have applied. Chapter 3 gives an account of research strategy, methodological issues, selection and research methods. Chapter 4 explores how the democratic transition and the subsequent shift to more streamlined operating principles were framed by NGO staff and what sustainability strategies they have given rise to. The chapter introduces the discussion of partnerships as one amongst these sustainability strategies, examining the usage of the language of partnership in policy and by the NGO professionals in this research. Chapter 5 fully explores the partnership theme by discussing its modalities, analysing how various partnerships with different sectors were understood to have impacted on the form and structure of

NGOs. The partnership discourse is understood as a political technology that ensures that key actors in the development domain are complicit with particular policy regimes. The specific techniques it makes use of, such as monitoring and evaluation which align with neoliberal rationalities and are shown to contribute to a harmonisation of modes of operation of diverse sets of actors, are discussed in chapter 6. Chapter 7 focuses on NGO activity in relation to the governmentality of civil society because, crucially, it is partnerships that shape the positioning of NGOs to social movements and community struggles. This thesis thus draws attention to areas frequently overlooked by other studies of NGOs – the effect of NGOs' partnerships and auditing on their organisational form and on practices of governing in civil society.

Situating Post-Apartheid NGOs and Neoliberal Development

2.1. Introduction

This literature review chapter has several functions: it elaborates the historical and political economic context within which South African NGOs operate in terms of development theory, practice and policy (parts one and two), develops key issues in relation to the literature on NGOs (part three) and attempts to synthesise these two within a theoretical framework that applies governmentality studies to the neoliberalisation of development (part four). The literature on which I draw in this chapter reflects the interdisciplinary character of development sociology and, theoretically and methodologically, the fact that no overarching framework is presented – the complexities of Post-Apartheid development have led me to engage with diverse theoretical influences.

The first part reviews, very briefly, the origins of development studies and highlights the ongoing relevance of the modernisation and dependency paradigms. I go on to argue that dependency theory's contemporary variants provide an important lens through which to grasp the processes of exclusion and marginalisation that have accompanied both the most recent phase of global capitalism and Post-Apartheid development. In discussing alternative development, structural adjustment and good governance, I consider the major themes in development practice over the same period of time, here emphasising the interface between the emergence of neoliberalism in Africa and the rise of the NGO as the preferred agent of international development. The development policy initiatives that Africa experienced in the 1990s were building on structural adjustment but moved reforms to a broader development agenda, concerned with rebuilding the state though governance programmes, capacity building and public sector reform. I will refer to contemporary Post-Washington development as 'reflexively neoliberal' in order to draw attention to the reformed character of international development policies that seek to govern through

partnerships, accountability and responsibilisation, but essentially retain their focus on liberalisation and privatisation.

Recent years have seen global changes in funding modalities towards budget assistance and sector-wide support. This entails a reversal from direct funding of the civil society sector to funding governments, who in turn rely on CSOs to deliver services. If, as Gould (2004a) puts forward, the predominant operational instrument of the aid industry of the 20th century was the development project, donors still exert vast influence on the management of health, education or civil society reform in Majority World countries under the current focus on policy and governance. Budget support has moreover led to an increasingly dualistic conception of NGOs' role as either active in advocacy or service-delivery. The aid effectiveness agenda, as embodied in the 2005 Paris Declaration (OECD 2005), further threatens to marginalise the critical role of CSOs by eroding their space for voicing dissent.

Part two traces South Africa's transition from Apartheid to neoliberalism. In this section, I contextualise my later analysis of NGO activity and popular mobilisation by providing a brief account of the effects of Post-Apartheid development in terms of growth, poverty and inequality. The Government's recent shift to a developmental state discourse is discussed through Mbeki's concept of the 'two nations', as this provides an excellent example for the coming together of various discursive processes at work in contemporary South Africa. The 'two nations' thesis identifies and targets specific populations as subjects for intervention, marginalises those not in line with the nation-building objectives of the 'new South Africa', and leaves intact the neoliberal premise that global integration leads to development, whilst drawing on an Africanist or Third-Worldist rhetoric.

In part three, I shall review the literature dealing with NGOs in development and define the term NGO for the present research context. In discussing the legislative and structural developments that have impacted on the South African NGO sector since the transition, I argue that there has been an attempt to formalise and sanitise civil society. Partnerships and civil society strengthening have been funding priorities for South African NGOs in recent years; the literature pertaining to these will be discussed in chapters 5 and 7 respectively. My evaluation of the main studies of South African NGOs finds that there is a tendency to analyse NGOs as dichotomous to the state. I then provide an overview of procedural, structural and ethical critiques and highlight accountability as a technology of power that gives rise

to particular NGO knowledge practices and technologies. Accountability provides the theoretical link between the good governance agenda discussed in part 1 of this chapter, and current regimes of NGO funding and management.

This critique leads me, in part four, to discuss more explicitly the wider theoretical framework I have employed. The two seemingly contradictory theoretical traditions of Marxian development studies and governmentality studies are engaged throughout the present chapter. Government here encompasses a whole continuum of power relations between donors, NGOs, their target populations and other organisations of civil society. It is individuals, organisations, communities and states that are to be made efficient, flexible and responsible – responsibilisation thus constituting one of the prominent themes of this chapter. Contrary to some studies in this vein which focus on the production of the subjects of development, I am interested in what type of NGO is produced in partnership with other development actors in South Africa, and how NGOs come to define and transfer the meaning of civil society. However, I also draw attention to the limitations of a governmentality studies approach, arguing that whilst it provides an important tool to analyse the present research questions, alone it is insufficient to grapple with the complex configurations of power in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Particularly, challenges to expertise and the partial failures and unintended outcomes of specific projects of rule are not well accounted for. I conclude the chapter coming full circle, by returning to contemporary variants of dependency theory and their relevance to capturing the dimensions of exclusion and inequality that characterise the field in which NGOs operate in South Africa.

I will not discuss the literature specifically pertaining to partnerships and to civil society in this chapter, having chosen to review this in the appropriate analysis chapters where these concepts are engaged (chapters 4 and 7, respectively).

2.2. Neoliberalism in Africa and the rise of the NGO

The relevance of dependency theory: a very brief history of development studies
The origins of development studies in the 1940s and 1950s can be traced to the central problem of how European powers could transform their former colonies,

govern them and make them more productive (Leys 1996). Social sciences were no longer seen as relevant for Majority World countries, and the changed post-war international context had made underdevelopment a foreign policy concern for industrialised countries. Prior to this, the disciplines of classical political economy, and later of sociology and anthropology, had been tracing the progression of European societies from 'traditional' to 'modern' through industrialisation (Hettne 1990). Most early contributions to sociology are thus types of modernisation theory, with Marx's stages theory or Durkheim's division between mechanical and organic solidarity being obvious examples. The modernisation paradigm was central to post-war development theories and has remained influential in development practice to the present day, describing 'a structural change process whereby the traditional and backward Third World countries developed towards greater similarity with the Western, or rather the North-Western world' (Martinussen 1997: 38).[5]

Alternatives to the modernisation paradigm evolved in the 1950s and 1960s in the form of theories of dependency and underdevelopment, themselves drawing on earlier Marxist studies concerned with the effects of imperialism in peripheral countries (Cardoso and Faletto 1979, Frank 1978, Frank 1996, Wallerstein 1993). Most significant for the present context amongst these forerunners is Rosa Luxemburg's (1971) assertion that capitalism can only exist in conjunction with non-capitalist systems. Her theses about accumulation by dispossession provide an important lens through which historical and contemporary processes of exploitation/ superexploitation (and struggles motivated by them) in South Africa have been analysed by political economists (Harvey 2005b, Bond 2000). Development and underdevelopment, from the perspective of dependency theory, are constituted by the same historical processes inherent to the world capitalist system (Frank 1969). An exploitative chain of metropolis-satellite/ core-periphery relations links the global to the national scale and to regional and local centres, each of which involves unequal exchanges of commodities and wages.[6]

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[5] Modernisation theory dominated development economics, as well as sociological and political theories of development, see Martinussen's (1997) two-chapter overview. Different theories, dependent on which aspect of modernisation they focused upon, highlighted the need of underdeveloped countries to develop democratic governments and media systems, exposure to mass media, a highly specialised economy and extensive division of labour, high productivity, or an active state apparatus (see Rostow 1960, Lerner 1958, Inkeles 1966, Gusfield 1967).

[6] The influential theory of 'colonialism of a special kind' that was adopted by the Communist Party (SACP) during Apartheid represents a version of dependency theory: 'From its birth through to the present, South African capitalism has depended heavily on the imperialist centres... It was within a colonial setting that the emerging South African capitalist class entrenched and extended the racially

Dependency's contemporary relevance lies in the perspective it affords on the selective regional and sub-national integration/ marginalisation of Southern Africa into the global economy. Political economy approaches can also account for the rising inequalities that characterise the economy of South Africa itself, showing them to be clear outcomes of neoliberalism's internal systems of capital accumulation (Harvey 2005b, 2006). Dispossession or exclusion as the consequences of global capitalism in South Africa has produced new political challenges and alliances which can be understood from such a perspective. At the same time, the uneven effects of globalisation and other projects that attempt to extend elite power cannot be grasped in terms of class-based models and theories alone (see in particular Hardt and Negri 2000, Barchiesi 2006, Hart 2008). Critique of and practical opposition to neoliberalism are stronger in South Africa than anywhere else in Africa, but such challenges no longer simply come from the traditional left, neither can they be understood in terms of class mobilisation alone.

In the 1970s, the focus and aims of development practice and theory began to shift. On the level of policy, the recognition that two decades of top-down development economics had failed to contribute to real development demanded a rethinking of the notion of development as growth. Decolonisation was reconfiguring global relations of power, whilst postcolonial movements in the South and new social movements (NSMs) in the North were challenging the political and intellectual status quo. In terms of theory, the cultural turn in the social sciences brought about an epistemological shift through which knowledge acquisition and transmission were radically re-conceptualised. With culture entering development theory in the context of postcolonialism, the ethnocentric and culture-specific value premises of development research and practice were called into question. Development theory became more agency-oriented and spatialised, emphasising local factors and social and cultural differentiation (Schuurman 1993). Alternative development advocated development 'from below', that is, participatory, pluralistic and starting from Southern communities.

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exclusive system to increase its opportunities for profit' (SACP, cited in Bond 2007e: 7). See Wolpe's articulation of modes of production argument for a different kind of Marxist analysis (Wolpe 1980, also see Hart 2007).

Alternative development and early neoliberalism

These Southern communities were however not to be directly represented, but rather to be embodied by grassroots organisations (GROs) or NGOs. NGOs began to be seen as a panacea for a more just and participatory way of achieving development. The conflation, in development theory and policy of the time, of indigenous grassroots movements on one end of the spectrum with the emerging large Southern and international NGOs on the other, is itself indicative of the intertwining of the official rhetoric of participatory development and what I describe below as the neoliberalisation of development. The proliferation of supposedly bottom-up approaches to development that led to the channelling of development funds to NGOs must be understood in conjunction with particular International Financial Institutions' (IFI) aid conditionalities and their anti-statism. As far as IFIs were concerned, NGOs provided a third sector alternative to what was increasingly perceived as 'failed' developmentalist states in the global South.

The immediate postcolonial period in Southern Africa is in fact characterised by a dynamic of increasing external agency involvement and a parallel weakening of civil society internally (F. Manji, personal conversation, Sept 06). The emancipatory mass movements supporting independence on the African continent had been swept up by the postcolonial governments and became, over the next two decades, partly attached to the development agenda as embodied by NGOs.[7] Moreover, the consolidation of neoliberalism in the early 1980s in large parts of the Western world, and its effects on the African continent through structural adjustment, contributed to the deteriorating of public sector capacity in lower-income countries.

The set of (locally-specific and heterogeneous) economic and social policies that is commonly referred to as neoliberalism was first applied in Chile in the late 1970s and quickly became dominant in the US, UK, continental Europe and China. In Sub-Saharan Africa, neoliberal economic policies were coercively introduced through aid conditionalities under the IFI's structural adjustment agenda. With African countries heavily indebted due to the economic crisis of the 1970s, multilateral lending agencies had the leverage they needed to impose neoliberal policy demands (Manji and O Coill 2002). Structural adjustment programmes typically involved cutting public expenditure, deregulating labour markets, trade

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[7] The role of NGOs in the post- independent period was marginal, as development agencies regarded the state as having the overarching responsibility for this role. This was to change with the spread of neoliberalism.

liberalisation, privatising of industries and services, conservative fiscal policies and increasing export outputs (see Berg 1981 for one of the central texts legitimating neoliberal policies in Africa). By the end of the cold war, 42 African states had undergone structural adjustment, with devastating results for populations at large, but particularly for the poor.[8]

As an economic doctrine and political project, neoliberalism worked also by discrediting alternatives to the devaluation of the developmental state. In the anti-statist climate of the 1980s, Southern governments were uniformly portrayed as corrupt and ineffective. The rhetoric of the failed African state clearly remains pervasive, and is a central tenet of the good governance agenda that has dominated international development policy in the last decade. However, weak states are a result of the effects of structural adjustment on state capacity. Where public levels of service delivery had already been limited by a lack of financial resources, the neoliberal mantra – that services are more effective if provided by NGOs or the private sector – further shifted resources from state to non-state entities and provided a rationale for external service provision and development interventions.

Contrary to the argument that neoliberalism involves a 'rolling back of the state' early neoliberalism entailed a shrinking of social spending, with the state becoming more centralised. Power in the transnational domain should not be seen as a 'zero-sum game' (Sending and Neumann 2006) where power is transferred from the state to non-state actors, as the global governance literature tends to do.[9] Rather than denoting less government, neoliberalism describes 'a new modality of government predicated on interventions to create the organisational and subjective conditions for entrepreneurship' (Hart 2006: 22) – a 'rolling out' and reconfiguring of state formations (Peck and Tickell 2002). This becomes apparent in my empirical data, although I contend that two related processes are at work. Particular NGO projects seek to produce entrepreneurs (of Soweto teens, for instance), but these NGOs are themselves subject to governmental interventions that seek to instil entrepreneurial or managerial qualities.[10]

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[8] It goes beyond the scope of this review to discuss the effects of SAPs on the African continent. There is ample country-specific literature in economics and sociology; for more general reviews, see Harrison (2005); Petras and Veltmeyer (2001). However, even as taken on its own terms, i.e. that development is about economic growth not equity, there is scarce evidence of structural adjustment 'working'.

[9] Rosenau and Czempiel (1992) and Held (1995) are good examples of this literature.

[10] This argument is broadly in line with a governmentality understanding, which I discuss properly in the last section of this chapter. The work of some of the case study NGOs in terms of creating entrepreneurial dispositions is analysed in chapter 6.

This transformation under neoliberalism – of policies being used to shape individuals into entrepreneurial citizens - is related, on the global level, to changing patterns of governance, which I will turn to next. In other words, the understanding of neoliberalism advanced here sees it not merely in terms of the restructuring of the state, but as a project concerned with reconfiguring the relations between people and things, often in terms of responsibilisation and autonomisation. In the broadest sense then, neoliberalism is understood as 'a project to expand and universalise free-market social relations' (Harrison 2005: 1306), which highlights the integration of an economic set of policies into a much broader developmental agenda. In other words, neoliberalism encompasses a range of development policies directed at shaping the economy, the state and social relations and concerned with the very re-articulation of the socio-political and economic spheres. As such, it is reflexive, locally specific and contingent. In South Africa, a neoliberal ideology is differentially articulated by different actors with other political projects, for instance with versions of African nationalism or the African Renaissance.

Moreover, policy discourse has increasingly shifted to the language of the developmental state, with the Government making the case for South Africa to become a progressive, activist developmental state in order to advance growth and pro-poor development. As I will discuss below, this has not been seen as a genuine shift by all; Bill Freund for example argues that the developmental state model so far is a superficial one in South Africa in which the deep social interventions typical of the East Asian tiger states is missing (Freund 2007).

(Good) governance and reflexive neoliberalism [11]

The above definition echoes theories of neoliberalism as governmentality, in which context it becomes important to underline the distinction between neoliberal and advanced liberal, the latter denoting the context within which Anglo-Foucauldians such as Nicholas Rose and others (Barry et al. 1996a) have located their analyses. Neoliberal rationalities exist in complex interrelations with other multiple rationalities

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[11] Semantically, the term 'reflexive neoliberalism' has echoes of both Beck's (1992) reflexive modernisation and Dean's reflexive government. As I carry on to argue in the next section, by describing neoliberalism as reflexive, I want to firstly highlight the continuities and discontinuities with the earlier neoliberal development policies in Africa; and secondly to draw attention to the fact that IFI-led ideologies and policies have been reformed to govern through inclusion and consensus. Dean's (1999) reflexive government goes further in that he describes it as the outcome of the governmentalisation of government.

of government, and with a plurality of varieties of neoliberalism (Dean 1999). A quick typology of theories of neoliberalism may additionally identify theories of neoliberalism as hegemony (for instance Peck and Tickell 2002) and as a class project (Harvey 2005a). Ward and England (2007a) similarly outline four different ways of conceiving of neoliberalism:

- as ideological hegemonic project (concerned with people and places behind its origins)
- as policy and programme (concerned with agencies, institutions, audiences of policies and their logic)
- as state form (concerned with state formations and reconfigurations)
- as governmentality (concerned with changing relations to coordinate at a distance).

Whilst the above typologies highlight methodological and ontological differences between theories, there is increasingly an engagement between different schools. Beyond the broad definition I have given above which does not neatly adhere to any of the above schools, it is important for the present context to acknowledge that there are many varieties of neoliberalism. Ong writes:

As an array of techniques centred on the optimization of life, neoliberalism migrates from site to site, interacting with various assemblages that cannot be analytically reduced to a uniform global condition of "Neoliberalism" writ large' (2006: 14).

It is the work of a number of geographers in particular (Larner 2003, England and Ward 2007b, Hart 2002a, Li 2007) that has added to my understanding of the hybrid nature of contemporary South African policies and programmes, including but not limited to multiple and contradictory aspects of neoliberal technologies. Moreover, locally specific neoliberalisms operate at multiple scales, for instance as a supranational project ('neoliberal globalisation'), as well as on the level of the nation-state and in local, often urban, projects, producing states, spaces and subjects in complex ways (Larner 2003). Indeed, as this research aims to show, NGOs themselves contribute to new forms of government that produce but sometimes also

challenge neoliberal programmes, technologies and values. Below, I first turn to a redefinition of neoliberalism in the context of global development policy as 'reflexive'; I then discuss the establishment of a 'neoliberalism of a special kind' in South Africa.

I mentioned above that the notion of good governance, transposed to the level of states, reflects the neoliberal vision of making individuals responsible for their own development. The good governance agenda emerged in the wake of the fracturing of the Washington consensus and was partly caused by a crisis of development and the legitimacy of development institutions, and by mass protests against SAPs across the African continent. The Asian crisis and the changing security concerns of the post 9/11 world further gave rise to calls for consensus-building and more inclusive, responsive and participatory institutions, replacing the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility with the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility in 1999.[12] The 2004 World Bank Development Report (World Bank 2004) made that need for consensus for poverty reduction even more explicit by recommending neoliberal market integration and commitment to social services and empowerment of poor people to become involved.

The crude policies of structural adjustment were thus slowly being replaced by a more inclusive 'Post-Washington' orthodoxy that rejected the development blueprints of the 1980s as a 'grand narrative'. The massive protests across Africa in reaction to the effects of structural adjustment certainly contributed to the rise of good governance as a mainstay of development policy. This promoted NGOs as efficient and responsive alternatives to the state, in the process 'rediscovering' civil society and hailing it as a benign area through which to improve the democratic performance of Southern governments:

> The concept of civil society was being shaped by global ruling class power to support anti-statism, and to separate politics from welfare and economics (Greenberg and Ndlovu 2004, cited in McKinley Unpublished Book Chapter).[13]

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[12] The IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility specifies a collaborative model around IFI -led development and attached it to national Poverty Reduction Strategy papers which were to be owned by recipient governments. Based on creating economic opportunity through global market integration, they seek to enhance economic and social security as well as empowerment through 'innovative governance arrangements for local delivery of health, education and poverty-reducing services' (Craig and Porter 2006: 4).

[13] Literature specifically addressing African debates on civil society is dealt with in chapter 7. It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss in detail the broader literature or provide a genealogy of the

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Mainstream economic thinking now recognised the centrality of institutions in the efficient functioning of markets and in ensuring broad-based growth and poverty reduction. The state was reconceptualised as an enabler, building and supporting institutions.

The Post Washington Consensus also draws on other 'positive liberal' approaches, such as building human capital via services, empowering and protecting the rights of the vulnerable through legal access and engendering moral obligations to community and work (Craig and Porter 2006). Yet, whilst acknowledging that social factors and relations are decisive for development success, a conservative macroeconomic and fiscal policy approach has been retained, favouring privatisation and free trade (Fine et al. 2001). Capacity building for governance and partnership are central to this vision, as they enable multi-stakeholder participation and the inclusion of countries and people in global and local markets (see for example Commission for Africa 2005).[14] The vocabulary of participation and local ownership directly mirrors the demands of the good governance agenda, coupling responsibility and accountability with institutional reform to provide more equitable development. One recent example is provided by the G8's position on Africa: the report Growth and Responsibility in Africa (G8 Summit Declaration 2007) frames development in terms of partnerships with 'responsible stakeholders in the international system' (World Bank 2002, World Bank 2004).

Recent initiatives to make aid more effective through harmonisation, as embodied for instance in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD 2005), similarly highlight the role the state has to play in new forms of development cooperation. The declaration specifies 12 effectiveness targets as part of the broader partnership commitments of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, management for results and mutual accountability. Together, they seek to reduce transaction costs arising from reporting and evaluation procedures by using common arrangements,

term. Key debates in the field can be divided into a 'alternative and a 'liberal' lineage, the former covering Marx, Gramsci and Habermas, the latter Tocqueville and Putnam. See Comaroff and Comaroff (1999) who provide an excellent overview from Adam Ferguson via Hegel, Marx and Gramsci to the dissident struggles in communist Eastern Europe and its usages today. Also see Edwards (2004) and Elliott (2003).

[14] The Commission for Africa (CfA) whose report Our Common Interest I have referred to here in itself makes an interesting example for the inclusionary character of Post-Washington development I have described. The CfA was convened by Tony Blair in the run-up to the Gleneagles Summit and prided itself on its far-reaching consultation with African civil society groups and other stakeholders. It included 17 Commissioners, drawn from international politics, the private and voluntary sectors in Africa.

improve the public administration of aid, and employ results-oriented frameworks (OECD 2005). As part of a 'new architecture of aid' (Lister and Nyamugasira 2003) involving budget support and sector-wide approaches, the rediscovery of the state in development displays a trend towards a technocratic view of development aid. This architecture relegates the role of civil society, itself a recently revived and reified concept, to ensuring that the state is formally accountable and to filling the gaps left by state and markets.

The establishment of Africa's own development framework, the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), serves as an interesting example of the institutional adaptation of African states to produce specific neoliberal policy agendas under the banner of good governance and ownership. The text is significant because, whilst it does address the 'historical impoverishment' of the African continent, it offers no structural critique of its marginalisation in the current global order and advocates African integration into the world economy. Responsibility for the African economic crisis is attributed squarely to African leadership. Although the language of ownership and participation is dominant in the text, NEPAD has been criticised heavily by civil society groups for not taking into account the concerns of broader interest groups (Coalition of African Civil Society Organisations 2002).

Harrison (2001) has employed the notion of 'post-conditionality' to describe these new, less coercive relations between African states and external agencies after structural adjustment. Internal and external interests are harder to differentiate; intervention is exercised through close involvement with state institutions rather than through conditionality alone; funds are used to promote reform programmes. 'Reflexive neoliberal' projects are then not just pursued by IFIs or Western governments, but also by a wide range of African elites, including some NGOs. The question of elite interests in South Africa's transition to Post-Apartheid neoliberalism will be picked up in the next section; suffice to say here that the democratic transition hinged not only on political liberation but on economic liberalisation, with the final rejection of Apartheid by corporations, capitalists and the business elites tied to the latter. Similarly, the adoption of a neoliberal development framework such as NEPAD by the new political elites of the country has arguably advanced South Africa's position on the continent and beyond. NGOs have potential gains from these and

similar developmental arrangements, as my analysis of NGOs' 'expansionism' into the Southern African region in chapters 4 and 7 demonstrates.

2.3. South Africa: from Apartheid to the developmental state, via neoliberalism

The negotiated settlement and GEAR

South Africa, due to the particularity of the Apartheid economy, is in some ways the exception to the familiar story of how neoliberal globalisation came to dominate Africa. Yet today, it serves as a 'textbook example of how globalisation plays itself out in the semi-industrialised world' (Ballard et al. 2004: 9). This section seeks to trace some of the policies and processes that have contributed to this transformation. The negotiated settlement was a compromise between old and new powers, the latter achieving the political aims of one-person-one-vote in exchange for the continuity of an economic system that essentially left capitalist power intact and did not address momentous issues determining development and poverty reduction such as land reform.[15] Indeed, some argue that one of the primary objectives of the transition was to bring about a market economy that could be inserted into the global system.[16] Marais' (2001) point of departure is that the transition was based on a need to modernise and accumulate capital. 1994 therefore marks the 'dissolution of the dominant alliance of social, economic and political forces in South Africa' (ibid: 4), which has been followed by the struggle to reshape the state and capital relations despite the political ascent to power.

The adoption in Post-Apartheid South Africa of economic policies broadly in line with neoliberalism is often interpreted as a 'radical shift' from the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to the Growth, Employment and Reconstruction strategy (GEAR) of 1996 (Gumede 2005, Peet 2002). The RDP framework, itself drawing on the principles of the 1955 Freedom Charter, still

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[15] 'What the [new Post-Apartheid] constitution did was to entrench the right to private property' is how Cosmas Desmond sums up the class-bias of the new South Africa (cited in Pilger 2006: 271). The SACP has consistently argued that whilst the national liberation movement has ascended to state power, the economy still remains firmly in the hands of the white, domestic and colonial-type bourgeoisie.

[16] Witness the recalling of US capital from the mid-1980s onwards that forced the De Klerk regime to follow through with the transformations South African white capitalists had begun to seek through their secret negotiations with Tambo and Mbeki in Zambia.

features in the ANC policy discourses from time to time; in the Strategy and Tactics document preceding the Polokwane Conference it has transformed into the 'The RDP of the Soul' which includes the familiar rhetoric of 'the dictatorship of capital' and 'the Western imperialist empire' (African National Congress 2007). Emphasising poverty alleviation, basic needs provision, employment creation and human resources development, the RDP encouraged grassroots participation in the development process and democratisation though the empowerment of historically disadvantaged groups previously excluded from participating in decision-making processes (Bek et al. 2004, African National Congress 1994).

Conversely, GEAR has been heavily criticised by the Left as South Africa's 'homegrown structural adjustment programme' (Desai 2004). Leading to reductions of Government spending in education, hospitals and housing and the commodification of basic services, it focused on poverty alleviation through 'trickle-down' which, given the inherited levels of poverty and inequality, was at best a contested strategy. But the programme fitted perfectly into the international consensus of sound economic policy – trade liberalisation, a shift to investment spending, export-oriented manufacturing, wage control and flexibility of the labour market in order to foster higher economic growth and investment – as one *Financial Times* writer noted: 'the ANC emerged with as powerful a commitment to budgetary discipline and fiscal conservatism as white South Africa could have wished' (cited in Williams and Taylor 2000: 34).

Some disagree with the assessment of a radical shift from RDP to GEAR, arguing that the transition was already characterised by domestic and international elites pushing for liberalisation. The economically inexperienced ANC leadership was continuously exposed to the mantra that there is no alternative to free trade, as Patrick Bond describes:

> 'Reconnaissance missions' from Washington-based financial institutions were [...] undermining the integrity of domestic policy formulations and ambitiously promoting the interests of international financial and corporate capital (2001: vii).

The fact that a 1992 International Monetary Fund (IMF) report[17] was followed by a letter of intent to go alongside a $850 million loan agreement which even the IMF thought to be rather conservative, provides an alternative explanation: that the ANC leadership was itself actively pursuing economic liberalisation. Contrary to narratives focusing on the external imposition of a neoliberal agenda or a co-option of leadership, several other elements characterised the transition period: the inexperience of the ANC, the conflicts and contradictions inherent in the Tri-Partite Alliance, but particularly the convergence of ANC leaders with the business community and class interests.[18] McKinley's (1997) analysis, for example, focuses on the essentially petit-bourgeois nature of ANC leadership, especially the 'exiles', that determined the outcome of the economic negotiations.[19] He argues that contrary to romanticised or deeply politicised narratives, the ANC had never articulated a socialist agenda. His account enables an understanding of the formal adoption of liberal macroeconomic policies as 'steady maturation of a modernized class project of considerate sophistication and likely longevity' (Marais 2001: 4, also see Bond 2000).[20]

Even judged on its own terms, GEAR has not been successful; growth has been constant, but not high enough to make a significant impact (Cassim 2006, Bhorat and Kanbur 2006).[21] But GEAR also marked another break: the RDP had been written in consultation with NGOs, social movements and organised labour,

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[17] The IMF's occasional paper *Economic Policies for a New South Africa* had stated, in 1992, that redistributive policies were not sufficient to tackle the magnitude of South Africa's economic problems and eradicate poverty, instead recommending an economic growth strategy which was to trickle down to the poor through employment and an increase in government revenue (Padayachee 1994).

[18] Also see Sinha (2008) on the limits of metaphors of coercion and external imposition in understanding power in development.

[19] Also see Gumede (2005) on the different cultures that developed in the ANC during the liberation struggle.

[20] In addition to these remarks, a binary understanding of the RDP as a 'socialist programme' and GEAR as 'purely neoliberal' needs to be carefully assessed (S. Gelb, Interview, 10 May 07). Gelb argues that even in 1996 there were a number of initiatives that were undertaken by the Government that were not 'purely neo-liberal' but broadly developmental. This indicates that many universalised readings of neoliberalism are not capturing the mix of policy discourses and approaches that characterises Post-Apartheid South Africa. Notwithstanding these complexities, it is taken as read here that the ANC's economic position is in conflict with the material struggles and freedom's promises. It is also important to bear in mind the huge role that the neoliberal discourse played in delegitimising alternatives and stifling debate during the transition.

[21] The economic legacy of GEAR and how to interpret more recent economic indicators have been subject of considerable debate, which goes beyond the scope of this review. See Bhorat and Cassim (2004) for an overview of the literature on growth, employment and poverty in the first Post-Apartheid decade. See Seekings (2007) and the special issue of *Africanus* (2007) for more recent discussions on South Africa's political economy, with a particular focus on the developmental state and two economies debate. In the latter volume, see Meth (2007) on the large differences in published poverty research (and the pro-government bias of some of them).

reflecting the ANC's traditional style of policy-formulation. GEAR on the contrary was the product of a small group of experts and technocrats, including representatives from international institutions, and was never openly debated. Washington elites, and later the ANC leadership itself, portrayed key sectors of economic decision making such as trade policy or the central bank as 'technical' or 'administrative'.

The strong opposition to the lack of consultation and content of the GEAR framework by the ANC's alliance partners SACP and COSATU indicated a rupture inside the Tri-Partite Alliance that has since intensified (also see Andreasson 2006). Indeed, GEAR came to symbolise the loss of union power and the marginalisation of the traditional Left (Barchiesi 2006). Yet, to date there has been no alignment of COSATU with the constituencies involved in various community movements and protest actions. Despite their radical rhetoric and Congress resolutions, COSATU and the SACP have time and again shunned any meaningful support for, and solidarity with, the new movements whilst consistently affirming their loyalty to the ANC (McKinley 2007). On a number of occasions COSATU-affiliated trade unions have actually united with the Government against striking workers (Desai 2002). These events provide an important backdrop to the class relations embedded in Post-Apartheid civil society. Arguably, GEAR's other legacy may be the shift to a developmental state rhetoric that has emerged in response to the left's critiques of the Government's economic course, as I will outline subsequently.

South Africa's 'two nations'

The pro-growth strategy that dominated the first decade of Post-Apartheid yielded moderate but 'unequalising' growth (Gelb 2006 :1): South Africa is ranked 76 in terms of GDP but performs worse in terms of HDI, where it is placed 125 out of 179 (UNDP 2008). Capital was the primary beneficiary of these increases in productivity and profitability. The Government has consistently argued that integration into the global economy offers developing countries development and growth opportunities. However, when new jobs have been created, it has predominantly been in capital or skills intensive sectors, such as mining or the services sectors respectively. Within manufacturing, labour-intensive sectors grew far slower than capital-intensive sub-sectors, which has in part been due to trade liberalisation (Gelb 2007). For instance, industries such as clothing, textiles and footwear have been decimated as the

domestic market was lost to imports and local industries struggled to find markets abroad. Unemployment was at 38.8% in 2008, according to the South African Institute for Race Relations survey (SAIRR 2008); StatsSA estimates it at 23.2% in the third quarter of 2008.[22] There have been clear gains for, and benefits allocated to, specific classes – namely the organised working classes, existing and emerging middle classes and aspirant African bourgeoisie (Marais 2001).

Skills shortages and the low levels of education that were inherited from Apartheid are important factors impacting on employment growth. Whilst education spending per pupil is now equal across races, there is a strong correlation between pass rates and pupils' ethnicity; 40% of schools are inadequately supplied with classrooms and/ or electricity, while 49% are without textbooks (Gelb 2007). The vast inequality between rich and poor is witnessed by South Africa's Gini coefficient of 57.8 (down from 0.72 in 2006) (UNDP 2008); meanwhile, South Africa's cities remain the most unequal in the world (UN-HABITAT 2008). If the Gini coefficient was to be calculated on specific sections, such as amongst the Black population, it would be considerably higher.[23] It seems difficult to imagine, but as COSATU's Vavi puts it, '[m]any of the millions who are unemployed, or whose jobs have been casualised, are even worse off than under Apartheid' (also see Bhorat and Kanbur 2006, Seekings 2007, Meth 2007).[24]

As elsewhere in the world, the neoliberal restructuring of the economy has led to a commodification of basic services. Budget cuts in education, health and housing led the state to devolve responsibility for service delivery to local government which in turn adopted a cost-recovery model for water, electricity and other services. As Ballard et al. observe, 'these forces amount to a "pincer movement" on the poor, with the state insisting that people pay for their services, housing and land while simultaneously eroding livelihoods' (Ballard et al. 2004: 14).[25] Government has not introduced a comprehensive safety net for the poor, although social grants provided

[22] The great disparity between the two figures is a reflection of the fact that poverty and unemployment statistics in South Africa are calculated in inconsistent ways and their reporting is sometimes skewed (see Meth 2007). Moreover, official Government figures use a measure that only includes those unemployed that are actively seeking work.
[23] Small sections of workers have done well in Post-Apartheid, for instance skilled black personnel, especially given the corporate obligation to meet BEE targets. These have created a black elite, a category often referred to by South African sociologists as 'black diamonds'. The gap between these and the 20 to 25 million poor blacks is vast (Butler 2007). It goes beyond the scope of my thesis to discuss Black Economic Empowerment. See Mangcu et al. (2007) and Andreasson (2006).
[24] 27 October 2007 Vavi: Unemployed were better off under apartheid. *Mail & Guardian*.
[25] I discuss the commodification of basic services and the community struggles it has given rise to in more detail in chapter 7.

to special groups have been massively expanded in the last decade. A basic income grant (BIG) has been discussed but was never adopted. One economist contends that if Government 'were to announce it will spend R100 billion on the poor, international credit bureaus would downgrade South Africa's ranking for adopting populist policies' (Sampie Terreblanche, cited in Butler 2007). Gillian Hart advances another argument: 'The reason why the ANC Government rejects the BIG [...] is precisely because it is a universal grant – and therefore lacks points of leverage for instilling in its recipients the 'correct' attitudes and aspirations' (2007: 54).

In recent years, there has been a shift in policy discourse to a developmental state rhetoric. In his 2005 State of the Nation address, Mbeki made the case for South Africa to become a progressive, activist developmental state, in order to overcome the country's massive socio-economic challenges. This shift certainly mirrors the changing global development policy environment I outlined earlier, giving the state a more interventionist role. Yet, probably more significant were the internal pressures from within the Tri-Partite Alliance and the continuous protests and struggles country-wide over the failures of GEAR. The policy vehicle for the proposed developmental state framework is AsgiSA (Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa). AsgiSA aims to raise economic growth to 6% and to halve poverty and unemployment by 2014 through 'interventions to accelerate growth in a shared manner [that] surgically target weaknesses unique to South Africa's economy and government' (Mbeki 2003).[26]

Acknowledging that there really exists a disjuncture between the Government's growth strategy and its nation-building and poverty reduction objectives, Mbeki stated that bold steps were required to 'end the "two nations" divide':

The successes we have scored with regard to the 'first world economy' also gives us the possibility to attend to the problems posed by the third world

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[26] The initiative proposes:
- A massive investment in infrastructure
- Targeting economic sectors with good growth potential
- Developing the skills of South Africans, and harnessing the skills already there
- Building up small businesses to bridge the gap between the formal and informal economies
- Beefing up public administration
- Creating a macroeconomic environment more conducive to economic growth (The Presidency 2006).

The phrase 'surgically target' itself is an interesting choice of words, since it conveys a sense of technical and seemingly politically neutral solutions to socio-economic issues.

economy, which exist side by side with the modern 'first world economy' (2003: para. 16).

The two economies thesis is central to the Government's poverty reduction discourse, claiming that first and second economy are 'structurally disconnected' and growing further apart. Whereas the former is 'modern' and 'becom[ing] ever more integrated in the global economy', the latter is 'poor and underdeveloped', populated by the unemployed, unskilled, and 'unemployable'. Isobel Frye writes:

> This 'first' economy is set to realise the 'rainbow' nation's goal of true racial and economic integration, as any advertising billboard will show you, with be-suited young men and women of all hues seated behind one boardroom table. The 'second economy' does not feature much on billboards, but is present in most government papers and speeches, generally in a short paragraph towards the end entitled 'Second Economy Interventions' representing in effect, the surplus people, *the lumpen proletariat* (2007: 159).[27]

Some have accused the Government of harbouring a technicist understanding of the developmental state or maintained that AsgiSA alone is an insufficient pro-poor growth strategy (Seekings 2007, Bhorat 2006). Others argue that the developmental state model has only been employed superficially and has not included the deep social interventions that made the East Asian miracle possible (Freund 2007). This is echoed by Stephen Gelb, commenting here on the ANC's policy proposals ahead of the 2007 National Conference:

> I think that basically all the rhetoric around the developmental state is a signal that Government wants the state to play a much bigger role in various ways. The state-owned enterprises, in particular this infrastructure spending approach. That was not a centrepiece of policy in the past. On the other hand I don't think there's much agreement, or understanding, of what the developmental state is, or how it can be constructed in South Africa (S. Gelb, *EDGE Institute*, Interview, 10 May 07).

Rather, from within the official first/ second economy discourse, state intervention in the second economy becomes imperative, whereas the first economy

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[27] Italics in the original.

presumably is best left to regulate itself. Concepts such as the two economies must be analysed in terms of what kinds of citizens or subjects they create, and to what ends and in what ways they are being employed (Hart 2007). The recent shift to a developmental state discourse is, as posited above, at least partly a strategy to contain the challenges from oppositional movements and community organisations. The concept of the second economy involves the identification, targeting and treating of a backward, 'Third World' element of society as a subject for intervention. It enforces the drawing of 'uncivilised' communities into social security nets. At the same time, these strategies of containment have been accompanied by the marginalisation of protesters and those sympathetic to them as the 'ultra-left'. I discuss such processes of in- and exclusion in chapter 7.

Significantly, the discursive division of South Africa leaves intact the neoliberal premise that global integration will lead to development, whilst accounting for those it marginalises by relegating them to a separate space or 'nation'. By maintaining that first and second economies are disconnected, this model ignores the link between growth and inequality and justifies the fact that the overwhelming majority of infrastructure spending is aimed at reducing 'the cost of doing business' in the first economy, rather than extending infrastructure services to those in the second economy (Gelb 2007). The concept of the second economy then presents one way of dealing with the broken promises of the liberation struggle.

2.4. NGOs in development

Definition of NGO for the research context

The term NGO itself is deeply contested – even, as some commentators have asserted, practically meaningless (Edwards et al. 2000, Hilhorst 2003). I have adopted Salamon and Anheier's (1997) definition which characterises NGOs as organised and possessing some institutional reality, private, institutionally separate from government, non-profit, self-governing and involving a degree of voluntary participation. I distinguish NGOs from membership organisations such as grassroots- or community-based organisations which are formally accountable to their members (see Robinson 1997, Edwards and Hulme 1997 for similar definitions). Whilst CBOs

which numerically dominate civil society in South Africa are concentrated in areas of service delivery at a local level, more formalised NGOs are structurally equipped to benefit from funding and are involved in intermediary activities.

In South Africa, what I conceive of as NGOs are mostly registered Section 21 organisations, which identifies them as having a higher degree of formalisation due to more complex procedures of registration, auditing and reporting. All of the NGOs whose staff participated in this research were registered Section 21 organisations. The above evaluation criteria are also used by one of the largest studies of the South Africa non-profit sector to date (School for Public and Development Management 2002), which estimates the number of non-profit organisations in South Africa at 100,000. The figure included CBOs, social movements and trade unions, with 53% classified as less formalised NPOs. In terms of formalised organisations, the Prodder directory of NGOs and development organisations lists 4,000 entries in 2008. Mathoho (2006) classifies established CSOs in terms of four categories of activity: political and democracy-enhancing, economic and developmental related; health, welfare and social justice; education and training, or human resource development.

The above-mentioned Wits study further distinguishes between the not necessarily exclusive domains of development NPOs, survivalist NPOs and oppositional NPOs, the term NPO here arguably reflecting the shift in South Africa towards a depoliticised language that transcends the NGO-CBO divide and delineates the sector from the private sector (School for Public and Development Management 2002). If one is to adopt this later definition, almost all of the case NGOs[28] can be described as oppositional and developmental, in that they are involved in lobbying and advocacy as much as in the direct improvement of social, cultural or economic well-being – although they may not think of their own roles in this way.

NGOs in South Africa: historical reflections
In Africa, NGOs often came out of the independence movements and were concerned with overthrowing the remnants of colonialism, with new, technocratic

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[28] I use the phrase 'case NGO' throughout this thesis to refer to the NGOs whose staff were interviewed or observed for this research.

NGOs emerging since the 1980s.[29] Mawdsley, Townsend et al. define these as 'acquiescent NGOs' which are not driven by specific ideological commitments, but set up in response to the massive increase in funding opportunities in the 80s and 90s: 'they acquiesce to working only or mainly as their paymasters rather than their clients demand' (2002: 5). With closer ties to governments and resembling less the historical grass-roots movements, they frequently mirror the form and practices of the international NGDOs (Fowler 2000b). Feldman (1997) is concerned that many of these new NGOs primarily serve the interests of non-state actors aiming to commodify and individuate social relations under conditions of economic insecurity, rather than providing arenas for mobilising democratic movement from below. The growth of indigenous NGOs has been less pronounced in Southern Africa, where civil society has historically been relatively weak. Michael (2004) attributes this to the fact that postcolonial African socialism reduced the space available to civil society groups. Moreover, formalised NGOs need specific material and organisational resources which are scarcer in Southern Africa.

South African forms of state and civil society organisation constitute a unique case, with the intensity and length of colonial and settler involvement leading to the development of 'a thick network of state structures' (Greenstein 2003 :12). The later Apartheid state tended to work in mutually beneficially relationships with white civic organisations involved in service delivery, whereas progressive organisations provided a shadow welfare system to the majority of the population neglected by the policy of separate development. It was ironically the refusal of the Apartheid state to deliver services to black South Africans that gave rise to a powerful and highly organised Anti-Apartheid civil society that to a large extent enabled the final demise of the system (Mathoho 2006).

However, besides the objectives of a non-racial democracy, the values of the various parts of the Anti-Apartheid movement were not clearly defined. In fact, relationships within civil society had always been diverse and frequently conflictual, such as between ANC-affiliated movements and other actors in the mass movement. The internal tensions in the movement against Apartheid were at best temporarily cast aside, rather than resolved. Some argue that the bourgeois middle-class identity of the ANC had always been in necessary tension with the socialist objectives of the labour movement (McKinley 1997). Moreover, in the Apartheid era, it was not just the

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[29] See Fowler (2000b) for a history of Southern NGOs in the postcolonial era.

Apartheid state that suppressed dissent: it also existed within the Anti-Apartheid movement where resistance became increasingly violent and disorganised. These historical complexities have left a legacy and provide a lens through which contemporary struggles within civil society can be understood, as I will argue in chapter 4. The cracks in the relations between the Tri-Partite Alliance partners ANC, COSATU and SACP that began to show with the secretive adoption of GEAR has further intensified to the extent that the SACP announced in 2007 that it considered campaigning separately in the next elections. However, relations between the alliance partners and with other actors in the public sphere respectively are complex, fluid and highly political.

The negotiated settlement had an enormous impact on state-civil society interactions: Apartheid service organisations had positioned themselves outside of the state, whereas NGOs were shifting from 'an "oppositional" mode to a "developmental" mode' (Walters 1993, cited in Pieterse 1997: 158), with increasing numbers involved in policy development, training, networking and implementation.[30] In the RDP, the state committed itself formally to fostering institutions of participatory democracy and the Government was quick to set up national structures to give institutional form to these commitments. For instance, the National Economic, Development & Labour Council (NEDLAC) was formed, in which civil society was represented by a development chamber that consisted of chosen NGOs or CBOs. The Non-Profit Act of 1997 defined the role of NPOs as involved in governance and delivery, the Directorate of Non-Profit Organisations required CSOs to officially register with the state, and the National Development Agency was formed. By assigning to NGOs a role in line with official Government programmes that did not give space to contest the fundamentals of such programmes, this institutionalisation led to a 'sanitising of civil society', as McKinley (Unpublished Book Chapter) argues.

With the discourse of reconciliation fostering consent and initially limiting resistance, the 1990s were thus marked by a demobilisation of popular organisations – a 'wilting of civil society' that can be seen as typical for societies that undergo democratic transitions (Marais 2001). As Chapter 4 shows through empirical data gleaned from interviews with NGO leaders, this period can be characterised by a

[30] Note the shift of terminology from 'service organisations' to 'NGOs' here, which mirrors global development concepts such as 'governance' and 'civil society' entering the policy lexicon through an influx of Western experts and development knowledge. It was the civil society/ democratisation discourse that also, as Pieterse (1997) pervasively argues, served to mediate the potential conflicts arising from the proximity of the relationship between NGOs and the ANC.

continuous depletion of organisational capacity at the grassroots, as former activists and civic leaders began to be integrated in the state bureaucracy or in some cases into the business sector. Indeed, the ANC absorbed – and in some cases dismantled – some of the women's and youth movements that had emerged organically during the 1980s into the ANC structures or into the newly-established South African National Civics Organisation (SANCO) during the transition period, although this process was largely accepted consensually. The staff of these civics was usually part of the UDF and therefore committed to an ANC-leadership, but the strengthening of the ANC was also reinforced by the priorities of international donor governments and agencies, which saw the party as a stabilising and economically relatively orthodox power. As Marais (2001) has argued, the ANC has been highly successful at a key aspect of any hegemonic project: it managed to deploy ideological symbolism and render it relevant to the lived realities of many South Africans.

These processes led to a lack of political direction, mission and leadership in the non-profit sector. After 1994, many of the radical NGOs disappeared due to the funding crisis – again, this will be discussed in reference to empirical data in chapter 4 – whereas those that survived re-oriented themselves towards the new Government or international donors. NGOs and state institutions were now seen as partners in a national project, contributing to state building (Fakir 2006). This led to increasing dependence on international development funding and its associated knowledge regimes, and crucially to co-dependent relationships with the ANC. It was the (largely transnational) civil society/ democratisation discourse that also, as Pieterse (1997) argues pervasively, served to mediate the potential conflicts arising from the closeness of the relationship between NGOs and the ANC, particularly in view of the latter's hegemony.

NGOs gained power in relation to the communities they were meant to serve and increasingly grew distant from their constituencies and community-based partners. These processes left a vast gap in terms of social movements, community-based organisations and more progressive NGOs which only closed at the end of the 1990s. However, this background has shaped the relationships between NGOs and the state, and those between NGOs and social movements (see my discussion in chapters 5 and 7, respectively). It has also constituted as dividing line in South African civil society the issue of whether an organisation is pro-government or anti-

government. The increasing alignment of the ruling party with various elites, but also their historical relationships with the NGO sector, have formed the complex context in which the NGOs in this research must operate. It is the conceptualisation of their relationships to the state and ruling party that I turn to next.

NGOs and the state

Much of the literature on Post-Apartheid NGOs is therefore framed in terms of their relations to the state (Community Agency for Social Enquiry 2004, Mathoto 2006, Fakir 2006, Habib 2003, Ranchod 2007). Some of these demonstrate South Africa's case study potential to investigate the significance and challenges of NGOs in newly democratising societies and trace how state-NGO relations change in transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes (Bond 2000, Habib and Taylor 1999, Pieterse 1997, Seekings 2000). According to one study (Husy 2002, cited in Greenstein 2003), NGOs saw their main advantages vis-à-vis Government as possessing greater ability to coordinate relations with communities and CBOs, a focus on empowerment to enhance community ownership of projects, better response time to development needs, less bureaucratic procedures and the ability to offer cheaper and more cost-effective services. These 'comparative advantages' (Beloe 2003) mirror those in the literature on NGOs and development elsewhere. NGOs are perceived as more innovative than governments and less restricted by bureaucratic structures.[31] Edwards, Hulme et al. (2000) for instance argue that the lasting relevance of NGOs is the capacity to innovate on all levels, that is in terms of theory, policy and practice; their innovative potential is considered important in the areas of alternative development strategies (e.g. microfinance, participation), methods (e.g. Participatory Rural Appraisal) and awareness raising (e.g. regarding gender inequalities).

Flexibility and efficiency are seen as key benefits, as the following assessment indicates:

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[31] The argument of 'less bureaucracy' is hard to sustain in the face of increasing institutionalisation of the NGOs, as I explore in chapter 6. The framing of NGOs' significance and roles in terms of comparative advantages, such as in Beloe (2003), is itself indicative of the ubiquity of corporate management terminology in some of the literature concerned with NGO organisation.

[NGOs are] able to respond quickly on a small scale, partly because they are not hampered by bureaucratic structures, and partly because they are often close to their constituencies and in a better position to understand the influences on a local level (DeJong 2003: 7).

A number of studies identify the paradox of Post-Apartheid NGOs' 'twin roles' (School for Public and Development Management 2002) of service deliverer and critical watchdog, with a chasm sometimes identified between the two. The funding crisis, professionalisation and commercialisation have forced NGOs to tender for government and donor money, blurring the distinction between for-profit and non-profit agencies:

Anti-Apartheid NGOs were seen clearly as agents of change. Today, formerly progressive NGOs face the danger of being seen as agents of control, of being co-opted to neoliberal agendas, becoming the "community face" of neoliberalism (Habib and Taylor 1999: 80).[32]

The growing convergence between voluntary and private sector organisations is also evident in phenomena such as ethical corporatism, Corporate Social Investment (CSI) and public-private partnerships – all of which are commonplace in South Africa's development sector.

The dichotomous reading of the literature on NGOs' relations to the state (whether as antagonistic or engaged) constitutes an oversimplification of the complex relationships and frequent collaboration between the two actors.[33] It is however consistent with a (neo)liberal discourse that sets NGOs up against a straw man state in order to then highlight its comparative advantages. South African NGOs in particular are bound up with the state in a number of ways, for instance through partnerships, tendering for Government money and, ideologically, through a shared history of the struggle. This is further complicated by the fact that in a 'developmental' middle-income economy like South Africa, the state itself is the

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[32] These processes and their impact on the NGO sector are discussed in detail in subsequent chapters, including an assessment of their positioning between service deliverer and watchdog in chapter 5.
[33] Chapter 5 discusses the case NGOs' relationships to the Government, but treats them as one amongst a number of relationships that impact on NGOs' positioning in civil society. The notion of civil society and the state as diametrically opposed is rejected in this research, as I indicated in the introduction.

biggest donor and commissions NGOs as providers of services. Some informants estimated that 50% of all services are outsourced to NGOs and other private entities (D. Marshall-Smith, *Starfish*, Interview, 23 Mar 07).

Critiques: procedural, structural, ethical

NGOs have increasingly come under attack by everyone from World Bank officials and the business sector to academics and grassroots activists, albeit for different reasons. Firstly, some criticisms address procedural limitations whilst being positive about NGO impact. These betray a tendency to focus on NGOs' roles in relation to their intended effects, such as their track record as service providers or partners (cf. Bryant, 2002) – perhaps owing to the fact they are often written by development practioners in the field. The constraints of funding arrangements and a lack of co-ordination and communication can lead to duplication of programmes which in turn results in poor service delivery for other communities. Short-termism is an issue which is also related to NGOs' dependency on donor funding: the lack of sustainability in the NGO sector means that programmes do not always have continuity and indeed that they may be diverted from their particular strengths towards areas of increased funding (Community Agency for Social Enquiry 2004, School for Public and Development Management 2002).

Secondly, there is a set of radical or structuralist critiques of NGOs. These often revolve around NGOs' positioning as agents of neoliberal development (in the case of South African NGOs) or of imperialism (in the case of INGOs).[34] The following is a fairly typical assessment:

> [NGOs] have taken the 'missionary position' - service delivery, running projects that are motivated by charity, pity and doing things for people (implicitly who can't do it for themselves), albeit with the verbiage of participatory approaches (Manji and O Coill 2002).

Kamat's (2002) ethnography of an Indian grassroots organisation concludes that NGOs are organically connected with capitalist social relations therefore making

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[34] Similar critiques have been advanced by scholars studying 'civil society' in various geographic contexts, often with reference to the NGO-isation of social movements (see for instance Lang 2000, Smith 2007). I will further discuss this literature in chapter 7.

them incapable of challenging the authority of the state and transforming unequal social relations (also see Petras and Veltmeyer 2001, Kamat 2003). Whilst my objective in this literature review is also to tease out the connections between particular forms of governance and 'their' preferred development agents by focusing on neoliberalism and the rise of NGOs, it is vital that Post-Apartheid NGOs be analysed from the specific perspective of South African development and the various global spaces and practices that domain connects to.

A third set of critiques deals with the ethics of NGO practice. The three interconnected aspects of representativeness, independence and accountability have been given particular attention under the rubric of NGOs' crisis of legitimacy (Lister 2003, Webb 2004, Jordan and Van Tuijl 2006, Ebrahim and Weisband 2007). Turning to representation first, critics have pointed out that NGOs frequently do not reach the poor, and certainly hardly ever the poorest of the poor (Streeten, 1997; Kamat, 2002). NGOs are also likely to operate where there is a constituency willing to take advantage of new resources provided by the NGO, which tends to exclude the most disadvantaged (Feldman 1997). Crucially, if an NGO loses legitimacy in the community, it may still not lose donor support, as evaluations rarely consider long-term trends. Also, NGOs can be elitist, exclusionary or serving only particular interests, for instance by having a faith base or a base in trade unionism (Streeten 1997). These are significant arguments given the conflation of NGOs and civil society in donor funding practice: the strengthening of NGOs can then be seen as precisely weakening civil society and democracy.[35]

The fact that NGOs are dependent on external funding, be it from members of particular communities, government or multilateral donors, has been discussed extensively in the literature, and the question of their autonomy has increasingly entered the public domain (Howell and Pearce 2003, Martens 2005, Lister 2000, Brehm et al. 2004, Michael 2004, Hearn 2000). Issues around funding and relationships of the case NGOs to international donors, government and private sponsors are explored throughout this thesis, with chapter 5 addressing funding dynamics through the lens of partnerships. Concerns about independence and accountability, coupled with a decline of donor funding, have forced NGOs

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[35] The relationship between development and faith-based development agencies is particularly complex: due to the importance of religion in many Majority World countries, faith-based NGOs can have a potentially huge impact on development, whilst there is an uneasy historical connection between the two.

everywhere to address their sustainability prospects (Beloe 2003, Hira and Parfitt 2004, Fowler 2000c); South African NGOs are no exception as I contend in subsequent chapters. Fowler's (2000c) framework has been useful for my analysis of case NGOs' sustainability strategies, addressing three aspects of sustainability: development impact and enduring change; resource mobilisation, both human and financial; and the adaptive viability of organisations.

Accountability as a technology of power

Accountability has emerged as a set of practices dealing with these concerns of independence, representativeness and legitimacy in the non-profit sector. Hulme and Edwards define accountability as 'the means by which individuals and organizations report to a recognised authority (or authorities) and are held responsible for their actions' (cited in Roberts et al. 2005: 1850). They and others refer to accountability in its older meanings either as a moral concept or financial practice. For instance, a distinction is made between upward and downward NGO accountability, the former being directed towards donors or networks, the latter internal to projects. Although upwards accountability is required by donors, this is not necessarily the case with downward accountability (to CBOs or directly to beneficiaries), raising issues of in(equality) in development partnerships. Literature on North-South NGO partnerships has highlighted that inequality in terms of accountability mirrors inequality of resources and a lack of transparency (Brehm et al. 2004, Mawdsley et al. 2002).

However, as for instance Power (1997) and Strathern (2000) have shown, accountability has come to carry a whole range of practices, procedures and values. 'Rituals of verification' (Power 1997) such as auditing are global phenomena, affecting diverse domains and institutions. One way of theoretically grappling with the issue of accountability is through an understanding of its associated practices as technologies of power. From this perspective, ever-more sophisticated forms of auditing, monitoring and evaluation form part of a paradigm of knowledge which, concerned with quality control, good practice and economic efficiency, is specific to a neoliberal form of government. These new forms of accountability contribute to a re-organising of public institutions and not-for-profit organisations according to a financial rationality, thus constructing calculable spaces and making them

governable through experts and expertise (Miller 1994, Rose 1999). As Rose writes, '[o]rganizations had to be rendered accountable, and the terms of that accountability were not professional but those of accounting' (1999: 152). What were previously extra-economic domains are now made to be economic and 'colonised by criteria of economy efficiency' (Lemke 2001: 202).

As a dominant norm in international development, accountability gives rise to specific audit practices such as Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and specific assessment tools such as Logical Framework Analysis (also see appendix 5). Systems of reporting, monitoring and organisational learning play central roles in shaping what NGOs do, how they talk about what they do and how they conceive of future projects. Ebrahim (2003) argues that information flows and systems are therefore one of the mechanisms by which funders shape NGO behaviour. Roberts et al. (2005) illustrate how 'buzzwords' like transparency, accountability, participation, efficiency and practices like strategic planning, evaluation and organisational self-assessment are specifically Western modes of managerialism that have transformed the day-to-day practices of NGOs in the South since, in order to be eligible for funds, NGOs must increasingly demonstrate that they understand and apply managerial and evaluation practices.

Accountability links the discourse and practices of good governance on a global level with those of NGO governance; both are arguably concerned with efficiency and good practice rather than democratisation or transparency. Adherence to these accountability practices has the effect of inclusion. For instance, development partnerships encompass multiple levels of accountability that operate as channels for the circulation of particular managerial practices and neoliberal values. Accountability practices such as M&E run through multisectoral networks, connecting CBOs, NGOs, public sector, donors and INGOs (Roberts et al. 2005). As I put forward in chapter 6, accountability understood from the perspective of its associated knowledge practices and technologies transforms NGOs on the level of data, staffing and developmental objectives. These technologies favour highly formalised sections of civil society and marginalise others. However, contrary to the assumption of certain strands of governmentality studies, I contend that such technologies are also actively shaped through NGO practice, adaptation and resistance, rather than NGOs passively being at the receiving end.

2.5. Theorising NGOs and power in Post-Apartheid development

Governmentality studies and neoliberalism

Some of my arguments in the previous sections have drawn on governmentality studies as a broader theoretical framework, and it is this body of literature and its applicability to the present research questions that I discuss in this section. Governmentality approaches focus on how governmental power in modern societies operates in a de-centralised fashion, through a multiplicity of sites and authorities. They acknowledge that development usually operates through a productive power that wins legitimacy and empowers actions whilst putting into place regimes of truth. Such regimes structure the possible field of action, with individuals constituting themselves in terms of norms through which they are governed. It is the work of a set of Anglo-Foucauldians that is probably best known for their development of the governmentality framework (Rose 1999, Barry et al. 1996b, Burchell 1993, Miller and Rose 1990). I will only briefly address this body of literature, as there are a number of writers whose work – in specifically addressing questions of development and seeking to move beyond the framework established by the former – is more significant to the present analysis (Li 2007, Watts 2003, Hart 2008, Corbridge et al. 2005, Gould 2005b). Others have sought to overcome governmentality studies' focus on the Western liberal state (see the volumes edited by Larner and Walters 2004, Mosse and Lewis 2005) and trace what is perceived as an emerging system of transnational governmentality composed of state and non-state actors in African countries and elsewhere (Ferguson and Gupta 2005, Ferguson 2006a).[36]

The British school addresses neoliberalism in the setting of Western advanced liberalism, i.e. as a property of late capitalism. This has prompted critics to doubt its applicability to the study of development in Africa.[37] Having already set out the important distinction between advanced liberal and neoliberal above, I do not see this criticism as valid for the present research for two reasons. Firstly, the framework within which much development funding, language and practices takes place is

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[36] There has also emerged in recent years an interest in 'spatial governmentality', concerned with the study of spatial politics and the production of governable spaces. See Appadurai (2002), Chatterjee (2004) and Roy (2009).
[37] See for instance Gould (2005b) who points out that most African scholars would not characterise African societies as late capitalist. An analytics of governmentality is moreover predicated on the identification of governmental practices which create compliant subjectivities, something he argues the state or any other public actor in Africa simply does not have the authority to do so. As I will put forward below, I do not agree with this and other similar critiques. Indeed, several works look at social programmes in South Africa as disciplinary techniques (see Ruitgers 2007, Hart 2007 for examples).

transnational. Secondly, South Africa presents a special case in Africa where a strong state co-exists with relatively powerful transnational non-state actors in the development domain to form an assemblage of governance, a situation of 'overlapping sovereignties' (Ong 2006: 7). Like the Asian states Ong describes, South Africa is characterised by neoliberal strategies that interact and compete with other forms of state-led and community-centred development. Correspondingly, I believe that the Government's rhetoric makes use of a mixture of often contradictory approaches that encompass neoliberal, Africanist, social democratic and 'new South African' discourses (Bond 2001, Greenstein 2003). In short, neoliberal ideology, whilst having a discernible intellectual genesis as I have described it earlier, is differentially articulated with various other political projects and takes multiple forms (Larner 2003). However, as I will outline below, I agree that a governmentality framework alone is insufficient in grappling with the complex configurations of power in Post-Apartheid South Africa.

Foucault understood government as the 'conduct of conduct', that is to say as 'systematic ways of thinking and acting that aim to shape, regulate, or manage the comportment of others' (Inda 2005: 1, Foucault 1991a). He highlights the correlation between the rise of the self-regulating subject of liberalism and the increasing penetration of the mechanisms of power and governance into both the social and individual body. In this analysis of power, the state is but one element 'in multiple circuits of power, connecting a diversity of authorities and forces, within a wide variety of complex assemblages' (Rose 1999: 5). Social programmes relating to the security, health or economic development of populations can be mobilised to shape the desires, aspirations and interests of individual subjects, so that they themselves contribute to achieving the desired social order. Government therefore works both on and through the agency and subjectivity of the individual (Burchell 1993). This practice of responsibilisation – of making individuals or communities responsible for their own change – links processes of subjectification with wider programmes. Responsibilisation enables the monitoring and surveillance of conduct, making vital the role of what are seemingly non-political technologies and expertise. M&E, and the expertise, technologies and languages it gives rise to, are analysed as an example of this in chapter 6. As was discussed in relation to accountability above, techniques of calculation are central to government rationality and have a role in subjectification: 'they turn the individual into a calculating self endowed with a range

of ways of thinking about, calculating about, predicting and judging their own activities and those of others' (Rose 1999: 214).

Foucault's work has also influenced a group of theorists who, sometimes grouped under the label of post-development, have questioned the legitimacy of the 'developmental professional gaze' and have tried to push Foucauldian notions of governance beyond the nation state (Sachs 1992, Esteva 1992, Escobar 1995, Munck 1999, Latouche 2004, Rahnema and Bawtree 1997, Rist 1997). These critics employ the Foucauldian concepts of power/knowledge and discourse analytics to deconstruct development as a system of knowledge. Escobar (1995) emphasises the historically constituted character of development and its embedded power relations, showing how expert knowledge about the Third World shapes the practices of development actors and consolidates a (Northern) consensus about (Southern) poverty and underdevelopment. Representations are 'places of encounter where identities are constructed and also where violence is originated, symbolized, and managed' (ibid: 10).

This theoretical body is relevant to a critique of the paternalism of North-South relations, shedding light on the bias towards Africa's failure to develop or, in the present context, her failure to count, manage and audit.[38] This, and the portrayal of African states and societies as failed, rogue, deficient or criminal, thus legitimates development interventions. Post-development here provides an important perspective on the way knowledge is produced and circulated in the international NGO community, and more broadly on how Southern Africa has historically been produced by discourses and practices of development. More specifically, it offers a lens through which to analyse the impact of NGO essentialism and reductionism in their relations to other sectors of civil society that I address in chapter 7.

Aside from these insights, post-development's understanding of civil society seems to me to be consistent with (neo)liberal conceptions of development, for instance in attributing a necessary negative role to the state in development by setting up a dichotomy with civil society, in which the latter tends to appear as more benign. It also takes for granted what I call the 'indigenisation argument', in which Majority World NGOs are equated with work that is inherently more participatory, appropriate and pro-poor. Undoubtedly, indigenous organisations are (often) better placed to effect more appropriate and participatory development, but a romanticised

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[38] See chapter 6 for a critique of a Western paternalism towards 'indigenous' monitoring and evaluation.

notion of Majority World NGOs as a priori delivering these type of democratic, emancipatory and bottom-up activities turns a blind eye to the potential shortcomings of large-scale 'indigenous' projects such as the emerging public-private-voluntary partnerships.[39]

Governmentality in development studies

Turning now to the development domain, the governmentality framework has been employed to analyse how development relations provide a context for disciplinary practices, aimed at regulating social life by producing citizens, rather than to repress or exert overt control. Thus for instance capacity building initiatives, as they are regularly sponsored by donors and implemented by NGOs in South Africa, are also political interventions that are designed to produce modern economic subjects. Kamat (2003) for instance argues that microcredit programmes are well suited to the neoliberal economic context, as risks are shifted to the individual entrepreneur – often poor women – who are forced to compete in a restricted, uneven and fluctuating market environment. Governmentality literature provides a way to think about how spaces, states and subjects are constituted by both state and non-state processes and helps explore practices through which communities and NGOs come together as partners for development, becoming responsible for decisions as active and self-reliant subjects. Examples of applying governmentality theory specifically to the operation of NGOs are provided by Bryant (2002) who examines the outcome of NGO activity in the Philippines as a facilitation of government, Sending and Neumann (2006) on the international campaign to ban landmines, and Postero (2007) on NGOs and new subjectivities amongst indigenous people in Bolivia (also see Richter 2006 on civil society in Russia).

Li draws attention to the important fact that government operates through freedom:

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[39] Moreover, from a post-development perspective earlier 'alternative' approaches to development such as Women in Development, rural development or sustainable development have contributed to the systematic production of knowledge and power much like development economics or modernist development discourse; all of these discourses are equally developmental and thus rejected. Whilst it is possible to accept this argument both on a level of discursive formations and of project outcomes, one is left wondering how it can accommodate the fact that such disparate discourses may be negotiated differently on a local level. Anthropological studies of development such as Rossi (2004) on the contrary serve to show how development 'recipients' negotiate, or resist, development projects and practices.

For the transnational development apparatus (donors, development banks, consultants, and non-governmental agencies), acquiescence is crucial. Lacking access to the means of violence, they can operate only by educating the desires and reforming the practices of their target populations (2007: 16)

To improve populations requires a distinct government rationality that relies on problematisation and calculation to be translated into concrete development programmes. The notion of problematisation is central to Foucault's work:

Problematization doesn't mean the representation of a pre-existent object, nor the creation through discourse of an object that doesn't exist. It's the set of discursive or non-discursive practices that makes something enter into the play of the true and false, and constitutes it as an object of thought (whether under the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.) (Foucault 1989).

Calculation or 'rendering technical' (Li 2007, Rose 1999) confirms expertise and ensures that problems are diagnosed in a way that is amenable to technical interventions and solutions (also see Ferguson 1990). Experts are therefore vital to an analysis of power in development: expertise is a channel for governmental practices, particularly because to govern involves the autonomy of the subjects of rule to choose freely how they conduct themselves.

My usage of this theoretical framework extends beyond the effect of development projects on the individual or on populations. Government in the development domain encompasses a whole continuum of power relations between the state, donors, NGOs, target individuals or groups, and other organisations of civil society. It is not just the individual, but also states, organisations and communities that are to be made responsible, efficient and entrepreneurial. I am interested less in the constitution of development subjects as citizens, entrepreneurs or the poor[40] (although this is clearly an absolutely central effect of NGOs' work in development), but in the constitution of appropriate development organisations (which produce certain subjects). These in turn attempt to transfer the appropriate meaning, forms and practices of development and social change within civil society at large.

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[40] On microcredit as a governmental strategy, see Rankin (2001) and Brigg (2006).

This understanding allows for an analysis of partnerships as a mode of global governance, as I seek to put it forward in chapters 4 and 5: partnerships ensure the inclusion of disparate development actors into shared projects with consensual agendas such as capacity building or empowerment. In the context of NGO partnerships, one of the key questions then becomes whether, and to what extent, NGOs are enlisted into CSI projects or government agendas, assuming responsibility for external policies (also see Abrahamsen 2004).

Beyond governmentality

There is no space here to discuss in detail the limitations of governmentality studies. In addition to the aforementioned, the most relevant critiques for the present context are: Gupta and Ferguson (2005) who describe the Anglo-Foucauldian conception of neoliberalism as Eurocentric; Mosse (2005), that governmentality studies are too precise about the effects of ordering power and too abstract about their location; and Hart (2008), that Anglo-Foucauldian conceptions of neo-liberal governmentality are incapable of accounting for the constitutive role of contestation. In the same vein, O'Malley finds that the governmentality approach privileges official discourse 'with the result that it becomes difficult for it to recognize the imbrication of resistance and rule' (O'Malley 1996: 311). The latter point is particularly relevant in light of popular mobilisation against neoliberal rationalities in Post-Apartheid. O'Malley et al. (1997) crucially identify some of the difficulties in the governmentality literature regarding the realisation of its political potential. Again, many of the authors I explicitly draw on have since addressed the above shortcomings.

Li (2007), Watts (2003) and others have countered some of the criticisms levelled against governmentality studies by emphasising that it is an 'accurate guide to development as a project of rule' (Li 2007: 295), but not to its practical accomplishment or implementation. Closure is indeed a feature of expert discourse, as some Foucauldians would have it. This is for instance evident in the near-complete exclusion of political-economic issues in the funded civil society domain. But there are always challenges to expert discourses, and efforts need to be made to sustain the boundaries between those who have expertise and those who do not. The limitations of governmentality as an analytic is thus in-built, since '[t]o govern means to act on the action of subjects who retain the capacity to act otherwise' (Li

2000: 17). There are always boundaries to government, because it precisely does not aim to exercise total control and there are many ways in which people resist neoliberal restructuring. This implies that attention must be paid to questions of political economy, social struggles and class power. As Li, who employs a governmentality framework but supplements it with Gramscian theory, writes:

> Rule and its compromises are enabled and constrained by the sediment histories, contemporary social forces and international resource flows configuring a particular national arena (1999: 299).

So whilst I analyse NGO practices, expertise and technologies from the perspective of a (modified) understanding of power as governmentality, the issues at stake in chapter 7 – strategies of containment and contestation – also show the limits of such an understanding, for instance by typically viewing rule as a secure achievement rather than as a project that continuously needs to be struggled for.

South Africa's case study potential of how globalisation plays itself out in the semi-industrialised world further necessitates an analysis that is sensitive to the concrete and often disastrous outcomes of Post-Apartheid development. Moreover if it is true, as some assert, that South Africa has replaced racial Apartheid with class Apartheid (Bond 2004a), a discussion of the processes of inclusion and exclusion that characterise Post-Apartheid is paramount. Whilst being suited to exploring the mechanisms and technologies of rule, a governmentality framework does not account well for the effects of neoliberal policies, and for the movements challenging them.

In grappling with the broader socio-economic issues that frame my analysis of Post-Apartheid NGOs, I have therefore been influenced by accounts that capture the uneven structural effects of globalisation. Throughout this chapter, I have highlighted the influence of political economy analyses on my reading of the Post-Apartheid development terrain. In particular I have sought to emphasise the relevance of a theory of uneven development, which assumes that – both on a global scale and within South Africa – wealth is always produced in tandem with poverty, and development with underdevelopment. Whilst this thesis does not pose political economy questions and cannot analyse the development domain in terms of economics, I nonetheless acknowledge the impact that this theoretical tradition has

had on my thinking, providing me with a broad guiding framework that captures vital dimensions of Post-Apartheid politics.

There are theoretical challenges that arise from drawing on such diverse bodies of literature. I have justified this, firstly, by employing them strategically, i.e. to illuminate different dimensions and levels of analysis in the Post-Apartheid development domain. I am drawing here particularly on the above-discussed work of Li (1999, 2007). Kamat (2002) also blends her Gramscian analysis of grassroots organisations in India with a Foucauldian approach to development discourses in order to examine how NGOs might come to control and regulate radical popular initiatives. Different theoretical traditions pose different questions and provide different tools. Governmentality studies have offered an important perspective to grapple with NGO practices, technologies and vocabularies, and the forms of expertise, knowledge and identity they produce. Marxist critiques emanating from a number of disciplines (development studies, political economy, sociology and geography) have informed my understanding of the broader issues impacting on NGOs. Secondly, my understanding of the governmentality literature has been shaped by theorists who themselves acknowledge the influence of Marxian accounts on their writing, thus providing a departure from the Anglo-Foucauldian school. My analytical focus on discourses and technologies necessarily implies less focus on resistance, but I highlight throughout this thesis the strong critiques from some NGO professionals and recognise that the technologies of rule examined are themselves often modified or sometimes neglected altogether.

2.6. Conclusions

This review chapter has highlighted two historical processes: firstly, the neoliberalisation of global development and the shift towards a subtler, more inclusive neoliberalism; and secondly, the changing role for NGOs in South Africa's transition from Apartheid to a Post-Apartheid setting. This setting, I have argued in drawing on the work of human geographers, is characterised by a locally specific neoliberal ideology that is articulated in conjunction with other social and economic projects. Regarding the global level, a more inclusive style of development is captured in the twin agendas of good governance – or more recently, simply

governance – and partnerships, both turning on a conception of development as consensual and participatory, necessarily including NGOs, financial institutions, companies, state agencies and donors. The recent aid harmonisation agenda ties in with such homogenised versions of development and may curtail the space available to NGOs, although these harmonisation projects do not necessarily succeed. However, in this move, the reach of markets is extended far beyond that of earlier structural adjustment programmes into areas previously not liberalised. NGOs themselves can play a central part in the extension of market models into extra-economic areas.

This research positions itself in the vicinity of recent work on governmentality. As I have contended, there are problems with the post-Foucauldian literature on government, partly because of its focus on projects, not outcomes or resistance, and partly because of its focus on Western liberal democracies. Many of the authors that have informed my reading of the Post-Apartheid development terrain in this field have already provided answers (or at the very least raised more questions) to these issues. However, there are certain 'in-built' limitations, which have meant that whilst the approach is useful to answer research questions on the level of the NGO, broader issues impacting on the NGO field have been left open. It is here that I have turned to political economic accounts of neoliberalism, which are sensitive to the role played by social power dynamics and class relations in determining capitalist dispossession.

Whilst this research takes a discursive approach to the governmentality of South African NGOs, future research of an ethnographic may expand on the themes explored here, attending in greater details to the struggles over projects of rule and to the successes and failures of audit culture and associated technologies. Perhaps most importantly, in South Africa neoliberal ideology is articulated together with other political projects, most evidently a racial nationalism, a populist Africanism and a third way social democracy. In other words, whilst theories of neoliberalism are important, this context is also always exceeded.

Chapter 3:
Researching
Post-Apartheid NGOs

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 has already summarised the research problem and my research motives and objectives. Here, I provide an in-depth discussion of how I designed this research, which methodological strategy and methods I employed and which issues my approach has raised.

I began desk research in London in October 2005, reviewing literature and developing a conceptual framework. In the summer of 2006, I carried out semi-structured expert interviews with staff at four UK-based development NGOs (see appendix 7). These were intended to form a pilot study, identifying themes and topics which would then be examined through more detailed work in the subsequent year of fieldwork in South Africa.[41] The four organisations were chosen because they all focused on one or more central aspects of my research, for instance capacity building in North-South partnerships or multi-stakeholder partnerships in Southern Africa. The interviews covered the topics of partnerships and funding, project management and project development and technologies and norms. My thematic analysis particularly highlighted the themes of proposal writing as a language skill, the practice of translation and interpretation in partnerships and NGOs' institutionalised reflexivity.

The pilot study was useful in terms of honing my interview technique and getting a sense of the language and concepts professionals employed to speak about issues in the development domain. However, my research questions and objectives changed considerably between this initial research and my departure to South Africa in early 2007. I decided to focus on South African NGOs as opposed to INGOs operative in South Africa as I had originally planned. This involved a shift of

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[41] Whilst these interviews contributed to the development of a conceptual framework and helped me to refine my research questions, the data provided a view on issues specific to African development organisations operating in the UK, and how they negotiate, are constrained by, and actively contribute to discourses and practices of international development.

focus from the international development domain to that of Post-Apartheid, itself constituted by various local, national and global discourses and flows. The change reflected my evolving understanding of the South African development field where 'indigenous' civil society organisations are relatively powerful and the state represents the largest donor.

Before commencing my overseas fieldwork, I had also carried out a critical analysis of development policy documents in order to gain knowledge of policy agendas and language. This enabled me to identify the continuities and breaks in development discourses across various development spaces and scales. In line with my research questions, I focused on partnership and governance as two central elements of recent development policy. This documentary analysis further informed the development of the conceptual framework and the refinement of the research questions.

The majority of the data was generated in two periods of fieldwork, during which I was based in Johannesburg; one from January 2007 to August 2007 and a second one for 6 weeks in January and February 2008. I had decided to live in Johannesburg during my fieldwork as this is where most of the intermediary NGOs that I focus on are based. It is also the home of most development funders, which I thought to be important in terms of the city being a development industry hub (it later turned out that a number of case NGOs and their funders were even clustered in the same building in Braamfontein). As a centre of cultural and intellectual life, it also gave me the opportunity to attend conferences, talks and cultural events. However, I also carried out some interviews in Durban and Cape Town and attended academic conferences in Pretoria, Mafikeng and Durban.

Before my departure in January 2007, I secured an affiliation as a visiting researcher with the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER) at the University of the Witwatersrand, providing me with office space, library access and the opportunity to participate in weekly research seminars. WISER is an interdisciplinary research centre carrying out work concerned with the Post-Apartheid social order. Prior to my departure, I had also established some preliminary research contacts with NGO leaders and other development practioners, which led to some initial meetings and expert interviews and helped me to gain access to NGOs. I discuss the selection of case NGOs and my choice of research methods in detail below (see sections 3.2. and 3.4.).

My research was approved by Goldsmiths' Sociology Department Ethics Committee in 2006. It was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and conducted in adherence to the Council's Research Ethics Framework and the British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice. In accordance with these, I explained to informants what my research was about, who was funding it, why I undertook it and how it was to be disseminated. I also sought consent to record interviews and explained how I was planning on transcribing and storing data. I sought permission from participants to be named in the study where they acted in an official capacity, and obtained written permission for the use of direct quotations. Furthermore, I offered to send the interview transcript to each interviewee, which was taken up by about half of those cited directly. Consent was given by all participants to be named and for their institutional affiliation to be given.

I interviewed individuals at 23 different organisations as well as carrying out some expert interviews with other development practioners and activists (see appendix 1). I recorded interviews on a MiniDisc recorder and kept MiniDiscs separate from other data until final consent was given. I transcribed roughly one half of the interviews myself and had the other half transcribed by Phineas Riba, a postgraduate student who was recommended to me by one of my colleagues at WISER. Whilst the transcription process is often said to form an initial element of the data analysis, I did not feel that my reading of the second set of interviews was in any way less in-depth since I listened back to the interviews several times to check through the transcripts for mistakes. Moreover, the number and length of interviews called for a pragmatic decision about whether I wanted to curtail my interviewing for the sake of transcribing them myself.

I kept a field diary in which I recorded my observations, providing descriptions of settings, people, situations and conversations. This was accompanied by virtual and hard copy folders of clippings from newspapers, leaflets, NGOs' information materials and documentary materials. During the first period of fieldwork in 2007, I also blogged regularly, which provided me with a different kind of writing space and which, during writing up in the UK, has helped me to connect with the inspiration I had felt when living in Johannesburg. The visual data I produced, such as photographs, was important in terms of bringing ideas and observations back to life once I began my data analysis.

I came back to the UK in August 2007, planning to return at the end of the year for an additional 6 months to carry out observation research with two organisations. *Mindset* and *Teboho* were chosen because of their case study potential to illuminate two distinct modes of NGO organisations that had emerged from my research up to that point: the partnership model and the social entrepreneurship model. I also began the formal data analysis (see section 3.5.), although I regard data generation and analysis as dynamic and interactive and had begun an initial thematic analysis during fieldwork. When I became pregnant in that autumn I needed to adjust my plans, returning for a month-long observation at *Mindset*, additional interviews and a conference presentation in January and February 2008. By this stage, the data analysis was quite advanced, which impacted on the way I designed further interviews and planned and conducted the observational research. Indeed, the methodological approach I have chosen understands data generation, theory building and data analysis as intertwined in a developmental process.

3.2. Research strategy, methodological approach and selection

I have employed a multi-method qualitative approach, allowing for the production of rich, detailed and contextual data that is required to address the research questions posed here. Qualitative researching encompasses a wide range of philosophical and methodological positions and intellectual traditions, and this section discusses which assumptions underlie my project.

My methodological approach has been broadly interpretivist, attributing meaning to people's actions and their interpretations of them. I understand people as agents that are both empowered and constrained by structures. This approach also assumes that social explanation requires depth, complexity and contextualisation. I have employed multiple methods of data collection and a discursive-analytical approach to data analysis. It was important for me to develop a flexible research design that would be able to accommodate multiple methods and a developmental relationship between theory building, data generation and data analysis. I began with concepts which had been informed by the theoretical perspectives that have been influential on my work. These were developed as field work progressed, so that data

and theoretical ideas were developed in conjunction. This approach was aided by a period of reflection and analysis between the two blocks of field work I undertook.

My standpoint is critical in the sense that it situates the research in a wider socio-economic context, is focused on inequalities and understands the role of research to be linked to values and a political commitment. This necessarily involves an ongoing awareness of my own role as a researcher and the impact of my subject-position on the knowledge that is produced. It is thus a theory-driven approach that produces constituted, positioned and context-specific knowledge (Lopez and Potter 2001). Such a standpoint has echoes of a critical realist epistemology. Contra constructivism or a naïve realism, a critical realist epistemology asserts that we have access to truths – although not a definite, finished truth – via fallible theories and accordingly that knowledge is always partial and positioned (Cruickshank 2003). I am not fully committed to a critical realist position, but it has enabled me to think through the relationship between discursive and material or extra-discursive practices whilst understanding knowledge as socially constructed. Language shapes social realities but these social realities are delineated by the conditions of the material world.

Flexibility was also required in so far as I formulated research questions and methods at the start of the project that were modified during fieldwork, on account of immersion and engagement with informants. This is based on the recognition that, although I had developed a good understanding of the theoretical context within which my project was situated through secondary research, this was not sufficient to be able to formulate a definite and final strategy. Questions were being refined as the research progressed, for instance by accounting for my increasing interest in NGOs' relations to other civil society actors. Also, my initial research design proposed to analyse the effects of two elements of the global poverty reduction consensus on NGO practices, namely the good governance and partnership agendas. After some months in the field, I made a strategic decision to focus my attention primarily on the effects of the partnership discourse. This was due to the need to focus down the research; also, the initial data that I generated suggested that the partnership discourse had impacted on NGO practices in complex and interesting ways.

Overall, whilst not carrying out a formal discourse analysis, this research has taken discursive analytical approach in the sense that it considers language as

having constitutive properties, and is concerned with its effects and consequences. A discourse is a specific, structured and historically produced way of representing and organising knowledge and practices about a topic or field (Hall 1997, Foucault 1972, Foucault 1977, Andersen 2003). As complex constructions of meaning, discourses become bound up with institutions to constitute regimes of truth that define what constitutes expert knowledge. As such, they are embedded within and reflects wider relations of power that manifest in development practices, operating procedures and forms of expertise of NGO staff, development professionals or researchers (Ebrahim 2003). Development institutions and organisations generate their own form of discourse, which both constructs objects of knowledge and creates a structure of knowledge around these objects (Ferguson 1990).

This interest in how language represents the relations, processes and subjects of development is combined with an understanding of people's interpretations of discourses as equally important. It is thus the meaning made by social actors that this research tries to explore. Therefore in-depth interviews were chosen as the principal method best suited to exploring how development discourses are actively constructed by development practioners. In other words, the effects of discursive structure on NGO behaviour need to be linked with the forms of agency exercised by them (Ebrahim 2003), for instance by asking how audit culture may be understood by NGO professionals, and how it impacts on their relationships with other actors in the field of development.

Multiple methods
Based on my flexible research design, I have employed a mixture of methods, primarily in-depth interviews (including life-historical interviewing), but also observation research and document analysis (Mason 2002, Atkinson et al. 2001, Berg 2001, Plummer 2001). There is a danger of a naïve view of triangulation, which assumes that by simply combining methods a more complete picture is produced, thereby failing to do justice to the situated nature of accounts (Silverman 2001). In choosing multiple methods, my aim has not been to produce data that converges and thereby establish validity, as this would not be concurrent with my research design. Rather than assuming a corroboration purpose, I understand multiple methods to fulfil an elaborative purpose: 'elaboration occurs when the variety of data

expands understanding of the phenomenon, perhaps by providing different perspectives' (Blaikie 2000: 267). Different methods tap different ways of knowing, requiring that the data be located carefully within their wider context (cf. Mathiason [1988], cited in Blaikie 2000). This speaks against triangulation as a technical solution and towards a more holistic perspective as is found for instance in many critical ethnographic projects (see below). It also implies that ambiguities of findings must be held onto as opposed to having to be resolved at all cost.

Selection, Access and Positioning

Despite the association of sampling with a statistical logic, qualitative research necessarily involves selection of data, albeit for reasons of focus rather than generalisation.[42] I wanted to select as wide a range of South African NGOs as possible. The criteria narrowing my choice reflect the focus of my research on NGO partnerships and their function as intermediaries. Therefore, I wanted the chosen organisations to identify partnerships as one of their activities. I also only selected organisations with some amount of international funding. Beyond these wide criteria, I employed a combination of, firstly, snowball sampling and, towards the middle and end of my fieldwork, theoretical sampling.

Specifically, I was aware of a number of organisations that fulfilled my criteria prior to commencing fieldwork. The *Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation* (*CSVR*) and the *Freedom of Expression Institute* (*FXI*) were two of the first NGOs I contacted and was aware of due to their public profile and research activities. Early expert interviews with 'solidarity funders' such as the Luxemburg and Böll Foundations proved useful in the first month of so of fieldwork, as they gave me a clearer idea of some of the current issues for NGOs in South Africa and contributed to a refinement of the interview schedule. By way of snowball sampling, they led to contacts with NGOs they were aware of or had funded in the past (for instance the *Wolpe Trust* and *ILRIG*). I was also alerted to some NGOs that fitted my research focus through social networks that also facilitated access (*Gun Free South Africa* for instance). In addition, I used SANGONet's Prodder directory of NGOs and

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[42] I have also chosen documentary data that has not emerged from my research of NGOs directly, such as policy texts. I will discuss my selection rationale for these below. The choice of *Mindset* as a case study for observation research likewise represents another selection decision that is addressed in section 3.4., under the heading of observation research (Yin 1994).

development organisations in South Africa which gives details of NGOs' activities, where they are based and often their web pages.

Towards the end of my first fieldwork trip, and prior to the second one, I began to sample more theoretically, contacting people who I felt could highlight specific issues in relation to my research questions. This reflects a research design that allows for an ongoing theoretical logic to the selection process. Theoretical sampling is sometimes associated with grounded theory approaches, but I have employed it here in the more general sense of strategically selecting NGOs on the basis of their relevance to the argument I was developing, enabling me to make key comparisons (Mason 2002). The list of interviews in Appendices 1 and 2 shows the development of my thinking in terms of thematic focus areas. The more I became familiar with 'my' subsection of the NGO sector, the more I was able to take advantage of the considerable networks that span the sector, taking up practioners' recommendations or their offers to introduce me to colleagues or friends in other NGOs.[43]

In all cases, I contacted the potential informant by email and provided a brief summary of my research questions, background and aims of the study (see appendix 3). Receiving a relatively high percentage of positive replies may just be considered lucky, but I believe that something at the very core of Post-Apartheid South Africa made access relatively easy. For a researcher or academic from Europe, boundaries between sectors or strata in South Africa can appear very fluid; everything constantly seemed in flux and open to contestation. It would be naïve to assume that the majority of the population shared this sense of permeability and renewal. Yet, an atmosphere of transparency and change are often invoked in the media, in official narratives of the transition and in personal stories. The young democracy South Africa references itself often.

Ulf Hannerz writes that in multi-sited ethnographies it is important to '[establish] personal credentials, to place oneself as the ethnographer in the

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[43] Needless to say, there were quite a few organisations that did not respond to my repeated attempts to contact them. With others, staff were willing to be interviewed but practicalities and logistics did not allow for a meeting. Although I made trips to Durban and Cape Town, I did not manage to arrange all the agreed interviews in the short time I spent in each city. Moreover, whilst intermediary NGOs are characterised by their metropolitan location, clearly not every NGO I may have been interested in contacting was located in one of these three cities. Lastly, there were one or two NGOs which seemed to fit my selection criteria according to preliminary research, but it became apparent in the course of the interview that they no longer received international funding (for instance the *Workers Education Project*). Notwithstanding, these interviews gave me an important insight into the struggle for sustainability or survival these organisations faced.

'translocal network of relationships' (2003: 209). Making personal politics explicit was certainly an important part of the recruitment process and I would not have been able to access organisations, places, and people without doing so. Likewise, I would not have been accepted into the social circle I was in if I had not shared much of their politics, their way of life and their assessment of the South Africa they were living in. For instance, a short-term work contract evolved from contact with a progressive funder. This acted like a letter of recommendation, facilitating contact with other progressive NGOs, academic networks and social movement activists. These and the biographical interviews I carried out informed my understanding of issues of development, inequality and mobilisation in South Africa. Biographical interviews were carried out with people who had previously shared aspects of their life histories in the context of our friendship. The selection criterion here was the relevance of their narratives to my reading of recent social history and contemporary social and political issues.

As should be clear from the above, sometimes my particular positioning enabled access to informants that I would have not been able to gain otherwise. For example, being a foreigner seemed to open some doors, with people often being pleased that I had 'come all this way'. Other people were suspicious of me and my research because I am a foreigner. Yet others made it clear that they would not have trusted me if I was a white South African, leaving me with an odd sense that it was my having 'proven my worth' in debates about BBBE or a Post-Polokwane ANC that granted me access. The politics of race and class very noticeably permeate all kinds of relationships in Post-Apartheid South Africa, and the relationships of researcher/ informant, expert/ student, expert/ expert and so on, are no exception.

3.3. The importance of being there and the 'field'

I did not carry out an embedded, in-depth ethnography as this was not part of my research design and would just have given me knowledge of one site rather than of processes across sites. Rather, my concern has predominantly been with how NGO professionals have constructed and rendered meaningful notions of audit culture and partnerships. Nonetheless, I employed various ethnographic strategies, for instance the use of grey literature, participation at events and the collection of documentary

sources and visual material (see for instance Atkinson 1990, Coffey 1999, Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, Hammersley 2006). I felt that the research questions could only be addressed through gaining a holistic awareness of the social and economic context within which NGOs operate, how history and personal experiences of Apartheid impact on the NGO sector, and at the most general level what challenges South African democracy faces over a decade after the transition.

I understand this use of ethnographic techniques as quite separate from the short period of observation research I carried out with the NGO *Mindset* in 2008 and which became very instructive for my thinking on the future of NGOs in South Africa (see section 3.4. below). Much of what I hope to convey about my perception of this juncture in South Africa was gained outside of, or in dialectic relationship with, working in an NGO or carrying out interviews; it developed from interacting with 'non-designated' informants in everyday situations, from participating in academic life at WISER and from exploring the city. These contacts gave me access to spaces that would have otherwise been closed to me, or whose existence I would not have been aware of. Research contacts and friends helped me to navigate the Post-Apartheid city, putting places in the context of personal and political history. They also shaped my thinking in terms of helping me to steer the political landscape, often in ways unbeknownst to them.

Multi-sited and trans-scalar ethnographies

My methodological thinking has been influenced by contemporary development ethnographies. They apply ethnographic methods to global processes and multi-sited phenomena, attending to the trans-scalar, transnational character of the development domain. They have in common an acknowledgement that communities are constructed through social relations and mostly conceptually bounded, as opposed to the conventional anthropological pursuit of describing discrete and bounded communities (Crewe and Harrison 1998). They problematise the idea of the single-site field as the staple of the ethnographic imagination. Burawoy (2000) for instance calls for a redefinition of fieldwork as detached from a single place and time, whereas Gould (2004b) proposes to distinguish between sites, localities and levels instead of the 'field'.

Mosse's (2005) work on global governance also tries to explore local-global relations through an ethnographic investigation of 'constructed communities of interest'. Hart's (2004, 2002a, 2002b) project of critical ethnography has commonalities with Burawoy's (2000) call for a global ethnography; both contend that attention must be paid not only to the impact and experiences of globalisation but also to its very production, from which vantage point globalisation seems much more contingent. All of these projects are concerned with the difficulty of developing a global sociological imagination (Back 2007) beyond local/ global dichotomies.

Governmentality offers one amongst a number of methodological strategies to deal with the issue of scale in development research, providing a framework for analysing the construction of authority across levels and for identifying the subjectivities associated with them. The idea of local/ global itself rests on an assumption of verticality that also underlies the traditional conception of the state/ civil society binary (or of political struggle 'from below' and the state intervening 'top-down') (Ferguson 2006a). However, NGOs are an element of what Ferguson and Gupta (2005) refer to as the transnational apparatus of governmentality. This apparatus overlaps and coexists with the system of nation states rather than replacing it, disrupting its technologies of power and producing new forms of spatalisation. Their notion allows for the spatiality of all forms of government in neoliberal globalisation, as opposed to assuming the frame of the nation-state as in some concepts of governmentality. These insights have been important for the development of my research, for instance by providing an alternative framework to the dominant portrayal of social movements in South Africa as 'grassroots'. This framework enables the capturing of their community character and their fighting of transnational struggles.

3. 4. Research methods

<u>Interviews</u>

In-depth interviews provided the principal method to explore my research questions, chosen because I took informants' active constructions of development, partnerships and civil society as central to my enquiry. Interviews are regarded as material evidence of discourses and therefore analysed in a discursive analytical method (cf.

Kamat 2002). The interviews afforded insights into how central issues and agendas in development were constructed by NGO professionals who I understand in turn to actively shape the social world they inhabit, despite being constrained by structures. In other words, my research has been primarily concerned with what NGO leaders say they do, and with how they have made sense of the processes and technologies that impact on the activities and organisational forms of the NGOs they worked in.

I conducted 40 interviews, of which 32 were core interviews with senior NGO staff, and 8 were 'expert interviews' (see appendix 1). The core interviews were drawn from 23 case NGOs due to interviewing more than one individual in some organisations. Experts included social movement activists, individuals working for grant-making institutions or consultants working in the development field. Of the core interviews, the vast majority comprised conversations with leaders such as NGO directors or executive directors, although where this was not possible I interviewed senior researchers or other individuals that had been identified as suitable by the organisation's director. All interviews were semi-structured, with the expert interviews more informal in character than those with NGO staff. They each lasted between one and a half and two and a half hours. After each interview, I gave the interviewee the opportunity to ask questions or raise any issues that may have come up. I followed a topic guide which I modified for each interview according to preliminary research about the NGO and their field of activity. The topic guide covered the following themes (in brackets are prompts for sub-questions):

- Organisational history and activities (links to development discourses and history)
- Funding and sustainability strategies (funders, changing modalities, ease, language and modalities of grant applications)
- Relationship to Government/ the state (definitions of the nation and the state)
- Monitoring and evaluation (techniques, organisational impact, experiences)
- Partnerships and partners (definitions, modalities, conflicts, shared objectives, hierarchies, experiences)
- Civil society (definitions, roles of sector, their own role)
- Model of NGO (indigenous v universal, roles, political vision, challenges)

In line with my research design and methodological strategy, the interview schedule changed and evolved continuously.[44] The fact that there was a year between my first and last interviews – at the time of my second leg of fieldwork I had long began data analysis – moreover clearly influenced the way I designed and carried out my interviews. This gave me the space for data analysis but also provided me with the necessary distance for reflection on research practice and objectives. Theory building, data generation and data analysis were developed dialectically, allowing me to move back and forth between data, experience and concepts.

Identities and positionings in the interview process

Using interviews as a primary method produces particular outcomes that are related to my own positioning as an interviewer. Like in any other form of social interaction, I 'connected' straight away with some interviewees and less so with others, which impacted on their (and my) openness. Secondly, my informants sometimes assumed things about my identity and politics, for instance that I knew little (or cared little) about South Africa's persistent inequalities. Being a woman academic further had implications for the interview data I generated and the access I got to organisations. South African society is officially very gender-equal, but in practice sometimes quite sexist.

In the introduction to this chapter I outlined how formal issues of ethical practice have been addressed in my research. There are of course wider ethical issues that exceed the practicalities of obtaining consent by informants. The selection of data represents my authorship of the research but there is a responsibility to represent people's views appropriately, for instance by contextualising interview extracts and by being aware of and transparent about how and when I am generalising to a broader issue. Likewise, the process of interpretation and critical analysis of the selected interview data represents my reading of their interpretations and discursive constructions, which they might not always agree with.

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[44] For instance, as described earlier, my interest in NGOs' positioning towards popular movements grew out the insights gained during earlier interviews. It was also impacted on by a greater appreciation of the challenges facing the majority population which I only gathered through living in South Africa. Later interviews thus contain specific questions about social movements that my initial research questions were not concerned with in equal detail.

While I am often critical of NGO practices and their effects, I also believe that the interviewees felt that they are doing important work, and crucially that they are themselves conscious of the structural conditions – and critical of the discourses – within which they operate. This tension lies at the heart of much NGO practice as I observed it, and is reinforced by issues of class location as Chapter 6 in particular demonstrates. Theoretically, I partly deal with this tension through the notion of the 'will to improve' (Li 2007), which helps to draw attention to the gap between what is attempted and what is accomplished and highlights its parasitic relationship to its own shortcomings and failures. Failed projects necessarily call for more projects. Whilst development (or 'improvement') programmes usually serve the interests of particular groups, I believe that they cannot be solely explained in terms of tactics or a class project. But ambiguities remain over how to reconcile what I may know about informants' intentions with the critical analysis of NGO practices to which I am committed.

The fact that informants were themselves reflexively pre-occupied with critical issues in development and indeed in the sociology of development is central to my analysis. They were knowledgeable not only about their conduct but also very often about the context within which they operated, including the intellectual expertise I may bring as a researcher, the conventions governing social science interviewing and so on. This knowledge partly stems from the overlaps of intellectual/ academic and practical NGO expertise that characterise the South African NGO sector and that were evident in the biographies of many interviewees. For example, Jane Duncan and Imraan Buccus were undertaking Ph.D.s at the time of interviewing; Tracy was leaving her position with the *Wolpe Trust* to begin her Ph.D. shortly. Others had held positions at universities or academic centres in the past.

The language that informants used in the interviews reflected this interplay of the two domains. When I asked Imraan how the CPP contributes to increased civil society participation, he told me: 'I am gonna try and avoid the theoretical aspect and maybe this whole Hegelian idea of the market being part of the civil society' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07).[45] Or on the relationship of NGOs to social movements: 'A large number of social movements have disowned official spaces of engagement.

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[45] When citing from interview transcripts, I provide the informant's name, the name of the organisation and the date of the interview in brackets. Appendix 1 provides greater detail on interviewees and organisations. Where no direct source is provided, a number of respondents have used the same terminology to describe a process, practice or object.

With this Gramscian idea of: this is about social control, why should we engage with the state on the state's terms' (ibid.). This throws up interesting questions about what it is that the sociologist is meant to produce and what expertise can be claimed to produce insights that the actors do not already have themselves. There are clearly overlaps of domains of expertise between development theory and NGO practice.

Going beyond the issue of a shared language and theoretical set of tools between researcher and informant, NGO practioners were very conversant with, and had ingested, any critiques that may be brought forward against them. For instance, the following exchange with Shafika Isaacs from *Mindset* was typical in that interviewees often made reference to what it was they were supposedly 'meant to say':

> Natascha: Who do you think you see yourself accountable to, maybe both you personally and the organisation?
>
> Shafika: You know what I would like to say and what would be politically correct to say, and I certainly try and do this as far as I can, I'd say, to the learners and the teachers. I mean again the question, the sort of OD-speak interpretation of that question is who are your clients, and again it is a question we consistently ask ourselves, who are our clients (S. Isaacs, *Mindset*, 2 May 07).

Imraan told me that as an organisation with 'fancy funding from Ford' they need to 'construct a sort of ideological orientation about where do you locate yourself' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07). Others advanced a critique of NGOs 'academising everything' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). Such self-critiques echo common criticisms of NGOs by the very social movements (and academics) Rama Naidu is talking about in the above extract. This had consequences for my data analysis, and the very process of writing up. For instance, it made it difficult to speak critically about the NGO practices involved, implying that there exists no vocabulary outside of that employed by NGO staff. These concerns relating to institutional and personal reflexivity are issues that I return to throughout this thesis.

More generally, NGO professionals' usage of discourses, even if they were reflexively engaged with them, implies particular material effects on the formation of consciousness and the mobilisation of identities (Kamat 2002). For example, as NGO workers in the current dispensation the participants in this research necessarily spend their time talking and thinking about auditing, accountability and partnership in

a particular way which I argue to have real material and ideological effects. Although alternative constructions existed and development vocabularies were reflexively negotiated in the context of the in-depth interviews, my research also shows that on the level of the organisation, the vocabularies used were largely homogenised and often neglected larger socio-economic issues.

Biographical interviews

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, I conducted biographical interviews with individuals who were part of my circle of friends and whose life stories I felt were illuminating on broader issues such as the liberation struggle, race, political mobilisation and the non-profit sector. Themba, Wayne and Thandi had each previously shared aspects of their life story with me in the context of our friendship, so that the later interviews represent a formalisation or extension of this interaction. Biographical interviewing and personal narratives give access to an informant's life, but the telling of a life history – that is, the life story as analysed by the researcher – also places an individual life story into a social context (Plummer 2001). One way of thinking about the significance of this rich data to my project was to ask 'to what kind of question could this personal narrative be the answer?' (Alleyne 2002: 126).[46] Whilst each story is unique in terms of the specific life choices it encapsulates, it shows the intersections of that individual life with the historical events of the time, and how these events conditioned the choices that were exercised. Often, my informants themselves verbalised and made obvious the linkages between these two. This further contributed to my overall sense of history always being present and referenced in South Africa.

Observation Research

Recognising that in semi-structured interviews, respondents' experiences and understandings are constructed in and for the situational context of the interview and that not all knowledge can be (re)constructed in the context of an interview, I wanted

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[46] Clearly the few biographical interviews I carried out do not amount to the writing of a life history and this was not my intention. However, I found the data I gained from these life stories very instructive, giving me a feeling of the present social and political juncture in South Africa that I could not gathered through other methods.

to observe first-hand how development policies and agendas were negotiated in the setting of the NGO. I was aware of the implications of interviewing NGO leaders too: NGOs are clearly not coherent wholes, but rather often internally divided, containing within them diverse attitudes towards the state, donors, movements and social policies. Specifically, I was interested in how M&E demands and other bureaucratic requirements affected the day-to-day running of the organisation and what forms of expertise they produced. What knowledges and processes are produced over and above what informants say they are doing? How does the NGO use research to monitor and evaluate their projects, how does this feed this back into their work and how is it communicated to funders and partners? Which monitoring and evaluation strategies are in place with different funders and how do these strategies impact on the implementation and management of projects? How are project proposals produced?

The observation with *Mindset* constitutes a form of case study research in the sense that I understand it as a 'whole' within my data set. The knowledge created through the case study observation is local and specific, but I do believe that it can be used to illuminate wider aspects of NGO practice and the processes governing NGOs. Whilst my research has primarily explored NGO professionals' claims and how they actively negotiated a variety of development discourses, this period of observation has allowed me to gain a better understanding of what they do. Observation research is thus not intended to increase validity of the data in a positivist sense but rather to afford different perspectives on the research questions, enabling me to explore how projects of rule frequently have unintended outcomes, some of which are actively exploited by NGO staff.

Observing at *Mindset*

Mindset is a South African NGO that creates, sources and delivers quality educational resources to schools, health workers and communities. The organisation seeks to 'work holistically with regional and national Government, corporates, the higher education sector and other NGOs and supports government and civil society efforts to address the Millennium Development Goals' (Mindset, A Three-Year Strategy for Mindset Network 2008-2010). Its various health and learning channels offer video, computer-based multimedia, web and print content and equip schools

and clinics with the required infrastructure. I have been familiar with the work of the organisation since 2004 and did some research into their use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for educational development.[47]

I had carried out some interviews with *Mindset* staff during my first fieldwork trip and had negotiated access then. My choice of the organisation as an observation case study emerged from an interest in their well-developed sustainability model. Partnerships have been central to the structure and organisational practices of the NGO since its inception in 2002. The case study was therefore chosen to illuminate more clearly this specific model and the effects of the organisation's range of partnerships across different sectors. Moreover, without wishing to generalise from this case, it allowed me to learn much about viable options for organisational survival and challenges to organisational identity that may be relevant to the wider NGO sector in South Africa.

My observation with *Mindset* lasted from mid-January to mid-February 2008. I was given full access to the organisation's funding and M&E documents, strategy papers, partnership agreements, budgets and so on. I shadowed Kirston Greenop, the NGO's research manager (itself a position that it is quite indicative of changes in NGO practices, as I explain in chapter 6), attended meetings and conducted interviews with various staff, such as the heads of channels and the CEO. I also produced a strategic report for the NGO.[48] In my observational notes, I tried to provide concrete descriptions of the setting, people I encountered, meetings and conversations (see for instance Lofland 2004, Atkinson et al. 2001). I noted down what language staff used to describe processes and objects and how different relationships (with funders, with civil society organisations and so on) were characterised. For instance, when was someone referred to as a 'funder' and when as a 'partner'? And by whom? I was also interested in types of roles and their descriptions that would give me insight into the meta knowledges that *Mindset* produces.

The observation research added a further micro perspective to my analysis of the impact of the partnership mode on NGOs that had evolved from the interviews where the focus lay on individuals' active constructions. It demonstrated very clearly

[47] Mueller-Hirth, N. (2005) *An African Solution to an African Problem? A case study of ICT in Development.* Unpublished MA Dissertation. Department of Sociology. Goldsmiths, University of London.
[48] Mindset's positioning in the South African NGO sector. Report for Mindset (February 2008)

the extent of individuals' awareness of the operation of power in bureaucratic mechanisms and also the 'threats' they posed to the coherence of NGOs' organisational identity. Morever, micro-level experiences in the NGO were far from uniform and often contradictory, underlining the diversity of ways in which organisational policy was contested and modified by individuals. For instance, Mindset's complex multiple-partnership model has meant that there are conflicts between different partners. As I show in chapter 6 this has resulted in restrictions of content provision, but there are also cases where the organisation has had to be creative and take 'a different angle' (C. Stevens, Mindset, 6 Feb 08), producing an effective modification of the auditing regimes that were in place. Whereas in the case of Mindset partnering has largely resulted in a depoliticised organisation, the constant requirement for auditing and data collection has also meant that the organisation was forever 'piggy-backing' on research which it subsequently used for its own autonomous purposes.

Just as with interviewing, questions of identity and positioning are at the heart of observation research. The opportunity of producing a report on Mindset's strategic positioning during my time there was telling of the changes I felt in my identity as a researcher, compared to the longer fieldwork period in 2007. Then, I had arrived as a student researcher whereas, coming back in early 2008, I was increasingly drawn upon as an expert by those I interacted with. One of my informants – rather ironically I felt - called me up and asked me to help with a funding proposal: to Erik Ntshiqela, I was fluent in the language of development and proposal writing that I thought I had merely spent a year exploring and critiquing. At Mindset too, I was seen as an expert on the South African non-profit sector. My role posed opportunities, challenges and dilemmas for me: on the one hand, I was critical of aspects of Mindset's and other organisations' work, on the other I had become very familiar with the language and knowledge practices of the industry. I repeatedly encountered this challenging threshold between observing and participating which I needed to remain very aware of.

Documentary analysis

I carried out a critical analysis of policy texts and donor documents which included South African policy documents and White Papers such as GEAR and the 2007 ANC

policy papers, the latter embodying the emerging developmental state rhetoric. I also considered strategic documents by major donor agencies and institutions such as the World Bank, USAID/ PEPFAR and DfID to understand different discursive constructions of partnerships and development. Lastly, I read funding guidelines by donor agencies and Northern NGOs acting as donors to further my knowledge of the context within which my case NGOs sought funding. These documents were selected on the basis of their relevance for the funding context that the case NGOs operated in. In addition, texts such as the NEPAD declaration and annual reports were chosen because I argue that NEPAD represents an example of the reflexive neoliberal agenda I describe throughout this thesis. Chapters 4 and 6 in particular draw on this data. In addition to these official texts, my documentary analysis has included materials given to me by NGOs, such as grant applications, budget reports and M&E strategies. These have provided an important lens on the procedures and systems in place in the organisations that were not always captured by interviewing their leaders.

I understand policy texts as constituting a crucial element in the development landscape in their own right, and not simply in terms of how they are negotiated and put into practice. The data gained from the documentary analysis provides an understanding of policy agendas and themes and has enabled me to identify the continuities, as well as the breaks and ruptures, in development discourse and languages across time and space through the lens of the South African NGO sector. Focusing primarily on the concept of partnership, I assume that policy language plays an important part in the production of development discourses and in the production and representation of the subjects of development. Official pronouncements, as they occur in policy frameworks and mission statements, represent the normative narratives of IFIs and aid agencies and legitimise their operations as well as their access to public resources (Shore and Wright 1997, Gould 2004a). These reports are thus important not because they represent an accurate guide to these institutions' economic policies, but because they are central texts in projects of ideological legitimation that impact on the vocabulary that is available in the development domain at a given time. Language represents and shapes social processes and relations over a distance – arguably crucial under conditions of globalisation and in the context of global development discourses which seek to maintain order as a set of shared representations. How such

discourses have been interpreted, modified or resisted by social actors, and how they interact with specifically South African vocabularies, concepts and ideas, is a clearly a different matter.

3.5. Data analysis

5.1 Use of NVivo for managing interview data

I chose to use qualitative research software to help me manage the large amount of interview data I had generated. The use of NVivo is associated with particular epistemological assumptions that some argue rely heavily on grounded theory. Grounded theory methods are systematic guidelines for data collection and analysis to construct theories that are grounded in the data themselves so that the analysed data generates the concepts that are constructed (Glaser and Strauss 1968). I was aware of the fact that NVivo includes certain features that potentially support the logic of variable analysis which would not have been in line with the epistemological perspective I have chosen. However, it is important to bear in mind that since Glaser and Strauss (1968) sociologists have employed techniques like memo writing and coding which can be traced back to grounded theory but have combined these more eclectically with contemporary methodological approaches (Charmaz 2006). Gibbs also counters the assertion of NVivo's inherent bias, pointing out that 'as programs have become more sophisticated, they have become less connected to any one analytic approach' (2002: 12).

I used NVivo for storage of data and for the creation and manipulation of codes. The programme also provided a more convenient way of using memos than working in Word or on hard copy. However, being aware of the potential danger of becoming too distant from contextual data or mechanising the analysis, I periodically returned to hard copy versions of whole interview transcripts. For example, I would keep a coding report on the side whilst analysing pages of a whole interview transcript on the level of language. I did not use the software for modelling, classification or comparison because my qualitative, non-positivistic methodology would not have supported this strategy. I have also limited the use of NVivo to the analysis of interview data, allowing me to work with textual data from observations and documents, as well as non-textual data, outside of the cross-sectional indexing

system. In summary, I have employed NVivo as a tool for handling large amounts of qualitative data and in conjunction with more free-from styles of analysis.

Thematic analysis of interview data

Before beginning to index the interview data, I had read each interview several times, so that I was very familiar with the data already. Before coding in NVivo, I had done 'trial runs' of indexing on paper with the earliest transcripts. After this, I began developing categories though open coding in Word. Open coding involves a reflective reading of text to identify relevant categories. The initial categories were then identified by revisiting my research questions in the light of my fieldwork experiences. I subsequently started to develop a coherent set of categories from these initial themes that I could apply to the entire interview data set. These were refined through engagement with data from observational notes and documentary analysis.

At first, themes were fairly broad and descriptive, such as roles of NGOs, funding, conceptions of development, relationship to the state and so on. I then trawled through the transcripts and looked for extracts that could either be coded under these categories or that related to the emerging themes, thereby refining the categories and creating sub-categories. After re-considering the relevant literature, the data was recoded and some of the categories were collapsed down to reflect the theoretical background to my analysis. I then trawled through the reports for nodes I had created, further refining my indexing scheme. For instance, within the very broad category of funding I distinguished between funding priorities, dynamics, processes, mobilisation, sources and long-term orientation. In this process, my categories slowly became more analytical and more detailed.

I also began reflecting on the relationship between different themes by asking specific questions of the data, such as what the connections may be between my categories of development discourses, development priorities and language of proposals. To return to the above example of funding, by exploring the still fairly broad category of funding dynamics I developed further subcategories relating to competition, conditionalities, personal relationships, state bureaucracy, uncertainty about the future and skills. Refinement of categories and subcategories was also influenced by my knowledge of the literature, as was for instance the case with data

relating to social movements (for instance by categorising data relating to resource mobilisation, opportunity structure or symbolism). At this stage of the analysis, I began exploring the data in relation to macro-level discourses such as nation-building, partnership, governance and neoliberalisation to see how individuals negotiated these and linked them to their own activities. Periodically, I would re-read the transcripts to see if there were any extracts relating to my categories that I had been missing (see Silverman 2001, Gibbs 2002, Seale 2004, Mason 2002 on thematic analysis).

I accompanied these activities by working through whole transcripts on paper. Separately, I recorded my thinking about the emerging themes, why I had chosen them, how they were changing and any ideas I had for further analysis. I also noted thoughts about links with relevant literature or non-textual data. Given the large amount of data I had generated, these notes have proven very important in the data analysis process and throughout the writing up stage. Developing a coding structure in NVivo was one way of helping me to think through the relationship between different concepts and categories, but it certainly did not replace other forms of analysis and concept development.

I also looked at interview extracts at the level of metaphors, using transcripts to explore discursive resources and strategies and noting significant terms and metaphors that stood out. Metaphors tend to reflect the cultural and social environments of their speakers, making significant the analysis of how they are used and structured (Gibbs 2002). They may be indicative of people finding it hard to express something or they may be an example for a shared concept. For instance, it was remarkable how often terms commonly associated with managerial or business language were used to describe extra-economic concepts or social processes.

Analysis of other data

I had developed a typology of South African NGOs, according to dimensions of funding, partnership model, relationships to the state, relationships to social movements, size and scope of activities. From this derived the concepts of 'new', 'donor-based' and 'social entrepreneur' NGOs that I employ throughout this thesis. It was with the notion of a partnership-based NGO model in mind that I approached the analysis of observational data from my time with *Mindset*. I analysed my

observational notes with a view to gaining an understanding of types of expertise and their relative significance within the NGO sector. Documents also allowed me to explore the relationships between research, M&E, project targets/ management and funding in the context of multisectoral partnerships.

As I described above, I was well into the data analysis by the time I returned to South Africa to carry out observation research and additional interviews. The data generated through observation is treated as case study material and I analysed it to confirm and refine the theoretical arguments I was developing. By analysing the NGOs' partnership model and M&E processes, I have sought to produce explanations of the processes that characterise *Mindset*. The organisation represents a case study and as such illuminates dimensions of partnership that are also relevant for other NGOs. In this regard, I have made some tentative arguments about the possible impact of these processes on the NGO sector at large, but acknowledge that there are great variations in terms of how they are understood and negotiated.

Biographical interviews were analysed thematically; unlike my analysis of interviews with NGO staff, I did not transcribe these but rather chose to listen back to them, noting down themes that struck me as relevant. These included issues of national identity, experiences of the transitional period and the theme of betrayal. Parallel to their informal character — that of an in-depth and often very personal conversation with a friend — my analysis of these histories was much more informal, providing another though certainly not primary window to my research aims.

3.6. Introducing participants and sites

Here, I want to provide a brief narrative description of the named interviewees and the organisations they worked for. Appendices 1 and 2 provide this information in abbreviated form in a table, including expert interviews (in appendix 1) which I have not included here. I felt that, in line with my methodology, it was important to contextualise the analysis I provide in chapters 4 to 7 in greater detail, highlighting the significant political and organisational differences between the organisations and situating them in terms of their positioning in the NGO sector. As discussed above, in order to highlight issues pertaining to audit culture and partnering as they applied

across sites as wide a range of South African NGOs as possible were selected. The participants are discussed in the chronological order of the interviews.

The *Centre for Education Policy Development* (CEPD) is located in Braamfontein in central Jo'burg. A medium-size organisation, the *CEPD* was founded in 1992 on the initiative of the ANC in order to develop the policy framework for education and training in Post-Apartheid South Africa also known as the 'yellow book'. The organisation came close to shutting down in the late 1990s and is now involved in research and policy as well as occasional grants management for the Government. The director John Pampallis was in exile in Tanzania during the late 1970s and early 1980s, teaching at an ANC school.

The *Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation* (CSVR), like a number of other NGOs, has its offices in the Braamfontein Centre on the corner of Jan Smuts Avenue and Jorissen Street. It is a research organisation but also plays a lobbying and advocacy role. Moreover, it is involved in direct trauma management and counselling, education and training and institutional change management with a view to promoting sustainable peace and reconciliation. Strategic partnerships with agencies of the state, NGOs, community organisations, individuals and international allies are seen as integral to these goals. The organisation started in 1989 at Wits University to provide psycho-social counselling to the victims of violence by security forces, but quickly developed a research unit to understand the nature and causes of violence.

Connect Africa is a small project that delivers communication, business and Government services to rural communities in partnership with the Government and communications companies. Dion Jerling, its founder and director, labels the organisation a social enterprise rather than an NGO, due to the fact that they employed non-traditional funding and partnering strategies.

Starfish is a well-known medium-size NGO working with Aids orphans. Acting as an intermediary between corporations and small CBOs, this organisation is sponsored by corporates and international donors but, unusually, individual donations make up a large chunk of their funding. My informant here, Dom Marshall-Smith, represents a personality in the NGO landscape that I would occasionally encounter: a well-educated well-travelled white South African who had returned from overseas to give something back. As Dom told me, 'Starfish is staffed by people that are coming out of corporate jobs, looking to make a difference in this society which is

you know teetering on the brink. There is a hope within South Africa right now, particularly in the White 30-something generation, around making a difference' (Interview, D. Marshall-Smith, 23 Mar 07).

The *Freedom of Expression Institute* (FXI) is one of the most visible, albeit small, NGOs in South Africa, researching and campaigning on a number of censorship issues. The history of the *FXI* is tied up with Apartheid-era anti-censorship work and the campaign to establish an independent SABC board and broadcasting regulator ahead of the 1994 elections. The *FXI* is one of the only NGOs in this research that worked with social movements from the beginning. Jane Duncan, the director at the time (she has now taken a post as professor in the Chair of Media and Information Society at Rhodes University) herself is a public figure and well-known activist.

Mindset is a large NGO that creates, sources and delivers educational resources to schools and the health community through ICT and other, more conventional media. The organisation was founded in 2003 and has always worked in multiple partnerships with the business sector, NGOs and donors, as well as with the provincial and national Governments. I carried out interviews with a number of staff here, from the CEO to the Head of Education and the Chief Fundraiser. In January and February 2008 I spent a month with the organisation, carrying out observation research and further interviews.

IDASA is perhaps the most prominent advocacy NGO in South Africa today, working in the fields of democracy, citizenship and governance. The organisation was founded in 1986, and convened the Dakar meeting which first brought together ANC and National Party members. Richard Calland, the director of the Governance Programme, has written extensively on South Africa and appears regularly as a political commentator in the media, for instance with a column for the *Mail & Guardian*.

ILRIG is a NGO that provides research, education and support to the traditional labour movement as well as to the new social movements. Medium-sized, it has developed out of an Apartheid-era service organisation that provided resources to labour organisations. Explicitly anti-neoliberal, ILRIG seeks to build capacity for alternatives to neoliberal globalisation.

The *Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust* is a small Cape Town-based organisation that emerged after Harold Wolpe's death. It organises events and lectures in

partnership with academic centres and other NGOs, with the aim of fostering critical dialogue and debate on issues of democracy and democratic participation. I interviewed the outgoing national co-ordinator Tracy Bailey and her successor Vanja Karth, who had worked extensively in the non-profit sector.

The *EDGE Institute* is a small research NGO, located again at the Braamfontein Centre. The organisation carries out research on economic policy and development issues and holds public seminars. Stephen Gelb is a well-known economist who has worked for the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the South African Government, and is currently a professor for development studies at Wits.

The *Africa Foundation* presents a different kind of NGO. Working in conservation, and based in the wealthy Northern suburb of Sandton, this organisation raises money from private donations, donors and corporates to facilitate the empowerment and development of people living in or adjacent to protected areas in Southern Africa. It does so by forging partnerships between conservation initiatives and communities, and works in partnership with other civil society organisations and provincial Government.

Gun Free South Africa was established in 1994 as a campaign for gun-control laws and gun-free zones. Turning from a campaign or movement into a formal NGO, *GFSA* is now entirely foreign-funded. The organisation collaborates with various civil society partners to ensure the implementation of the Firearms Control Act, which it helped create, and also carries out research on violence.

The *Media Monitoring Project* (now Media Monitoring Africa) was established in 1993 to monitor the first democratic elections, and specifically to monitor the SABC. It now monitors the media more broadly and seeks to promote democracy and human rights.

NANGOSA (National Alliance for Non-Government Organisations) was only established in 2006 as a national NGO umbrella body. At the time of interviewing, its president Eric Ntshiqela was trying to secure funding for its civil society capacity building activities. This, and my interview on the following day with the *Workers Education Project* (WEP), whilst giving me some insights into their particular situations (at the beginning and the end of their existence, respectively) were probably least useful in terms of shedding light on the effects of the partnership idea. The *WEP*, founded during Apartheid to provide education and training for the labour

movements, was struggling to survive at the time of interviewing, and had started to become involved in the SETA training programmes.

Teboho Trust is a small Soweto-based NGO that was founded by American Jose Bright in 2001. It works with vulnerable, often orphaned, teenagers, accompanying them from secondary school through to university. This is done through mentoring and social and personal empowerment workshops, and by providing educational support and democracy and governance programmes for the children. I would characterise this model as a social enterprise model, although Jose called it an NGO which he wanted to export to other countries in a kind of 'franchise model'.

Valued Citizens Initiative was founded in 2001 to strengthen civil society through the promotion of constitutional values and democratic citizenship in schools. Having established strong partnerships with public and private sectors, the organisation provides human rights training and civil education in secondary schools throughout Gauteng. The director Carole Podetti is from France and originally has a background in public relations and administration.

The Durban-based *Democratic Development Programme* (DDP) was founded in 1993 on the initiative of the German conservative Konrad Adenauer Foundation and works in the areas of civil society capacity building, civic participation and voter education in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal. The NGO works with CBOs across KZN, and has partnerships with various municipal and provincial government agencies.

The *Centre for Public Participation* (CPP), also in Durban, likewise focuses on strengthening public participation in governance, carrying out research, parliamentary monitoring, training and advocacy activities. Originally a part of IDASA, the organisation became independent in 1997. As the organisation's director Janine Hicks had just left to work for the Gender Commission, I interviewed Imraan Buccus, the research co-ordinator, on her recommendation. As with the next interviewee, this interview took place during the June 2007 SANPAD conference in Durban, providing quite a different environment to my other conversations with NGO leaders.

Michelle Oyedan was the director of *AGENDA* at the time of interviewing her although she has now moved to human rights organisation Indiba-Africa. *Agenda* is a feminist media organisation that publishes a well-respected journal aimed at

academics, activists and gender researchers. Established in 1987, the organisation had also recently become involved in community radio broadcasting. Like many of the other NGOs I interviewed, Agenda struggled with developing a sustainability strategy and found the changing funding modalities of its international donors burdensome.

Siyazisika Trust was established in 1987 to contribute towards small enterprise development in rural KwaZulu-Natal. Today the Johannesburg-based trust provides training and mentoring for communities across South Africa and works with a sister company Khumbulani which supports rural craftspeople to reach markets. Whilst working with the Department for Agriculture on specific projects, the NGO has suffered from the non-payment of government grants and is now (amongst other donors) funded by Tshikululu, the CSI umbrella agency acting for various large corporations.

Operation Hunger is a typical Apartheid-era service organisation that dealt with the consequence of Apartheid policies, implementing broad-based feeding programmes and initiating self-help projects. Whilst continuing to work in this area, the NGO now provides training and capacity building programmes for communities, acting as an intermediary between agencies, government and CBOs.

On my return to South Africa in 2008, I also interviewed Lauren Graham, a researcher at CASE, the Community Agency for Social Enquiry. This NGO produces research on social, economic and political issues for various clients, including government, international agencies and other CSOs. This interview represents an exception in the sense that Lauren contacted me after having heard a paper on NGO-state relations I presented at a conference at Wits. As a result, our conversation centred particularly on the issue of funding (in)dependence and the NGO's understanding of its role as a watchdog.

3.7. Ensuring quality of research: 'validity' and transparency

Despite using the term 'validity' in this subsection, quantitative measures of validity or replicability must not be employed uncritically in qualitative research given their positivist resonances (Kirk and Miller 1986, see Seale 1999, Flick 2002 for overviews of the debate). The qualitative approach I have chosen does not intend to produce

standardised results and, given the importance of my own positioning in this research, eschews conventional measures of reliability. Nonetheless, the quality of my chosen research methodology and interpretation needs to be established.

I have already discussed triangulation as an alternative approach to validate qualitative research (Blaikie 2000). Guba and Lincoln's (1989) alternative criteria for judging the quality of qualitative research have been widely employed and provide another way of assessing the quality of qualitative research. Credibility is here introduced as an alternative to internal validity, whereas transferability refers to the degree to which research responsibly generalises to other contexts. I have demonstrated credibility and transferability by situating informants' accounts and have contextualised the research setting both through thick descriptions and the review of major debates in my field.

The interpretivist nature of my research means that I have rejected the idea of a true reality that can be discovered with the right research tools (Mason 2002). Transparency and ongoing reflexivity however are important ways of achieving validity of interpretation (or dependability and confirmability, as Guba and Lincoln [1989] referred to the responsibility to account for the changing research context and to lay open one's choice of research methods and interpretation). Ensuring confirmability may also involve the building-in of a falsification strategy by searching for 'deviant cases' and by ongoing interaction with other researchers (Seale 2004). As I have shown above, the data analysis and development of analytical themes was undertaken alongside an ongoing engagement with contemporary debates in this field. At various points throughout the course of this research, I have given extracts of my work to colleagues and my supervisors. Preliminary ideas about *Mindset* were discussed with several staff at the organisation at the end of my observation period. All informants have been offered transcripts of their interviews and were invited to comment (although only a handful took up the offer). The fact that my informants and I were involved in an interpretative circle, in which they were knowledgeable about my discipline and expertise and which I have read to be instructive about their positioning and habitus, is a main constituent of this project.

The quality of this research has further been addressed by making transparent my standpoint and identity, my choice of methods and logic of methodological strategy. In this chapter, I have explained why I have chosen particular methods and how they are appropriate to the nature of the research

questions and overall research design. I have also, in this chapter and throughout the thesis, made transparent how I came to my interpretation and how I have reflexively engaged with my own standpoint. I have sought to contextualise and situate informants' accounts and to give adequate space to contradictions and untidiness in the data. I have explained how and why informants and case organisations were chosen and have indicated some of the dynamics of my relationships with them. I have discussed how I carried out my analysis and how themes, concepts and categories were derived. The way I have used notes and memos also makes it possible to retrace the way my indexing of data has evolved.

3.8. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have emphasised the importance of interaction with informants and spaces. However, this also means that my own position and motivations needed to be reflected on and questioned. I have discussed some of the implications of my positioning on the knowledge I have produced and how self-representation and identity have played a central role in the research relationships that I formed, but have found it harder to convey a sense of how profoundly my fieldwork experiences have affected me. Whilst I believe that qualitative researching necessarily entails awareness and critical reflection of how fieldwork and the very process of writing construct and implicate personal identities, I have perhaps worried too much about the danger of producing a highly personalised but not a more reflexive account (Coffey 1999).

This question of identity work is quite separate from the need to produce transparent and reflexive accounts of the research process. I have demonstrated validity of methodology by outlining why my particular approach was chosen, how it matches the research questions and that it is consistent with the explanations that my chosen methods have generated. I have also sought to prove validity of interpretation by giving an account of the research and analysis process and of issues of positionality and authorship that I have grappled with. I have sought to make transparent throughout the present thesis my research process and practices (also see section 3.7 above).

Reflecting on my research design today, I feel that overall I have achieved what I set out to do. However, the project would certainly have benefited from having had more time in the field. Particularly, I would have liked to have included more organisations in my research, although this is not realistic in the space of the three or so years allocated to a Ph.D. project. My research could have moreover been improved by carrying out a greater number of expert interviews, for instance with social movement activists. If time constraints would not have been an issue this research could have hugely benefited from including a comparative dimension, for example by carrying out research into intermediary NGOs in another middle-income economy such as India or Brazil. I will return to these reflections in chapter 8.

With the benefit of hindsight, the research could also have been improved by carrying out more observation research with different organisations (as was originally planned). My project sought to explore the discursive constructions of NGO leaders in relation to auditing and partnerships, but clearly there are gaps between what NGO professionals say they do and what actually happens in an organisation. This was partly addressed by my drawing on documentary sources and other ethnographic material. Indeed it has been one the biggest challenges of this project to be truthful to these messy and complicated outcomes and experiences in the context of a largely discursive-analytical research project.

However, data gained from in-depth interviews can show how actors make sense of discourses which is not sufficient in fully exploring how impact assessment procedures and partnership demands play themselves out in practice. A extended period of observation research would have also allowed me to examine in greater detail the ways in which technologies of rule can be ineffective and what unintended projects they may give rise to. Whilst this research employs a discursive-analytical approach with its inherent strengths and weaknesses, it recognises that projects of rule are only ever projects and that they often fail. Moreover, there are projects within projects – class relations, historical alliances and geopolitics are just a few of the elements that together form the backdrop against which the South African NGO sector operates. Indeed, this research might be extended with future work that will explore the successes and failures of audit culture through in-depth depth ethnographies that can highlight the messy unintended outcomes of the new regime of auditing on intermediary NGOs.

The following chapter initiates the discussion of data by introducing the construct of the 'new NGO' and the theoretical framework for my analysis of partnerships in the context of both Post-Apartheid and global development. Chapters 4 and 5 are closely linked, with the former discussing partnership as part of NGOs' overall sustainability model, and the latter in terms of its dynamics and associated practices.

Chapter 4
The New NGO

We have very good relations with Government, Education, Health and the Department of Communications, with respect to their understanding of what we are doing. And so in that sense bringing the kind of public entity, the private sector entity and the not for profit entity together to work cooperatively, I think it's great! Now in South Africa it may be a kind of easier way to do that simply because of our history.
(V. Naidoo, Mindset, 9 May 07)

The power of partnerships is voluntary and coercive at the same time, producing both new forms of agency and new forms of discipline.
(Abrahamsen 2004: 1454)

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the construct of 'new NGO' to analyse practices that have characterised the NGO domain in South Africa since the democratic transition and to explore how they have been negotiated by the NGOs in this research. The term new NGO works as a shorthand to describe both new-generation NGOs that have emerged after the first funding crisis and those who have successfully navigated shifting Post-Apartheid development modalities. The concept emerged from my observation that many NGO staff described funding modalities, sustainability approaches and organisational practices in opposition to a more traditional NGO model. This older NGO model was defined in reference to South African service organisations during Apartheid and their role in the liberation struggle, as well as to a more universal understanding of donor-beneficiary relations.

As I argue in this chapter, NGO staff often distanced themselves from what were portrayed as less efficient NGOs, sometimes invoking metaphors of death, survival or birth. If the changing funding modalities under Post-Apartheid that are charted in the first part of this chapter represent moments of crisis or the death of a

particular type of organisation, then what has come into existence in its place? One characteristic of the new NGO is its diverse sustainability model, which the second part of this chapter addresses with a view to their impact on NGOs' identity and mission. Importantly, NGOs may portray themselves as having the ability to form strong partnerships with diverse stakeholders and the corporate sector. The image of an 'all-singing, all-dancing' organisation comes to mind capturing the many roles, functions and tasks that the new NGO must be capable of fulfilling. The last part of the chapter initiatives my discussion of partnerships by exploring usages of the language and vocabulary of partnerships in NGOs in South Africa and in global development policy. This theme is then fully explored in the subsequent chapter 5.

There are a few important caveats to the typology employed here. Firstly, all South African NGOs are currently forced to develop self-financing strategies; audit practices lead any donor-based NGO to corporatise to some degree (also see chapter 6). As a result, boundaries between what may be called a donor-based and a partnership-based model are far from secure. Secondly, international donors see multisectoral partnerships as a funding priority and actively encourage NGO collaborations. Some of the case NGOs have a whole range of different partnerships but still obtain their income from donors. Thirdly, the South African NGO sector is clearly highly differentiated and neither partnerships nor the partnership discourse have the same impact on all organisations. In short, the concept of a new NGO is ideal-typical: donor mode and partnership mode are typological devices employed to examine the important effects this development ideal has on the sector, for instance by increasingly imbuing it with a survivalist rhetoric and impacting on NGOs' way of being and of thinking about doing NGO work.

International donor funding is in many ways the elephant in the room in this chapter and throughout the analysis. Funding flows run through the entire development domain, from international donors to the Government and to NGOs, to service-delivery CBOs and certain social movements, carrying with them not just resources but specific technologies and vocabularies, forms of expertise and calculation. Donors still have most of the power most of the time, circulating development priorities and techniques. However, partnerships constitute different kinds of mechanisms and technologies of exercising authority and legitimising that authority. Moreover, 21st century development is arguably more about policy than about distinct development projects managed by donors, given that aid is

increasingly channelled into direct support for national budgets or into basket funds. From these, donor agencies fund Government-run sectoral programmes in health, education or civil society reform. So whilst donor visibility has become more limited at the grassroots, they are more important than ever in the transnational policy community and therefore exerting considerable influence on the management of public affairs. Unlike service delivery NGOs that are more clearly dependent on Government, intermediary NGOs remain at least in part funded by international actors. It is hence these organisations that are the first link in a chain that carries donors' agendas and modes of development delivery.

4.2. Transition, crisis and rebirth

Looking back: from Apartheid service organisation to Post-Apartheid NGO

Above, I introduced the idea of a new-generation NGOs. To understand what is meant by this term requires discussing what preceded this new NGO, not least because many of the successful NGOs in my research distanced themselves from an older model of civil society organisation, as for instance Richard Calland does here:

> What I do know is that some NGOs that I can name atrophied, they didn't wake up to the new terrain, they didn't have a strategic discussion within themselves, they didn't change their relationships and they lost leadership, a lot of them, and withered on the vine (R.Calland, *IDASA*, Interview, 23 Apr 07).

Felicity Gibbs recalls the changes in civil society in the transition period and the first years of democracy:

> Many NGOs folded. Yes, and the first ones to go were the ones who were incredibly politically oriented, were the ones who were waving their arms in the air and shouting and being arrested. They got lots of money then. But the minute the new Government came in, those kinds of NGOs got no money because donors, be they private or whatever, they said: you do not have to jump up in the streets anymore; you've got your own Government, you've got what you asked for. And then of course there were a lot of skills or skilled people in NGOs who went then into Government. And when they were no longer there the NGO came to the end of its lifespan (F. Gibbs, *Operation Hunger*, Interview, 4 Jul 07).

Under Apartheid, what were then called service organisations or civics worked explicitly against the state. Foreign governments and donor agencies channelled funds to fight the Apartheid regime through these organisations. Contrary to some contemporary narratives of Apartheid civil society, the values of the various parts of the Anti-Apartheid movement – besides the objectives of a non-racial society – were not always similarly defined. They differed on essential issues such as the form of democracy and economic system to be adopted after the end of Apartheid. Tensions were largely suspended with the formation after the Soweto Riots of the United Democratic Front (UDF), which provided an umbrella organisation for hundreds of civics mobilising against National Party rule. Nonetheless there remained a clear ideological and organisational divide amongst the different components of South African civil society, serving to problematise an orthodox notion of the Anti-Apartheid movement as consensual and homogenous. Marais for example describes the 'remorseless and sometimes violent intolerance shown towards dissent and heterodoxy within the popular movement' (2001: 63).

The transition and immediate post-'94 period were characterised by a harmonisation of development objectives and by cooperation between civil society and the newly-democratic state. This was a result both of a consensual model of Post-Apartheid nation-building that attributed a service delivery role to CSOs, and of the formalisation of civil society through the structural and legislative consolidation that I have outlined in chapter 2. In the RDP, the state had committed itself formally to fostering institutions of participatory democracy in partnership with civil society. NGO expert knowledge was to play an important part in the capacity building of civil society and the transition process, with increasing numbers of progressive CSOs involved in policy-development, training, networking and implementation.

The post-'94 funding crisis that led to the folding of many organisations and to the professionalisation of what remained of the sector was a product of changing priorities of international funders. These now supported the democratically elected South African Government directly through bilateral agreements thus reducing the resources available for NGOs:

> The donors said we won't be giving you that amount of money; you've now got a good Government, and all things are right and all things are wonderful

and rosy and you can get your money there (F. Gibbs, *Operation Hunger*, Interview, 4 Jul 07).

Much of the expertise of the civics was being absorbed into the new state bureaucracy, as former civics staff were employed by Government ministries, agencies and commissions. This process continues today, as witnessed by the high rate of personnel change in the sector – some of my informants had moved into positions in the public sector by the time I returned to Johannesburg for the second leg of my fieldwork. Richard observes:

> Government, you know, people in the president's office always complain where are the alternatives coming from civil society, where is the strong research. Well, part of the answer is that most of the good researchers have been recruited by Government, you know our budget programme has been a training arm for Government. I can name 20 people who have been through this office and who now work for Government. Fair enough it's not a bad thing. But it is where they end up, or in the private sector (R.Calland, *IDASA*, Interview, 23 Apr 07).

Other NGOs survived the transition and associated restructuring but found that they needed to either reposition themselves as service delivery organisations or to carry out contracting work for the Government. This integration into state and corporate structures – both on a level of personnel and in terms of shifting activities towards service delivery – can in some ways be understood as a desire to contribute to the shaping of progressive policies in the newly-democratising South Africa, ensuring that the expertise available in these civic organisations would assist Government. The shift in 1996, from a framework seemingly emphasising reconstruction to GEAR, moreover favoured 'institutionalised corporatist relationships involving all social forces in the project of "nation building" through political/ideological "consensus"' (McKinley Unpublished Book Chapter). The emphasis on being partners in a shared national project, usually cast in terms of social cohesion and the construction of the 'new South Africa', was an important discursive building block of the initial Post-Apartheid years and has arguably impacted on the funding model and value orientation of what were now called NGOs. Indeed, by the time GEAR emerged, the NGO sector found itself side-lined and unable to challenge Government in a meaningful way. Many international donors in

fact began to directly support civil society organisations again by the beginning of this decade, but with their funding priorities having shifted to partnerships.

The birth of the new NGO

As a result of the above-outlined processes, the NGO sector was weakened in terms of capacity, reduced in numbers, increasingly dependent in terms of activities and had re-structured itself in important ways in line with Government policies and priorities (also see the historical background discussed in chapter 2). The new type of South African NGO that emerged in the beginning of the decade had already internalised these issues and incorporated them into its organisational form (also see the timeline in appendix 4). The financial crisis effectively created a more streamlined and self-sufficient NGO, as John Pampallis' account illustrates:

> We were forced onto the market and had to become self-sufficient. And I think we woke up a little late and came very close to closing. The deputy director at the time and me really walked the dusty streets of Pretoria from embassy to embassy and went to various big companies trying to beg money and tried to get tenders, I mean we were pretty bad at that in those days. Now we are pretty good, you see, now we churn out those tenders like we are a factory. A tender factory (J. Pampallis, *CEPD*, Interview, 23 Feb 07).

Similar narratives were apparent in most interviews, often framing the changes in business management terms. Here, Imraan explains how the changing funding modalities affected his organisation:

> We had to manage the process, which means we had to cut down programmatically. We also had to very immediately decide on retrenching staff, because a significant part of the budget was going to human resources. We had expensive office space which we shut down [...] So there was all these cost-cutting measures [...] And then we sort of revisited programmes, strategically, and developed a more streamlined, focused programme (I. Buccus, *CPP*, Interview, 26 Jun 07).

The language employed in many of the interviews highlights concerns with reconfiguring the organisation, maximising efficiency and cost-effectiveness, as is evident in terms such as 'streamlining', 'focusing' and 'managing the process'. The funding crisis was thus instrumental in the birth of the new-generation NGOs and in

the restructuring of those who survived the transition, producing a particular ideal-typical NGO that is professionalised, efficient and flexible.

The renewed changes in aid modalities towards sector-wide approaches (SWAP) and budget support have caused a second funding crisis in recent years, leading to a transfer of 'blue-chip NGO' activity to the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region, as I will further explore below. The pressures by many donors to give fewer and larger grants to NGO partnerships or consortia have led to a stratification process, whereby CBOs and smaller NGOs directly support people, whereas larger or more formalised organisations address political and policy responses to developmental issues, comprising activities such as advocacy, lobbying, research, organisational development and so forth.

I said above that case organisations often rhetorically distanced themselves from an older model of NGO. This was particularly noticeable with newer and with more corporatised NGOs. They perhaps regarded the 'old struggle NGOs' as outdated or archaic, given that the themes of death and survival were dominant: some NGOs were said to be 'withering on the wine' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07) or 'falling by the way side' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07). Significantly, there is also a value judgement by newer types of NGOs towards others that are perceived as not being equally prepared for the new configuration. Dion Jerling of *Connect Africa*, an organisation that characterised its organisational model as a social enterprise, told me: 'And those poor NGOs, they spend most of their time trying to find where next year's money's coming from, or next month's' (D. Jerling, *Connect Africa*, 16 Mar 07). This conveyed a sense of old NGOs that, like dinosaurs, are not being versatile and flexible enough to adapt to the ever-changing rules of a Post-Apartheid and Post-Washington Consensus world.

Accordingly, interviewees evoked an understanding of progress which always necessarily discredits the old and which crucially has to involve a transformation of attitudes: 'A lot of the NGOs are still working with the pre-'94 mindset, people and strategies. And that is where they're not much advancing' (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). Conversely, an organisation that does advance is one that is flexible and, as Felicity's account of the transition at the start of this section illustrated, not 'incredibly politically oriented' (F. Gibbs, *Operation Hunger*, 4 Jul 07). The survivalist language is also a reflection of the shift in donor guidelines to NGO-conceived and implemented projects that demonstrate sustainability. As I discuss in the following

section, sustainability is conceived of in narrow financial terms by both donors and NGOs in this research thereby establishing a link between producing commercially viable development products and organisational survival.

Indeed, flexibility sums up the new NGO. As I will show in the following chapters, it can adapt to the agendas of Government, ingest the working practices of corporates and still be aligned with the normative ideals of civil society. Flexibility also describes the new NGO in terms of its organisational structure. Many activities such as fundraising or aspects of monitoring are outsourced now, and core and support staff had been drastically reduced in every organisation in which I interviewed. Flexibility is a key characteristic of post-Fordist capitalism, its organisational model centred on increased responsibility and self-supervision of workers and productive sites (Hardt and Negri 2000). The donor model NGO operates as a unitary, stand alone organisation that needs to spend a lot of resources on raising funds to do their core business. Trying to 'offer a one stop service' (K. Greenop, *Mindset*, 1 Feb 08) makes it difficult to sustain itself. Conversely, a new NGO like *Mindset* tries to form partnerships to increase impact so 'that everything is added value' (ibid.).

Given this restructuring of the NGO sector, sustainability has emerged as an essential part of organisations' thinking. Partnering is arguably the most effective sustainability strategy for South African NGOs, as it allows for co-financing between sectors and is a funding condition of many donors. The policy drive that encourages partnerships is therefore explored in greater detail later in this chapter. However, besides partnering, the successful NGOs in this research employed a variety of other strategies to remain financially sustainable.

4.3. Survival and sustainability: some NGO strategies[49]

Whilst most NGOs understood the term sustainability in terms of reducing their resource vulnerability, there are different dimensions of sustainability, the most important of which are:

- development impact and enduring change

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[49] Also see appendix 4 which presents case NGOs' sustainability strategies at a glance.

- resource mobilisation (human and financial)
- the adaptive viability of organisations (Fowler 2000c)

A focus on financial survivability therefore in itself entails a narrow conception of sustainability, which may impact negatively on other dimensions, such as development impact and lasting change. As Fowler argues, strategic choices in terms of resources have a ramification beyond their reliability, 'because the choices made can also affect what the organisation stands for, which equates to a second task of protecting its mission and identity' (ibid: 60). Being sustainable from this perspective goes some way towards becoming more autonomous and flexible, producing marketable or profitable outcomes. The central problem with this restricted definition of sustainability lies in the fact that by its very nature, NGOs cannot be financially sustainable, since they should be needs-oriented rather than profits-oriented. In other words, funders require a model of sustainability that NGOs by definition cannot fulfil unless they radically change their mode of operation, both in terms of structure and activities.

The debate on NGO sustainability first arose in the 1980s in the context of the classical neoliberal understanding of non-profit organisations that called for development NGOs to be completely self-financing. Today, this is no longer seen as necessarily desirable, not least due to the partnership trend which has led to co-financing between sectors and the resurgence of civil society as a panacea for development. Fowler (2000c) defines the following factors that impact on NGOs' strategic choices for resource mobilisation and sustainability:

- vulnerability (the ability to suffer costs imposed by external events; the (in)ability to 'cope'),
- sensitivity (how fast and to what degree do resource changes impact; severity of disruption),
- criticality (how easily a resource can be replaced by another),
- consistency (the ability to alter resource profile without compromising mission and identity),
- autonomy (the ability to say 'no' in terms of resources) and
- compatibility (the similarity between new and existing resources in terms of structure and values; the extent of modifications required)

Bearing in mind these factors and turning to the case organisations' sustainability strategies, NGOs firstly often sought a diversification of funds and funders (also see section 4.4. below):

> I think our independence comes from the fact that we have several sources of funding, we are not completely dependent on any one source of funding and I think independence comes from having several income streams, and not being entirely beholding to any one donor (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07).

This strategy remains firmly within the framework of a donor-based organisational model. Its disadvantage lies in investing greater resources into M&E, proposal-writing and administrative tasks, which many of the NGOs are not equipped to do: 'what I would like would be that we have less funders because the administration of a lot of funders is very hard' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07). Yet, it is precisely a diversification of funders that is meant to guarantee survivability, which implies an even greater commitment to auditing. Moreover, the organisational ability to learn and to monitor projects supposedly contributes to cost-efficiency and so to survivability, which indicates a link between sustainability and M&E.

With some of the bigger NGOs, there is also a danger of diversification of activities which can sometimes lead NGOs to become too unfocused, moving away from their core strengths and threatening their identity. This may then be affecting their organisational consistency. Tendering for Government money is probably the most significant amongst these diversification strategies, although Government contracts have been a source of income for many South African NGOs since the transition. The dynamics and challenges of NGO-state relations are addressed in detail in the following chapter; here, it is sufficient to point out that this may affect the extent to which they can be autonomous.

Secondly, due to the re-classification of South Africa as middle-income economy, donors often require South African NGOs to develop projects in the wider Southern African region:

> In the last 5 years, where we have been pulled or where we've headed in terms of our portfolio of work is to do a hell of a lot more work outside of South Africa, throughout the rest of the continent, and initially that was just following the market, so the market place came to us and said we want to buy your skills, is basically what happened. And we would say yes or no, and often we would say yes. Because it was attractive, because it was a good

way of creating a new sustainability model. So for IDASA it has been a very valuable way of creating a new business model (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07).

Many of the blue-chip NGOs now carry out a range of activities connected with training and capacity building of local civil societies (also see chapter 7 for a discussion of the implications of an 'export model'). The preference of donors for such regional expansionism interestingly both constitutes a tribute to ideas of local ownership, in that it is seen as more appropriate to have South African NGOs carry out capacity building than an INGO, and betrays a sense of paternalism towards local NGOs. The language of 'following the market' once again speaks to my overall argument of the extent to which NGO discourse is framed in market terms and led by profitability concerns.

This particular sustainability strategy may affect dimensions of sensitivity and consistency, as not all organisations may be mature enough to deal with the expansion into different countries, as Vanja Karth from the *Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust* readily admitted:

> So for us it is far too soon to say we can actually afford to start working with people in Malawi, in Mozambique. We are not ready, we still need to actually get it properly recognised and properly instituted here before we can take it further. And the thing is, people take time to get good at what they do – We have finished fighting the struggle, now we need to solidify whatever we do. And we can't dilute ourselves by pretending to be the best (V. Karth, 25 Apr 07).

The trend towards geographically extending one's work once again emphasises the huge impact that international resource flows have on shaping NGO activity:

> It's more around how foreign governments define South Africa. If they continue to define it as a [middle] income country, and therefore less resources coming in; so there's less resources coming in not just for civil society but even sometimes for government projects that's coming in. So that affects across the board and it has nothing to do with shift in government policy around RDP, GEAR or greater social development (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

Thirdly, NGOs in this research increasingly seek to develop profitable activities by charging for consulting, training, grant-managing or publishing. It is not

that these are always new activities but rather that they are now conceived of as chargeable. Imraan explains:

> And obviously *CPP* has also gone into the phase now where we take on not consulting work, but sort of contractual work where maybe a state department wants a workshop on public participation. Previously we probably wouldn't have charged but now we do. It's all about building a sustainable income (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07).

There are often two-tier systems in place, which means some clients pay whereas the poorest or most marginalised do not. This shift arguably impacts on the way in which NGOs think about the development projects they develop and implement. Whether a 'development solution' is marketable as a product becomes an important criterion in the conception of projects. Michelle from *Agenda* for example told me about the difficulty of 'pitching' the publications it produces for a pay-for market, after the Ford Foundation had stopped funding publications. Other NGOs such as *IDASA* or *CEPD* have begun to manage grants in a drive to develop profitable activities. Grant-management is 'an efficient way of making money' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07), but it is also a way of ensuring that Government departments work more efficiently: 'the Education Department prefer to have it outside of the department because there is less bureaucracy, they can make quicker decisions, for example on how to spend money' (J. Pampallis, *CEPD*, 23 Feb 07). This understanding – that NGOs are more efficient than the public sector – is central to the sector's self-perception and legitimacy.

This branching out constitutes another example of the all-singing, all-dancing NGO that is able to take on grant management in addition to its more traditional activities. In this field as elsewhere, NGOs often compete with private sector organisations:

> In the beginning we found that we were tendering and competing against other NGOs. Now you put in a tender and you find yourself not only against the other NGOs but also against Ernst & Young, Deloitte's, PriceWaterHouse, POE Private Bank, depending on the kind of work it is (J. Pampallis, CEPD, 23 Feb 07).

Whilst successful NGOs portray themselves on the one hand as highly adaptable, being all kinds of things to all kinds of partners, there always lurks an essentially precarious situation of needing to find efficient ways of making money and to avoid the fate of other organisations that have folded. Organisational dimensions of

compatibility and consistency are potentially negatively affected here, given the resources and expertise required by such new (or newly-packaged) activities.

Fourthly, a number of foundation funders view endowments as a solution to the sustainability problem and have allocated grants to prepare and establish endowment funds to build financial sustainability. Lastly, *Mindset* has set up a for-profit arm that offers media services and communication services to the corporate sector using the organisation's expertise and technology platforms, generating money for the entire NGO. This hybrid profit-making non-profit structure is currently the exception amongst the researched NGOs, although it is rapidly becoming more commonplace in NGOs globally. Viewed from the perspective of sustainability alone, this seems a logical progression from charging certain users for activities or services. Clearly, there are potential compatibility issues of the for-profit segment with the values and culture of the non-profit element.

Other organisations conceived of themselves as following a social entrepreneurship model (often defined in contrast to a donor-based NGO model) in that they follow public good objectives in ways commonly attributed to private sector entrepreneurs (for instance *Teboho* or *Connect Africa*).[50] Due to the reduction in available funding and the push towards self-financing, the social entrepreneurship model is set to become increasingly common in South Africa, although it would arguably be difficult to transform a pure donor-based NGO into a social enterprise.

4.4. The power of donors: NGOs in the global context

The above discussion of sustainability models has already hinted at the continued importance of donors in the NGO sector, despite the changes in the modality of development funding that I argue for in the thesis. This section further discusses the modalities of global development funding in the South African case. The pool that funded the NGOs in this research is almost exclusively international. They include

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[50] Contrary to private sector entrepreneurship, the surplus made is fed back into the organisation to ensure organisational viability and social benefit. A distinction should be made between making a surplus and feeding it into an NGO as a kind of cross-subsidy, and making a surplus which has an explicit social value. The strengths of the social enterprise model is that it is seen as efficient and has a high staff retention; its weaknesses are the challenges of managing a hybrid and its 'neither-nor' reputation (Fowler 2000c).

foreign government agencies (such as USAID, DfID and NORAD), private foundations (such as the Open Society, Charles Stuart Mott and Ford Foundations), party-aligned foundations (such as the Heinrich Böll, Rosa Luxemburg and Konrad Adenauer Foundations) and Northern NGOs acting as grant-makers. With donor agencies, a large part of their spending for South Africa will go directly to provincial governments through bilateral aid or through partnership arrangements with Government which then disemburses, implements or delivers through NGOs and CBOs (also see the diagram in appendix 4).

Foundation funding is usually administered through short-term grants, typically over 1 or 2 years. It is increasingly rare for this funding to cover core costs; donors fund discreet projects which lends precariousness to the funding of operational costs for many of the NGOs in this research: 'we are struggling for core funding. We've got project funding, we've got more funds than we need for programme work. But we're still in a salary deficit' (M.Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). Moreover the short-termism of funding presents ongoing challenges for NGOs, as it makes forward planning difficult. From this perspective, partnerships across sectors may be a preferable option for an NGO as there is an assumption of longer-term commitment and sharing of responsibility.

The size and scope of bilateral development assistance is necessarily connected to the political landscape in the donor country. Probably the best-known example – one which affected the case NGO *Mindset* I discuss in chapter 5 at the time of research – is the impact of the Bush Administration's Christian stance regarding abstinence and behavioural change on USAID's priorities for HIV/Aids programmes in Southern Africa. However, in perhaps subtler ways, all foreign government funding has political motivations or conditionalities. This was experienced as a great constraint by NGO staff who felt that planning security and sustainability of projects was severely threatened by changing governments in donor countries:

> With foreign government funding it very much depends on which political party is in power in the country. And therefore you have priorities changing, and there is a level of fickleness there where sometimes they even fund you on a project for three years and then suddenly decide that, well, for this year they will take time out or we think the priority is not correct or so on (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

A key point about any type of international development funding for NGO activities in capacity building, governance, civil society and participation is that it allocates a key role for donors in domestic policy issues. The new post-conditional architecture of aid includes governance concerns beyond donors' previous interests in economic and financial management. Donor-funded NGOs can become conduits for the agendas of foreign governments or private entities that in turn begin to influence national political matters. This is certainly not a new claim to make regarding the global development system, but it is one that becomes more important when considering the increasing intermeshing of national and transnational development realms and agendas in partnerships. For instance, foreign-funded NGOs in my research collaborated with the provincial departments to provide training for the Local Government Ward Committees, which are themselves formal corporatist structures for engagement between the state and society.

The pressures of constantly changing donor priorities could be ameliorated, some felt, by having a range of funders and diversifying income sources. On the whole, EU funding was perceived as most burdensome in terms of bureaucracy and reporting requirements. The funding application alone was putting many off: 'I am going to have to work for a whole year on the proposal' (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). The complex requirements of the EU and other large funders raises important issues concerning the expertise they necessitate and produce in NGOs and the effects of this expert knowledge on the governmentality of civil society, to which I will attend in chapters 6 and 7. Some of the European government funders prefer to support Northern NGOs which then enter into partnerships with South African NGOs, thus adversely affecting the funding pool available to local organisations (see the diagram in Appendix 4). Still, this type of agency funding is less and less available due to the drive to refocus NGO activity on the SADC region.

Whilst the contributions of private funders such as the Ford or Mott Foundation are necessarily smaller than those of Northern government agencies, their prioritising of civil society and public sphere support provided crucial resources to the intermediary NGOs of this research. These types of funders were perceived as most in touch with the situation 'on the ground', most flexible in terms of changes to project spending and least burdensome regarding grant agreements and reports:

> The private foundations often have staff who understand the situation in SA
> very clearly, they know where the gaps are, they know where they will need

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to put the money in, they often undertake detailed analyses and evaluations of a range of projects and factors and issues and therefore the funding is often longer-term, much more sustainable (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

This in-depth understanding of the situation in South Africa was sometimes attributed to the fact that country officers for the foundations tend to be South African citizens.

A final category of funders comprises larger NNGOs such as Oxfam and Save the Children, which have supported case organisations activities in the areas of capacity building, media education and human rights. My research showed mixed reactions to this type of funding: some NGO staff characterised their Northern NGO funders as 'completely lovely, they're able to really give me some good advice and assistance' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07) whereas others complained about Oxfam's 'hierarchical reporting structure' (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). On the whole, unequal power relations seemed less of an issue here than with other funders, presumably because there was greater organisational similarity between the two parties. In any case, NNGO grants are relatively small compared to the ones discussed above.

Despite these general comments, there were almost always significant differences in perceptions of individual funders. For instance, whilst the majority of interviewees were critical of USAID's approach to target-setting, their reporting criteria and their reportedly patronising approach, Vanja had been given free reign with one of the agency's grants in a previous job: 'you know not only did they not interfere with what I did, I never heard from them, frankly' (V. Karth, *Wolpe Trust*, 25 Apr 07) This certainly demonstrates the great variety of ways in which any type of donor funding is negotiated. Some NGOs portrayed themselves as being at the whim of funders, whereas other seemingly confidently rode out the ever-changing funding priorities, political alignments and new bureaucratic pressures. The bargaining power of NGOs in their relationships with funders was impacted on by personal relationships, solidarity or ideological affinities, reputation and credibility, the ability to 'speak the funders' language' (also see chapter 6) and the solidity of their sustainability strategy.

It should also be noted that the vast majority of NGO staff had good relations with their donors, perceiving individuals in donor agencies as helpful and sensitive to NGOs' work and the systemic constraints of funding regimes. The long-standing criticism of technocratic, removed and culturally insensitive funders mostly does not

hold true today. Perhaps then, the critical issue is not their relationships with NGOs but their claims about what they do. For instance, foundation funding is often aimed at building capacity in civil society, when they are in fact mainly supporting highly formalised NGOs.

Taking civil society strengthening programmes as an example of the extra-economic funding priorities discussed above, donors tend to specify particular roles for NGOs, such as 'partnering with government to improve the quantity and quality of basic services' or 'engaging in policy formulations' (Mott Foundation website, http://www.mott.org/about/programs/civilsociety/southafrica.aspx, last accessed 02 Jun 2009). Foundation funding seeks to 'encourage opportunities for public debate on critical issues' and building capacity for civil society participation. These objectives of supporting 'a vibrant, diverse and inclusive civil society' (ibid) seem largely rhetorical where it is mainly highly formalised and usually urban and elite NGOs that qualify. With civil society itself being constructed, discursively and materially, according to narrow donor criteria, its extension through capacity building projects can arguably result in more of the same civil society, as opposed to contributing to greater participation (also see further discussion in chapter 7).

This argument is certainly backed up by the difficulty that progressive NGOs have faced in getting funding for their work with social movements, which should certainly fall within the definition of a diverse civil society. The *FXI* experienced such issues:

> There were intimations that funding may be withdrawn. But it's probably resulted in us being underfunded, because the more mainstream donors have I think become a little bit nervous about our image as an organisation, and our strong identification with the social movements (J. Duncan, 30 Mar 07).

This section has shown that donors continue to exert very significant power and influence in the NGO community in South Africa. What has changed in recent years is that the focus on sustainability strategies and in particular on multisectoral partnerships has created strong relationships between different sectors and different spatial levels. Donor funding flows connect local, national and global spheres, rendering them increasingly hybrid spaces. Moreover, the partnership mode may give some NGOs relative autonomy in relation to some of their partners (such as their private sector sponsors).

4.5. The greater good: NGOs and nation-building

Despite the global context within which NGOs operate, the focus of my research on national NGOs implies that organisations' objectives sometimes very clearly align with specifically national goals. The specific history of the sector, and particularly its role in the transition that I charted above, further contributes to this alignment. The ruling party's casting of NGOs as partners in a shared national project arguably impacted on how organisations have thought of themselves. To cite one example, one of *Starfish*'s staff quotes as the organisation's objective to 'contribute to the future of South Africa' (D. Marshall-Smith, *Starfish*, 23 Mar 07). For many respondents in this research, their identity as citizens in the young South African democracy was a key reference point. Time and again, they expressed the idea that collaboration of NGOs with Government or the private sector is the only way to tackle developmental issues of the magnitude that South Africa is facing. 'The point is to try to get together and do whatever we can to make sure that it is in the interest of the greater good', as Shafika put it (S. Issacs, *Mindset*, 2 May 07). Tuki Senne echoed this sentiment when he told me that 'the problem is far too big for us to be grappling over mundane issues' (T. Senne, *Mindset*, 6 Feb 08).

I discussed above how the immediate post-transition environment can be characterised by an institutionalisation of civil society activity with the aim of contributing to the national development, democratisation and reconciliation project. This can be observed with regards to increasing professionalisation, but also in terms of establishing a ideological consensus on the construction of the new South Africa. The Mbeki era since 1999 has arguably seen much more explicit attempts to reign in critics and achieve political cohesion by referring to nation-building objectives. Ahmed Motala sums up the change in Government discourse:

> Immediately post '94, the difficult was that many of those in Government were former colleagues and you did not want to be seen to be publicly criticising somebody you worked closely with and whose value and worth you know quite close up. So that was the kind of tension. Now it is more about this whole notion of nation building, that sometimes the definition is distorted to such an extent that it is actually seen as stifling any kind of criticism of the Government (A. Motala, *CSVR*, Interview, 14 Mar 07).

NGO-state cooperation then becomes framed as a facet or necessary condition of nation-building.

The notion of a greater good as it was encountered in the above quotation by Shafika relates to objectives of partnerships, such as inclusiveness, building broad-based support and sharing the goals of development. The self-evident commonality that was sometimes evoked makes it difficult to disagree with a consensual notion of development, as the following account by Carole Podetti shows:

> I firmly believe partnerships in South Africa are so important and working so well because there is no arrogance. [...] we all fight to make it work. And [...] we'll reach a common understanding to make sure that we implement what is good for the country. And I think also it is so important that when you speak about development or that people understand the [ground]. And I think the more you have the corporate, particularly in a country like South Africa, coming to the ground, understanding the ground and Government doing the same and listening (C. Podetti, *Valued Citizens Initiative*, 21 Jun 07).

The rhetoric that was used to express commonality by a range of different actors is normative and addresses incontestable values. Likewise, the 'mundane issues' that Tuki mentioned related to the accurateness of educational content distributed by his NGO, and the Government's stance on HIV/Aids prevention. Resorting to the idea of a greater good that overrides all differences stifles a sustained critique of the Government's way of 'doing development' and of the ultimate goals of development and democracy.

It goes beyond the scope of this chapter to analyse the various metaphors that are employed to evoke a shared Post-Apartheid identity – most well-known is certainly that of the rainbow nation, although this has gradually been replaced by Mbeki's 'African Renaissance' (Mbeki 1998b), drawing on Africanism imagery and perhaps indicating the increasing deployment of a racial nativism (Mangcu 2008). Others themes that are regularly invoked in the nation-building context include the new South Africa and the struggle.[51] The creation of a shared identity is a key element of the nation-building process, as the following definition suggests:

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[51] Interestingly, such nation-building objectives are often coupled with an anti-globalisation or post-colonial development rhetoric. Bond (2004b) has shown how the Mbeki Government deployed an eclectic mix of radical critique of global institutions and the neoliberal mantra of there being no alternative to globalisation. The combination of a technocratic, seemingly politically neutral language of modernization (for instance in terms of macroeconomic policy) with the appeal to an alternative modernity (for instance in terms of advanced governance and African values) not only forms a powerful and flexible nationalist discourse but also cements South Africa's position in the region (Greenstein 2003).

Nation building is the integration of communally diverse and/ or territorially discreet units into the institutional framework of a single state and the concomitant transfer of a sense of common political identity and loyalty to the symbolic community defined by the founding ideology of such a state (Liebenberg, cited in Goebel 1999: 308).

Indeed, this is how the official discourse on the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) has been deployed, seeking to discipline 'ultra-left factions within the Alliance' by accusing them of acting in coalition with 'right-wing professionals', as one ANC National Executive Committee member writes (Makhaye 2002). As Mangcu (2008) argues, nationalism, instead of being a tool in the struggle against repression, has become an instrument of rule. The ANC constantly invokes its own revolutionary tradition by referring to the national liberation struggle and re-articulating it in terms of the NDR, as Bheki Khumalo does here: 'there should be no denying the fact that our tradition in firmly revolutionary, now committed to a national democratic revolution of reconstruction' (2007: para. 11). Questions of development and of the relationship between democracy and nationalism are linked to the civil society experience of the Anti-Apartheid struggle, portraying 'criticism as undermining nation building' (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07). Hart suggests that invocations of the liberation struggle as central reference point are

not just a cynical manipulation from above; [they carry] powerful moral weight and [connect] with specific histories, memories, and meanings of racial oppression, racialised dispossession, and struggles against apartheid (2008: 22).

The way in which nation-building links up with specific modalities of development funding, such as the partnership agenda, leads to another important argument. Multisectoral partnerships seek to build a consensual approach to development, which in South Africa is tied up with ideas of nation-building and social cohesion. It is true that issues of poverty and inequality in South Africa are enormous. Still, the appeal to a poorly-defined notion of the 'greater good' or a 'common understanding' is potentially dangerous. It favours homogenised and convergent development approaches and implies that non-adherence means being

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'unpatriotic'. By involving them in the process of governance and invoking the notion of participation, former or potential future dissenters can be drawn into a consensus. Greenstein criticises the ANC's notion of partnership, arguing that 'popular participation is invariably seen [...] as a way of bolstering the role of the state under ANC leadership, rather than as potentially contradicting, challenging or forcing it to re-think its policies and practices' (2003: 15).

Most NGOs in this research described themselves in relation to national history, national issues and a national identity. Such questions of national identity are by definition not part of INGOs' remit, although INGOs that are operative in post-intervention and reconstruction contexts clearly also have nation-building objectives. National agendas and discourses impact on NGOs' values, identity and relationships with other sectors. Having shown that development partnerships can fulfil a consensus building function of development in a specifically post-repressive nation-building project, I now want to turn to a discussion of partnerships and their role in global development policy.

4.6. Governing development: partnerships in policy, practice and theory

As has become apparent from the above, both the global and the national context within which NGOs operate in South Africa involve an orientation towards multi-sectoral collaboration. In addition to having increasingly complex sustainability models, many successful South African NGOs are organisationally configured towards strong partnerships with other NGOs, Government and the private sector. Partnership is both an ambiguous and ambitious concept, whose ubiquity and often ill-defined usage in policy and by NGOs is a reflection of the dominance of a partnership discourse at all levels of the development domain. This discourse impacts on how NGOs think about and act on what they do. This section examines how partnerships are conceived of in development policy, in NGO leaders' talk and in the development literature. Before doing so, we should remind ourselves that, historically, the language of governing in partnership is not new in South Africa or in the Southern African region. British colonial rule in Africa relied on incorporating tribally organised local authorities into the governing project, whereas the Apartheid system drew on local African leaders within the Bantustan system (Barber 1999). As

Mamdani (1996) contends, Apartheid is in fact a peculiar version of the indirect rule model, rather than an exception. Indirect rule, by governing natives through local powers using customary law (as defined by Native Authorities), constituted African societies into 'citizens' or 'subjects'.

Moreover, as Chapter 2 already outlined, partnerships first entered the policy lexicon with alternative development approaches in the 1970s that advocated development starting from Southern communities, as represented by grassroots organisations. Development was now to be people-centred, participatory and pluralistic, methodologically expressed in new research methods such as Participatory Action Research and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The aim of participatory planning and methods was to make people central to development, which was justified in terms of greater sustainability, relevance and empowerment of development projects (Cooke and Kothari 2001). The language of partnership sought to encapsulate an ideal of co-operation and capacity-building between equal partners (instead of the conditional aid paradigm that characterised the Cold War). The rise of the NGO – both as supposed guarantor for participatory development and as third sector alternative to 'failed' developmentalist states – is indicative of the intertwining of the discourse of participatory development and the neoliberalisation of development.

Partnership as efficient delivery mechanism in an interconnected world

In their second coming, partnerships have at the beginning of the 21st century (re-) emerged as the latest panacea for African development. USAID for instance enthusiastically claims that there has been a 'renaissance of partnerships for international development': 'the United States is changing the paradigm for development, rejecting the flawed "donor-recipient" mentality and replacing it with an ethic of true partnership' (PEPFAR 2007: 9). Policy texts from this decade refer to the need for African governments to 'work in close partnership with civil society, established businesses (both domestic and foreign) and the international community' (Commission for Africa 2005: 240). To 'develop a global partnership for development' is one of the Millennium Development Goals that the UN member states and many international institutions have agreed upon.

The partnership approach in development is based on the assumption that contemporary complex developmental challenges cannot be solved by one sector or set of actors alone. By bringing together the varied skills and resources of different sectors, development projects are meant to be delivered better and more inclusively. As a World Economic Forum publication states,

> that is why we believe in facilitating public-private partnerships, so that many necessary advances can be achieved − with stakeholders such as governments and NGOs working closely with companies to apply the resources and competencies of business for the benefit of all (World Economic Forum 2006: 29).

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) refer to an arrangement with at least two parties - one from the public (governmental) sector and one from the private (non-governmental) sector, although 'inclusive partnerships' should ideally involve a range of partners such as local government, business, communities and wider civil society. A common feature of PPP schemes supported by international development agencies is that 'they target the poor, either as beneficiaries of the services and the generated jobs, or also as actual partners in the implementation of the partnerships' (International Labour Office 2007: 1).

The Post-Washington Consensus has identified state and institutions as central to the efficient functioning of markets. The emphasis on market failure, and the associated rediscovery of social relations that replaced the cruder liberalism of earlier decades, provides the theoretical underpinnings for the 'renaissance' of partnerships − the concept typifying the re-accommodation of the state and society as complementary mechanisms for development. My analysis of policy documents demonstrates the importance of the term in the current development regime (for instance Commission for Africa 2005, Department for International Development 2006, NEPAD 2004). In these texts partnerships are understood as a consequence of growing interdependence under conditions of globalisation. Similarly, Haider and Subramanian observe:

PPPs highlight the key aspect of globalization and answer the need for a changing model of service delivery and governance in an increasingly inter-connected society (2004: 26).

This assessment allows us to already identify some of the key assumptions of the partnership rhetoric: globalisation has losers as well as winners, hence necessitating a new, more efficient model of service delivery; developmental needs are an unavoidable consequence of the world we live in, but can be solved if the correct solutions, the appropriate model of service delivery and the right kind of governance are applied. Therefore the issue is one of fine-tuning and of correct management. The social risk that globalisation carries due to its marginalisation of large parts of the world's population can be downplayed by portraying partnerships as a technical issue. Such a representation makes use of two related practices that are central to a liberal rationality: problematisation and rendering technical (Li 2007). These practices confirm expertise and bestow it on those who have the capacity to diagnose problems.

In South Africa partnerships have been very popular too: donors are keenly supporting development projects that integrate voluntary, private and public sector efforts, as this interview extract exemplifies well:

> The regional head for the [Development Bank of Southern Africa] came in and said what she really loved about this was the cooperation between private enterprise, social enterprise, Government at all levels, and utilising technology and she said look we've got money for exactly these kinds of projects. She said not only must you come back again, but she said "to all of you Government officials, we've got money to finance this kind of initiative so please come to me" (D. Jerling, *Connect Africa*, Interview, 16 Mar 07).

The DBSA in fact characterises its role as 'partner', with the goal of 'leverag[ing] private, public and community players in the development process' (DBSA website, www.dbsa.org, last accessed 04 June 2009). Alternatively, donor funding criteria often specify that projects be carried out in partnerships of NGOs with other NGOs (also see section 7.3.). Moreover, under their CSI mandates, the South African private sector increasingly seeks collaborations with NGOs (see section 5.5. for a discussion of these relationships). The bilateral aid that is allocated directly to the South African Government is often conditional on the latter forming partnerships with civil society or the private sector. Multisectoralism has been particularly characteristic

of donor responses to HIV/Aids (Birdsall and Kelly 2007), but certainly applies to other funding areas too.[52] Perhaps unsurprisingly, the South African Government has displayed a due fondness of PPPs: the World Bank and DBSA were involved in the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Unit that set out the privatisation of services as PPPs (Bond 1998).

These shifts towards multisectoralism indicate a significant transformation of aid modalities over the last decade or so. Firstly, from 2000 onwards, SWAPs and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), funded by the IMF, the World Bank and other donor agencies, have sought to move from support of discrete service delivery projects to financial support of governments' budgets, especially if these were seen to be committed to pro-poor policies and the good governance agenda. They have stressed decentralised implementation and participatory approaches involving the government, domestic stakeholders and external development partners, including national and international NGOs, businesses and donor agencies.

Poverty reduction strategies must be based on the five core principles of being country-driven (including broad-based participation of civil society), pro-poor, comprehensive (recognising the multidimensional nature of poverty), partnership-oriented (involving coordinated participation of development partners) and based on a long-term perspective for poverty reduction.[53] Although South Africa, classified as a middle-income economy, has not been given a PRSP, I argue that the very same rhetoric of cross-sectoral partnership, harmonisation and broad-based participation has become dominant in the South African and more broadly in the global development domains.

Secondly, the recent focus on aid harmonisation, as embodied in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), has again emphasised the role the state

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[52] In relation to AIDS, multisectoralism has been a leading approach, intent on involving all sectors of society and all tiers of government and calling for partnerships of diverse actors who are seen to contribute not only different skills but also different positionings in relation to affected communities.
[53] For critiques of the 'new architecture of aid' and PRSPs, see Cling et al. (2003), Lister and Nyamugasira (2003), Gould (2005a, 2005b), Cornwall and Brock (2005) and Craig and Porter (2006). Such critics maintain that whilst trying to avoid accusations of institutional blueprints – not least in order to distance itself from the now discredited 'one-size-fits-all' approach of the SAPs – the Poverty Reduction Strategy initiative was nonetheless homogenising in its embracing of liberal free trade regimes, but couched in a language of participation and ownership It is indeed the case that all recipient governments must tie their budgets to an IMF/ World bank-defined framework and most budget spending must be targeted to poverty reduction, again as defined by the international institutions. Gould (2005a) argues that the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility – the successor to the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility – contains the same key macro-economic policy conditionalities, so that the institution's policy prescriptions have not been adjusted to suit the goals of poverty reduction. Moreover, despite the participatory rhetoric, participation by, and consultation with, popular movements or grassroots constituencies has been selective or non-existent.

has to play in new forms of development cooperation. The declaration specifies 12 effectiveness targets as part of the broader partnership commitments of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, management for results and mutual accountability. Together, they seek to reduce transaction costs arising from reporting and evaluation procedures by using common arrangements, improve the public administration of aid, and employ results-oriented frameworks (OECD 2005). Whilst this debate does not immediately seem to concern civil society funding, I believe that the targets and instruments of the Paris Declaration in fact set important discursive priorities that impact on the way development can be conceived of by NGOs.

As will have become apparent in the previous section, the language of partnership is ubiquitous and employed by different actors to describe what are highly varied and often normative relationships. This was empirically reflected in interview data and observation research, where reference to partners denoted anything from NGOs to CBOs, governments and companies, and comprised a range of activities such as funding, technical assistance, sharing information or managing projects jointly.[54] I have chosen to use the term multisectoral partnership, or sometimes simply partnership, as this reflected the usage of case NGOs themselves.

Issues of usage

The term partnership was routinely conflated with terms describing other types of relationships such as funding. The same interviewee often used different terms to describe their relationship with one partner. There is clearly a difference between programmatic collaboration and short-term financial agreements; there are qualitative differences between 'partnerships' with the government and 'partnerships' with CBOs – yet, this was hardly noticeable in the language used by staff.

The conflation between funding and partnership was noteworthy particularly since it was organisations fitting my idea of the new corporatised NGO that were most likely to use the terms partnership and donor funding as interchangeable (Mindset and Teboho, for example). Tuki differentiated between different types of

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[54] My concern lies with cross-sectoral partnerships as an organisational mode, although I did question NGO staff about their experiences with working with other NGOs, both South African and international. The distinction between different partnerships is further complicated by the fact that several large NNGOs act as donors in South Africa.

relationship with Government, funders and other CSOs but insisted on calling them all partnerships:

> We see our relationships with our donors as partnerships, because although they have been donor-recipient relationships, they have had a lot of interaction with our programmes as well. So it goes beyond just the money [...] For me, what determines how the partnerships is constructed is what the desired outcome should be. And then you build it around that (T. Senne, *Mindset*, 6 Feb 08).

This extract highlights that NGOs themselves employ and circulate the vocabulary of partnerships. The case NGO in question used the partnership discourse as a resource. The argument of NGOs strategically using the partnership discourse stands in contrast to a NGO narrative that sees development concepts and languages as being introduced in a top-down fashion. From the latter perspective, partnerships are merely the latest trend in the transnational development industry. Conversely, this poses the question of what a NGO stands to gain from portraying itself as having no agency. Moriss (cited in Lukes 2005: 66) writes: 'You can deny all responsibility by demonstrating lack of power'. If an NGO in fact does not want to be responsible or responsibilised, it may be strategic to portray itself at the whim of funders, or as a small cog in the development machine.

Portraying what are essentially donor-beneficiary relationships as partnerships however also suggests that the two have the same goals. It implies that, being 'partners', all participants in the relationship have the same ability to articulate their objectives. One of the consequences of portraying relationships as equal in this way is that it obscures from the analysis the issue of how power is distributed in relationships between different development actors. The convergence of development language around a rhetoric of partnership seems to me to indicate that NGOs become compromised in their motivation and ability to employ an alternative vocabulary for development.

Turning now to conceptions of partnerships, NGOs that positioned themselves as progressive and aligned with social movements depicted partnerships as compromising the identity of NGOs and as masking the continuing unequal power relations between different partners:

> [Such] organisations [engaging in PPPs] actually endorse the status quo. They actually endorse cost recovery measures, they actually endorse

neoliberal policies [...] And of course they would, because that means more community0private partnerships, it means a greater role for NGOs, and I think this is often why NGOs don't raise their voices (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07).

Jane draws attention to NGOs' self-interest in partnerships which is often hidden from how these partnerships are portrayed: not only are they increasingly demanded by donors, but they also guarantee long-term sustainability. Such sustainability concerns have, progressive NGOs argue, led to NGOs becoming 'conveyor belts of government policy' (ibid.) and 'strategically incorporated in the neoliberal order' (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07).

Still, the majority of organisations – even those whose model was based purely on partnerships – advanced some critical assessment of partnerships, even if they were central to their sustainability. For instance, informants would provide a critique of the concept of partnerships in the abstract, would concede that in practice it can be difficult to achieve equality and mutual understanding, and would then focus on logistics and organisational dynamics. Concrete problems emerging in partnerships could therefore be described as of a technical or managerial nature. Vis Naidoo told me:

> The issue has been in terms of the frequency of payment, getting the contract signed often takes very long – in those kinds of issues which are more, I believe bureaucratic, rather than fundamentally conflictual around the kind of pedagogical issues (V. Naidoo, *Mindset*, 9 May 07).

The term partnership was here more concerned with the effective management of projects than with the reconfiguring of power relations, as is claimed for instance in USAID's emphasis on an 'ethics of partnership' cited in the previous section. Responsibilisation of civil society, and assignment of its appropriate roles and duties, occurs through the rendering technical of development through partnerships. Rendering technical implies rendering non-political, in this context framing political economic issues in terms of technical responses and bureaucratic management.

Partnerships as mechanism for inclusion and legitimacy
Much of the academic literature on development partnerships focuses on how they can be made more effective by analysing opportunities and limitations of

partnerships. Accordingly, the necessary ingredients for a successful partnership include: mutual trust, a shared sense of purpose, the willingness to negotiate and make long-term commitments to working together, reciprocal accountability, transparency and joint decision-making (Haider and Subramanian 2004, Community Agency for Social Enquiry 2004, Brinkerhoff 2002, Lister 2000). Brinkerhoff (2002) distinguishes between the (not necessarily contradictory) normative and instrumental values of partnerships, the former being based on ideals of participation and empowerment, the latter crucial to meet objectives such as effectiveness and efficiency. Development agencies often evoke normative values such as honesty, mutual respect, understanding and trust; partnerships for development are seen as a way of overcoming the power inequalities that have characterised North-South or donor-recipient relationships in development. In this respect, it seemingly draws on the tenets of alternative and participatory development in the 1970s.

Despite these stated intentions, many the interviewed NGO staff cited unequal control over money as a major constraint of 'genuine' partnerships: 'the notion of true partnerships is a fiction, because the person that has the money inevitably has a bit more power in the relationship. Even with a big NGO like IDASA' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07). Other frequently-voiced obstacles and constraints were a climate of mistrust between different sectors, institutional capacity restraints, lack of experience and lack of an overall vision for interaction with NGOs on the part of Government. Incompatibility of approaches and aims were also criticised, as was the problem of state bureaucracy: 'you get pockets of excellence but you are fighting a huge bureaucratic system' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). Some of the literature on partnerships in South Africa lists these limitations only to conclude that partnerships are highly beneficial if NGOs can remain independent and do not become mere delivery agents (Community Agency for Social Enquiry 2004). It is precisely this quite substantial 'if' that is not addressed.

Alternative perspectives to these idealist accounts in the literature have variously dismissed partnerships as rhetoric, tactic or spin (Baaz 2005). They are understood as the 'Trojan horses of development' (Miraftab 2004) or as 'old wine in re-labelled civic bottles' (Fowler 1998: 137). The partnership rhetoric, according to such accounts, is deliberately employed to mask continuous unequal power relations between different types of partners at all levels of the aid chain. This includes relationships between donors – or 'funder partners' as they now sometimes call

themselves – and governments, between governments and civil society, and between NNGOs and their Southern counterparts (see Brehm et al. 2004, Mawdsley et al. 2002 on North-South NGO partnerships). Others (Crewe and Harrison 1998) point to the clash between the concept of partnership as process of cooperation and the agenda of good governance, arguing that partnerships are more concerned with the management of projects than with the changing of relations of power. For instance, despite the partnership rhetoric, participation by popular movements or grassroots constituencies has been selective or non-existent in African countries' actual development frameworks.

This analysis places partnerships in a broader framework that seeks to understand what the rise of the partnership model indicates about power in the development domain. In the first place, this involves seeing development partnerships as mechanisms of inclusion. On one level they are, as Jane put it, 'conveyor belts of government policy' (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07), serving to compensate for cut-backs to service delivery through NGO-government partnerships (also see discussion in section 5.3.). But crucially, they are also a way for various partners to gain legitimacy. For the South African Government for instance, they offer the potential to include previously adversarial actors (such as the 'ultra-left') into the policy consensus on Post-Apartheid development, and to marginalise others as outside of that 'greater good' normativity.

But partnerships hold the promise of increasing legitimacy for NGOs, too. This is apparent in the way new-generation NGOs use leverage – as a way to gain various forms of capital. For example, NGOs may strategically use partnerships with the provincial or national Government to increase their legitimacy with donors or corporations which they can in turn use to leverage new partnerships (also see the diagram in appendix 4). As one informant put it:

> It becomes a little more complex than simply going to the funder looking for money directly. Sometimes it's about creating relationships that leverage and leverage and leverage to the point where we can actually get access to funds (L. Jiya, *Mindset*,15 May 07).

The terminology of leverage itself is interesting in terms of the conception of power it entails: it can be defined as the power to influence people, but also as acting from a

distance and with only small investments. At *Mindset*, some sites were funded through provincial health departments, some of whom would take these resources directly from their own budgets, whereas Gauteng had an agreement with a private sector investor that was used to support *Mindset*'s work in that province. North West province had yet another model using budget support from the Dutch government to fund the NGO's work.

Besides my point about leverage and NGO agency, these arguments also emphasise that NGO activity connects different spatialities and contributes to the intermeshing of multiple sovereignties and responsibilities in the development domain. For those NGOs already configured to multisectoral partnerships, they constitute a way of gaining forms of capital and increasing their power. Partnerships are uneven, but they also constitute strategies by different development actors to 'reform' the development system in line with their own objectives. For NGOs in particular, they can come to constitute ways of ensuring continued relevance and survival and provide leverage on development agendas and projects. As a form of power in global governance, partnerships produce self-disciplining organisations, citizens or states (Abrahamsen 2004), bestow authority and circulate particular practices and values.

As discussed in chapter 2, reflexive neoliberalism retains conservative neoliberal policy settings but emphasises empowerment to enable participation of countries, organisations and people in global and local markets. In the development domain, this has translated into efforts to harmonise and align the administration of aid. One absolutely central point about this form of inclusion is that it can co-opt previously dissenting or alternative voices. As Gould puts it succinctly, partnerships represents attempts to 'draw a select class of "constructive" non-state actors – policy advocates and self-styled representatives of "the poor" – into the circle of consensus and intimacy which cements the partnership' (2005a: 7). This is not just the case regarding governments: NGOs can also be enlisted into Corporate Social Investment programmes as partners, as I discuss in section 5.4. However, attention must be paid not to confuse outcomes with intentions as some post-development writers do: that genuine partnerships do not materialise does not imply that none of the participants had partnership objectives.

4.7. Conclusions

This chapter has charted the restructuring of the NGO sector in Post-Apartheid South Africa, arguing that the death of the traditional donor model has given birth to an ideal-typical streamlined NGO that can be characterised by flexibility, preparedness, multisectoral linkages, formalisation and professionalisation, versatility and autonomy. The various sustainability strategies that were discussed can lead to commercialisation and commodification, for instance due to a push to produce commercially viable development products or to expand activities abroad. The NGO sector becomes dominated by elite blue-chip organisations, with smaller ones not being able to survive the restructuring and disappearing. It is not just organisational practices and structures that need to change in order to cope with the changed environment; it is also mindsets, attitudes and values.

I then discussed partnerships as the most important amongst the various sustainability strategies for NGOs. Partnering is often inscribed into organisational structure and vision, although at other times partnership may be invoked rhetorically and employed as a resource. Partnerships are often normatively constructed as common good approaches to global development problems. Interestingly, it is this construction that also enables the articulation of partnerships in terms of nation-building. Partnerships are not only a donor prerogative but an opportunity for Government and others to bring adversarial groups into the nation-building project, therefore turning 'potential civil society critics into consensual governing partners' (Craig and Porter 2006: 79). I am not suggesting that global and South Africa development priorities always overlap, or that a global development blueprint is necessarily adopted in South Africa. In this case however, a national and a global reform project for civil society reinforce one another. The partnership agenda is indicative of a particular form of power in global governance as well as articulating specifically Post-Apartheid narratives and reference points.

At the same time, the present research focus on national NGOs has served to demonstrate that they have very different objectives to international ones; to contribute to South Africa's future is a motivating factor for many of the NGO staff I interviewed. This objective presumably does not play as central a role for INGOs operative in South Africa; or if it does, it is not tied up with questions of biography and personal identity in the same way. This is also where the focus of the present

research differs significantly from the majority of the literature on partnerships in development.

The drive to partnerships then provides a way of understanding the role and scope of NGOs that in important ways parts with an earlier donor-beneficiary model. Nonetheless, the South African NGO sector – even within the narrower focus of this research – is highly differentiated, with the partnership rhetoric being employed variedly, and with different effects and outcomes. Therefore, the partnership mode may be negative for some NGOs whilst it gives other NGOs relative power. The next chapter will explore the dynamics of partnerships more fully, examining NGOs' relationships with the public and private sectors and showing that, despite the prevalence of an overwhelmingly ubiquitous partnership vocabulary, partnerships in practice encompass many different and often contradictory policies and discourses.

Chapter 5
NGOs and Their Partners

The angel is in the principle, the devil is in the details, so that's where you do your Faustian dances, most of the time.
(S. Issacs, Mindset, 2 May 07)

5.1. Introduction

As the previous chapter has demonstrated, the language of partnership has come to encompass the whole spectrum of development institutions, and institutions tend to refer to their work in terms of partnership. This includes not just the NGOs of this research but also grant makers, donors, IFIs and government agencies. Partnerships were often framed in terms of the sectoral advantages that NGOs brought to them. I discuss these in the first part of this chapter, highlighting claims of efficiency and proximity to communities in particular.

As I sought to emphasise above by providing a historical context of the sector since the democratic transition, state-NGO relations are diverse. They encompass adversarial as well as collaborative relationships. Changes in funding modalities towards budget support, the fact that multisectoral partnerships have become a priority for donors and the consolidation of funding flows under national authority have all made cooperation with the government in some form or another an important route to sustainability. Seeking to go beyond the binary of watchdog and service deliverer, the notion of the Post-Apartheid NGO as a 'critical ally' to government is explored below, arguing that the invocations of authenticity are central to this construction.

Whilst NGOs' positioning in relation to the state can be crucial to their survival, it clearly impacts on their identity and mission too. Maybe this explains why NGOs' portrayals of their relationship to the state were often ambiguous: many initially described themselves in a polarised fashion as either oppositional or engaged (although not necessarily 'collaborative'), only to later give a more balanced

assessment of their position as somewhere between these two extremes, as I go on to discuss in section 5.3. This mirrors my observation that partnerships were critiqued in a remarkably similar fashion by different NGOs, even as some of them relied on them whilst others rejected them. However, the below analysis of state-NGO relations does not imply that I understand the development sector to be structured in terms of these relations or that I see state and NGOs as opposites; rather, relations with the state are one (albeit important) aspect of a networked, enmeshed, intersectoral whole of development practices and interactions.

Given companies' constitutional commitment to Corporate Social Investment in South Africa, partnerships with the private sector are significant and are set to become increasingly so. Observational data indicates that the CSI landscape may have become more sophisticated over the past few years than simply 'painting the local hospital bright red', contrary to what the accounts of most interviewees would suggest. Thus, many NGOs had either not fully grasped how to make use of these kinds of relationships, or continued to feel that corporate funding was too circumscribed. There were however exceptions to this. Section 5.4. presents a kind of interlude, in that it discusses *Mindset's* partnership model and the challenges it may pose for the NGO's quality of output, consistency and relevance.

Mindset is a South African, internationally-funded NGO that creates and delivers educational materials through ICT platforms. The organisation has successfully adopted a range of the sustainability strategies outlined in the previous chapter: its organisational model revolves around partnerships with the public, private and non-profit sectors; it has diversified its funding base; it has established a for-profit arm and has built an endowment fund through investment. The NGO is clearly rather uniquely positioned in the sector so it would be a mistake to extrapolate from this case study to other NGOs in this research. I have chosen to discuss it in some detail because I believe that it sheds light on dimensions of non-financial sustainability, in particular development impact, organisational identity and coherence. Below I point to areas which may impact negatively on *Mindset's* non-financial sustainability, thereby showing the limitations of the all-singing, all-dancing NGO that perhaps tries to be all things to all partners. However, even in an organisation drawing so heavily on the language of partnership, partnerships in practice encompass many different and often contradictory practices, with the NGO's

vocabulary representing a mix of bureaucratic speak, the language of participatory development or that of auditing.

5.2. Partnerships: between idealism, self-interest and critique

NGO staff cited a variety of motivations for entering into development partnerships. Given the restructuring of the sector outlined in the previous chapter, I expected economic necessity, sustainability concerns and donor pressure to be foremost amongst them, but this was not necessarily how partnerships were framed. NGO staff highlighted their potential to foster greater commitment and shared goals amongst partners: they 'bring players together just to talk to each other, just to find each other' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). This chimes with the ideal of partnership as democratising development and giving a voice to those previously excluded from power. But it also reiterates that partnerships are portrayed as a necessity because the challenges facing South Africa are too big to tackle alone. This has the effect of constituting these challenges as technical matters, and amenable to partnerships as a solution.

Partnerships were consequently identified as mutually beneficial for all parties involved, as for instance Rama expressed: 'we're all winning' (ibid.). The point of partnering is to combine the knowledge and resources specific to each sector and to compensate for each others' weaknesses, thereby reaching wider constituencies. Accordingly, partnerships were often discussed in terms of NGOs' 'comparative advantages' which connect to assumptions about NGOs' appropriate roles in development. By emphasising the comparative advantages that NGOs bring to partnerships, informants downplayed the necessity of entering into partnerships as a means of organisational survival.

The frequent usage of terminology such as comparative advantages and value-added is noteworthy in itself as, like the language of efficiency that comes across clearly in the data, it derives from the world of economics and business management. Examples of NGO staff employing business, marketing or management language to describe things that properly belong to the social domain are cited throughout this analysis. NGO discourse, even amongst progressive organisations, is often framed in market terms. To cite just a few examples here,

development projects were often referred to as 'products' or 'development solutions'. Vis contrasted 'crass capitalism' with the application of sound business principles to the running of an NGO:

> You don't have to subscribe to kind of what I would describe as 'crass capitalism' in a way that says you make profits at any cost. But that you can use business processes that talk about increased efficiencies, that talk about better use of people, of staff, that talk about better ways of liaising with your clients, your partners, that talk about proper financial accountability, proper procedures internally (V. Naidoo, *Mindset*, 9 May 07).

Michelle Oyedan argued that NGOs need to 'market [their] social capital. And I know this sounds terrible, just using capital. But the social capital, the intellectual capital, the, I suppose, entrepreneurial capital that we have within the civil society environment has not been exploited fully' (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). Far from providing an exchange of ideas and perspectives between the sectors as it is usually claimed, partnerships then seem to involve the adoption of a business approach by NGOs.

NGO advantages

Frequently cited amongst NGOs' advantages was the ability to deliver at local level due to their capacity to mobilise communities and coordinate relations with CBOs and communities and reach the grassroots:

> So it's also useful for [partners] if they want to expand their work to partner with somebody who already has a presence, and who already understands those communities, and has the relationships that have been built up over time (J. Currie, *Africa Foundation*, 25 May 07).

Community is understood as poor and rural in many of these NGO accounts. NGO abilities are directly contrasted with the failures of service delivery by an ANC-government that lacks expertise and capacity:

> In terms of support for the Anti-Retroviral (ARV) roll-out, the government doesn't have the capacity to do that. It is civil society that can do that. Civil society has links in the communities, has the confidence of communities. And can you imagine what a fantastic partnership it would be if the Department of Social Development, Department of Health and civil society organisations got together and said okay; these are our different roles and we are gonna

provide, you know Government says we will provide money for civil society organisations to function in a particular area and provide a specific support to communities in terms of ARV roll-out and voluntary counselling and testing (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

Another comparative advantages that NGOs thought they brought to the table was their innovativeness in development approaches: especially the newer-generation NGOs characterised themselves as possessing 'a model that is pioneering and innovative' (J. Bright, *Teboho*, 19 Jun 07), as 'build[ing] more innovative ways of doing [service delivery]' (V. Naidoo, *Mindset*, 9 May 07), 'leading by example' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07), and 'demonstrating a viable model to government' (D. Marshall-Smith, *Starfish*, 23 Mar 07). These examples reflect the concern of these NGOs in particular to portray themselves as advanced organisations, again set in contrast to the bureaucracy of the state. They also indicate what may be called their reformism: a reformist drive to change the developmental practices and methodologies of other partners, especially provincial government, was apparent.

But portraying themselves as innovative also demonstrates NGOs' self-perception as more efficient. They saw their comparative advantage as having a better response time to development needs and greater cost-efficiency in service provision: 'we work more efficiently than government departments do' (J. Pampallis, *CEPD*, 23 Feb 07). Another informant pointed out:

Not in all instances do all the things that Government should do need to be done by Government, especially if you take into account that there are certain skills bases that they will not have' (T. Senne, *Mindset*, 6 Feb 08).

These statements paint a picture of a bloated and highly centralised state bureaucracy, implying concerns about the inefficiency of state delivery mechanisms. Such a portrayal is evocative of a liberal mistrust of the state as inefficient and weak. By ostensibly governing less, so orthodox liberal thinking goes, development is to be made more streamlined. In partnerships NGOs thus compensate for the lack of capacity and skill in government, resulting in increased effectiveness and efficiency of development interventions. Dion, director of the NGO-cum-social enterprise *Connect Africa,* identified this as their unique selling point: 'what we are saying is what we can do is provide your people [Government officials] with the infrastructure and a means by which they can be more efficient' (D. Jerling, 16 Mar 07]. Clearly, NGOs understand themselves as more efficient; it is their adoption of business and

audit principles and a language of management, as opposed to some intrinsic NGO value, that they are keen to promote.

One advantage of partnering, according to interviewees, was to ensure a long-term commitment to projects. By partnering with Government for instance, the sustainability of a project can be more easily guaranteed: if a classroom is built by an NGO, teachers need to be provided by Government, or if Government partners on an ICT-based project, they will be more likely to maintain the equipment. Lusanda Jiya at *Mindset* explains:

> The advantage [of partnerships] is if you get it right; you have a much longer term partnership and ownership rests with Government, which is important for us because we do not own the schools that we install Mindset at. And if we do not have Government support, the equipment can die and nobody cares; and nobody makes sure that it is used and all of those things. So it's important to have those relationships with Government (L. Jiya, Interview, 15 May 07).

The notion of ownership is a key term in the Post-Washington development lexicon. As a central pillar of the partnership mode, it is intent on making development aid more effective. The policy emphasis on local ownership is at once political and governmental, in that it gains legitimacy for development interventions and enables deeper penetration into what are domestic policy choices (Mosse 2005). As with accountability, the nature of ownership in multisectoral partnerships could perhaps be called shallow – giving rise to extensive audit practices and forms of expertise rather than being concerned with empowerment. Empowerment itself is hailed as an objective of partnerships, with skills transfer and capacity–building amongst NGOs' chief roles. This is once again connected to NGOs' expert role as a provider of neutral or technical advice.

Moving on to NGOs being closer to communities, this claim is not backed up by my research: all the NGOs I came across were urban, formalised and not at all close to rural communities. In order to reach poor and rural communities, they must draw on CBOs which they work in partnerships with. In order to sustain the claim of their comparative advantage, the homogenous notion of the 'we' of civil society is often evoked, thereby professing that NGOs and the CBOs with whom they work are one and the same. In practice, NGOs are more likely to act as an intermediary between government or corporates and local communities, providing a link between

the national and the local, connecting a variety of geographical scales. The following quote is instructive in terms of NGO location:

> I see ourselves positioned directly in the middle. As a non-profit we sit firmly in the middle of two client bases, basically, in business terms. That's the best way to look at it. Our two clients are the donors and the communities, and we sit squarely in the middle, and it's up to us to try and speak language on the one side and speak language on the other side and get the two to merge on a common goal (J. Currie, *Africa Foundation*, 25 May 07).

Having the ability to reach communities in this way extends the reach of the state, a donor or a corporation. NGOs become a governing partner that can provide government and corporate access to poor or rural communities. Overall, it is notable how NGOs are in fact reproducing donor understanding of their nature and roles themselves, despite their awareness of critiques against these perceived advantages.

5. 3. State-NGO relations: walking the tightrope

Beyond the binary of adversary and service deliverer

State-NGO relations are diverse, encompassing adversarial as well as collaborative relationships (see for instance Ranchod 2007). Whilst some NGOs repositioned themselves into partnership roles with the Government in welfare and service provision, other progressive NGOs cast themselves as a watchdog of Government or in an activist role. The functions that case organisations saw as fulfilling were:

- activism
- assisting Government
- assisting social movements
- being critical/ being a watchdog
- establishing best practices
- capacity building
- representing communities
- improving efficiency of development
- fighting for social justice

- forming networks
- fostering political dialogue
- innovating
- lobbying and advocacy
- research
- empowerment
- service delivery

Accordingly, NGOs had very different assumptions about the appropriate roles they should play in the new democracy and how they ought to relate to the state and its agencies, with each of these roles corresponding to particular conceptions of civil society.

The binary of adversarial/ aligned that some (and particularly the liberal) NGOs were eager to employ, betrays the complexity of NGO-state relations: all of the NGOs in my research, no matter how critical they are of Government, tender for Government contracts from time to time or are involved in Government-led consortia in their expert area. The key question for NGOs seemed to be in how far 'working for Government' was understood as 'working with Government'. Imraan for instance strongly opposed the idea that his NGO was somehow in partnership with the Government – 'we wouldn't enter partnerships with government around doing work, we wouldn't produce a report with the Government' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07) – but the organisation has developed national policy documents for the Department of Provincial and Local Government.

Further disturbing the adversarial/ engaged binary is what might be referred to as biographical alignment. The Post-Apartheid NGO sector is characterised by its interlinking with state and corporate structures, by absorption of NGO expertise into the state bureaucracy and by linkages with the ANC (through membership, trade union movements, social networks or business relationships). Networks of former 'struggle comrades' are for instance evident in the composition of many NGOs' governing boards. It is therefore perhaps more apt to speak of a fluid spectrum of relations which is also contingent on individuals, their short-term considerations and their class positioning. Moreover, personal networks work as disturbing factors to the regimes that are in place in partnerships, for example regarding monitoring and evaluation. Whilst it was commented that 'unless you know the people that you are

dealing with, you are not gonna get that funding' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07), it is also true that reporting was sometimes deferred or negotiated according to one's relationship with a grant manager or government official. This again underscores the point that technologies of rule are only ever projects: their implementation is not necessarily successful or may have unintended consequences.

In South Africa, the progression from activism to NGO employment and into the public sector is quite a typical career path. Alternatively, career activism may entail a journey from community via CBO and NGO to an international NGO. A glance, on any given Friday, into the weekly newspaper *Mail & Guardian* shows that nearly the entire appointments section is taken up by charities, international NGOs and development agencies, inviting applications for posts in South Africa and all over the African continent. Activism clearly provides a domain of expertise in civil society that can be institutionalised. I pick up the point about 'career activism' again in chapter 7, when I consider the relationship of formal NGOs to social movements.

The formalisation of civil society that I have outlined in the previous chapter has been accompanied by the massive outsourcing of service delivery and development to NGOs. These interlinkages have influenced government's perception of the role of NGOs in Post-Apartheid, as Rama notes here:

> I think it is an expectation of Government that NGOs need to be the service provider arm somehow. So they have an HIV/Aids programme and they got R10,000; here is it, you are gonna do these workshops. And that is not understanding the role of NGOs, that is using them as an extension of the state. And I think my argument is that that is not what we want to be seen as. We want to still retain very strongly our watchdog role, we want to stay outside of government (R. Naidu, DDP, 25 Jun 07).

His statement points to the centrality of the watchdog role in the self-perception of the NGO sector. It also speaks to the tensions characterising state-NGO relations in a post-repressive society where the liberation movement has taken power. What is missing from his account however is the attempt by some sections of Government to include and neutralise civil society actors by involving them in key tasks such as service delivery. This is at the heart of my understanding of partnerships: they also represent attempts by the state to enlist civil society into its agendas.

Claims of independence: NGOs as watchdog

NGOs that saw themselves as having an adversarial relationships to the state employed language such as 'conflict', 'challenge' and 'antagonism' (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 20 Mar 07); they spoke of 'forces in society' and their 'resistance' to an ANC 'who themselves have been transformed into middle-class election machines' (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07). This terminology can be linked to an understanding of civil society as providing spaces for dissent and struggle. Such a Gramscian understanding, as frequently evoked by activists, implies that civil society is an arena for contestation in which counter-hegemonic struggles can develop. NGOs have a watchdog role regarding the state, which situates them as strongly independent and intent on strengthening civil society. Rama for instance bemoans: 'we have lapsed in our role of being watchdogs [...] Government has had a fairly free reign in most things. And they haven't had the kind of vociferous opposition we're expecting from civil society' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07).

Progressive organisations such as the *Freedom of Expression Institute* see themselves as aligned to social movements, trade union or labour movements. But unlike many of these movements, an 'adversarial' NGO like the *FXI* uses a variety of modes of interaction such as organisation and mobilising (both through media and through protest) and the court system. Whilst seeing their role as 'fighting the state', they engage in existing spaces (such as the legal system), operating at once within and against state structures. Other progressive NGOs occasionally do small, commissioned work for the Government but made it clear that they can never be involved in substantive collaborative work that might, as William put it, cause 'people to start seeing us as being some kind of Government stooge' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07). Tracy Bailey, the National Coordinator for the *Wolpe Trust* which organises public debates that bring together various stakeholders, reiterated this difference between collaborative work and engagement:

> Because I do not think it would be desirable to partner with Government in a financial sense because that gives them kind of like editorial control. But certainly to engage them is something that the Trust is constantly wanting to do (T. Bailey, 25 Apr 07).

Conversely, some understood income generated in this way as having less conditionalities than donor money: 'the good thing about that kind of money is that it's contract work and then you can spend it the way you like, really' (W. Bird, *MMP*,

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13 Jun 07). This presumes that discreet project work had no impact on organisations' alignment and activities:

> If we had the opportunity to influence the work of government for a fee, I would be more inclined to do that. As I would be inclined to do some Agenda stuff with Anglo-American for a fee. But the fees are completely ours, and based on that we are able to do with it as we please. As opposed to it being a purely donor relationship where there is always a bigger, you know, the donor is the bigger guy in that relationship. There's all kinds of power stuff attached to it (M. Oyedan 27 Jun 07).

Independence and criticality are central to the identity of monitoring or research NGOs like the ones William, Michelle and Tracy work for; those features are their raison d'être. However, not a single one of the NGOs that I came across pictured itself as anything other than completely independent. Critiques of NGO legitimacy, accountability and representativeness have been advanced by communities, activists and scholars for a long time. NGOs themselves are acutely aware of these critiques, which is perhaps why independence is such an important claim that constantly needed to be reasserted in the interviews:

> Given all of the challenges and given the things that are coming up that you have to fight against - you need to keep an eye on what these people [Government] are doing. And where an NGO is useful is that it's an organised form of civil society that allows you to be sort of critical of whatever these things are; and you have some level of independence (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07).

This assessment ties in with a perspective of civil society as a watchdog as we have encountered above; yet even NGOs that primarily define their role as assisting Government cite as a secondary objective to 'provide a critical civil society voice' (S. Issacs, *Mindset*, 02 Apr 07). Because there are tensions between a service delivery and a monitoring or watchdog role – such as forgoing one's responsibilities towards the constituencies one supposedly serves in order to meet contractual requirements with Government, as the *Mindset* example below will show – the definition of independence has to be widened if it is too be maintained as central identity claim. Where independence from the Government cannot convincingly be professed, some of the more corporate NGOs claimed financial autonomy by highlighting the variety of funding sources they have. It is via independence that an NGO's continued relevance can be justified and that legitimacy and authenticity can

be ascertained. However, interviewees' accounts and observation research also showed that the increasingly complex intersectoral funding arrangements that characterise partnerships furnished several of the NGOs in this research with greater autonomy, for instance in relation to how they focused their research activities. Moreover, strategic alliances with partners sometimes provided opportunities to do more explicitly political work in a different area, or to be able to achieve particular objectives. In other words, although the partnership mode was experiences as imposed and constrictive by some, it still allowed strategic alliances and certain gains.

'Working with the system to change practices'

Notably, it is often those NGOs that are closest aligned with government priorities and objectives – those that see themselves as working in partnership with Government – that have no direct financial relationships with it (for instance *Siyazisika* or *Operation Hunger*). One characteristic of the donor-funded multisectoral partnership model is that Government endorses an NGO project which can then access donor funds more easily. *Connect Africa* for instance received a DBSA grant to provide the 'capacity for local government [to] get their services out into deep rural areas rather than people having to come to town to get the services' (D. Jerling, 16 Mar 07). In these complex arrangements, non-financial partnerships with the Government provide leverage to increase funding from other income streams, for other kinds of work.

For *Mindset*, 'working with the system is quite crucial. Because we wanna change practices etc. but we wanna do it within the system' (V. Naidoo, 9 May 07). This entails a complimentary role to Government that is ensured by aligning itself with the national curriculum and health priorities. Shafika explains:

> We tend more to be supportive and complimentary to Government, based on the recognition that the public sector in and of itself can no longer fulfil public good needs, which is why we are firmly in the public goods sector such as health and education. But again those terrains are also shifting, so education is no longer just a public good, nor is health no longer just a public good, giving the commercialisation of both sectors (S. Isaacs, *Mindset*, 02 Apr 07).

What is assumed here is that the state is unable to fulfil its obligations, and that health and education are no longer matters of the state. Both arguments repeat standard liberal assertions about the need for private sector intervention in these areas and the inability of the state to provide services for its citizens – despite Shafika insisting her NGO is not in the business of competing with government for resources. These issues tie into broader debates about the role of NGOs and of the state in relation to service delivery. If non-profit organisations deliver services for government, does this not encourage inefficiency and skills shortages on the part of government? The international development industry has in some case built what amounts to shadow health or education systems thus contributing to the under-resourcing of the national budget in neighbouring Southern African countries. Although South Africa does present a different case in terms of state capacity, a large proportion of services have been outsourced to private entities. As the state withdraws from service provision, the spaces get filled by NGOs, This is part of a transformation of the state that ensures that money does not get spend on direct services to people. Seemingly paradoxically, the research indicates that NGOs that positioned themselves as adversarial to the state believe in the importance of its role more that those that align themselves with it.

In practice, for some of the more delivery-oriented NGOs, alignment with the Government was often marred by what informants saw as the immature attitude and distrust of government vis-à-vis civil society. In the example of *Africa Foundation*, Government representatives took all the credit for work that the NGO had done. Most important however were challenges related to the state bureaucracy, which was seen as too technical and unrealistic in its expectations: 'There are lots of wonderful people in the Government that I have met personally who share our frustrations. But you succumb to the system, you know, your hands are tied' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). Others define their relationship to the state in terms of alignment to the Government's priorities, but have not been able to get Government funding, as is the case with *Siyasizika*: 'I know I am getting nowhere. And it's inexcusable. The government goes on about poverty and so on. [...] Possibly I am the wrong colour and we work in the wrong area' (J. Zimmermann, 4 Jun 07).

The critical ally

Somewhere between the positions exemplarily discussed above lie the majority of organisations I came in contact with. Carrying out activities such as advocacy and lobbying, monitoring, capacity building, organisational development and research, organisations enter partnerships with the Government on specific issues but also characterise their role as critically engaging the state through the official political system and fulfilling a watchdog role. Influencing Government was considered by many as one of their primary aims. Such intermediary organisations – covering the middle ground between pure service delivery NGOs and the less-formalised parts of South African civil society – are also most likely to be sponsored by international funders.

Ahmed outlines his NGO's more traditional donor-based funding model, again evoking independence to claim legitimacy and authenticity:

> We are very mindful of the fact that we are an independent non-governmental organisation, and we are non-partisan [...] And that to us is essential. Therefore the larger proportion of our funding comes from donors. Either from foundations or from foreign government funding and in that way we maintain our independence from the South African government at least (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

The emphasis on 'at least' being independent of the Government draws attention to their dependence on international development funding, which resonates with a whole host of issues connected to aid conditionalities and the power of donors that were discussed in chapter 4. *CSVR* regularly receives income from Government and partnerships are formed on an ad-hoc basis, but there is a sense of discomfort at those facts in Ahmed's account. The defensiveness about such collaborative work is articulated by insisting that 'we didn't tender for it, they came to us' and that this 'indicates that the Minister of Safety and Security sees the need for this engagement with civil society (ibid.).

In this seemingly uncomfortable space NGO's 'schizophrenic capacity to work in different ways with different people during the same time' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Mar 07) is most apparent. John explained the situation the CEPD finds itself in:

> Because we continue to do independent research with money raised from donors, and this often put us in a situation where we were critical of

Government. Often you find yourself critical of government, so on the one hand Government is a client and sometimes they get sensitive about criticism. So one has to walk a tightrope, and I think we have been doing this for a long time and we still standing on the rope, maybe we are still sitting on the fence (J. Pampallis, 23 Feb 07).

This account articulates a common dilemma, but is actually quite rare in its realistic assessment of the challenges that relationships with the public sector pose for an NGO. Far more prevalent was a rhetoric that portrayed other organisations as affected by such processes, but citing their own maturity for why this does not affect them:

Civil society organisations need to have a level of maturity that allows them to engage in government tender or receive government money and work for government without necessarily being co-opted by government. And I think some of them find it very difficult to maintain that sort of independent and critical relationship whilst at the same time taking money from the government (A. Motala, CSVR, 14 Mar 07)

It is usually other organisations that need 'worrying about' (K. Greenop, Mindset, 1 Feb 08), whereas a mature NGO possesses the stability or organisational agility to negotiate this tension. The way some of these - usually very successful - NGOs dealt with this was through constructions such as 'critical partner' (S. Isaacs, Mindset, 2 Apr 07) or 'critical ally' (R. Calland, IDASA, 23 Apr 07).

According to the latter, one can retain the position of a critical ally through relevance, positioning and relationships:

It works on different levels; it's partly about tone, so it's about being empathetic as well as critical, understanding the problems and not just blaming people. So it's tone and style. Secondly it's about relationships, preserving good relationships so you can work with Government [...]. It is quite hard to have two NGOs under one roof but that's what we try to do. We try to retain our ability to be a training/ capacity building NGO and on the other hand a sort of advocacy/ policy research organisation on the other. The last point is how you direct your research. You can try and steer your research agenda towards an agenda that is aligned to some extent with what the Government want. Not because you are doing what the Government told you to do but because it is useful to Government. Now I call that sophisticated lobbying, because if you are doing the research for Government then it puts you in a strong position to influence how Government thinks on important subjects. So it's not being docile or compliant, but it's also about having the strategic relationship (R. Calland, IDASA, 23 Apr 07).

When I prompted the interviewee about how critical alignment worked in practice, Richard again referred to 'tone and style'; Ahmed told me that, at CSRV, they have 'a lot of internal debates around how we manage the relationship with Government' (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

From authenticity to legitimacy

Interview data does not provide conclusive insights about the extent of such aforementioned internal debates. During observation research at *Mindset* however, I did not find evidence that the NGO was engaged in an organisation-wide reflection about maintaining its criticality and independence despite working with government. In interviews, other NGO professionals tended to reject the idea that there might be a dilemma between work for the Government and organisational autonomy in the first place. Imraan evoked a postmodern scenario in which theirs is a 'fluid, complex, plural, ever-changing, ever reengineered relationship with the state' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07). From this perspective, concerns about the effects of these relationships on an NGO's activities and identity can be marginalised as 'ideological' or 'unsophisticated':

> I have a number of friends in social movements who tell me (...) you cannot engage in those spaces because they're engineered for social control. But I think that links to a broad debate of the world. I think debates have become a lot more sophisticated than capitalism versus socialism. They've become more nuanced, they've become more about how do we ethically manage this monster of globalisation (ibid.).

The language of management that Imraan uses here in relation to what are social or ethical issues certainly resonates with the argument I have sought to make about partnerships seeking to make development more efficient as opposed to, say, more democratic.

Moreover, as with the 'sophisticated lobbying' that one of the NGOs sees itself involved in, sophistication (or unsophistication) is evoked. The use of terminology such as 'sophisticated' or 'nuanced' achieves a distancing from organisations who do not seek engagement or collaboration. As I argued in the previous chapter, NGOs frequently portrayed an earlier activist NGO model as archaic and dying out. Given this rhetoric distancing of '(post)modern' organisations

from the 'dinosaur NGOs', there was a defensiveness that characterised informants' responses to questions such as: how do partnerships with the government impact on your organisational identity? Above, I already cited two extracts that conveyed a sense of unease; a similar sense is discernable in the following extract:

> I mean you can't not take any money from the government. It's like taking money from a cigarette company. I do not have a problem taking money from a cigarette company, I am not gonna go and buy cigarettes. They want me to put their profits to good use, I will do that (F. Gibbs, *Operation Hunger*, 4 Jul 07).

I often felt that informants worked hard to convince me of how authentically non-governmental their organisations were. Many seemed uncomfortable with the relationships their organisation had struck with Government or with the corporate sector. Charges of co-option always loom large and NGOs are extremely aware of this. Consequently, they often referred to their own past as activists, conceivably to 'justify' organisational practices: 'Some of my closest buddies are from hardcore social movement backgrounds. And they continue to be' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07). Shafika, on a number of occasions during our interview, referred to her trade unionist background, seemingly in order to vouch for the NGO's integrity:

> We have to be clear of what it is that we stand for and when we do make compromises we are clear that those are the compromises that we're making. And I think that that is, it certainly helps someone like me who comes from the purest background, in particular (S. Isaacs, *Mindset*, 2 Apr 07).

Parallel to how organisational independence needed to be continuously asserted, biographical authenticity is evoked by individuals in NGOs which is measured in terms of a purity of struggle. This is more often than not achieved by reference to struggle credentials. If one comes from the 'purest background', the NGO one works for must be true to a (never quite defined) NGO ethos. It is worth mentioning that staff of the NGOs that had been established most recently, such as *Teboho* or *Connect Africa*, did not draw on a notion of authenticity in the same way, and did not seem uneasy or uncomfortable about their organisation's partnerships (also see the timeline in appendix 4). There are certainly political gains to an evocation of authenticity in this way, especially given the Post-Apartheid context. Firstly, no former struggle activist wants to be seen as having 'sold out' or having been co-opted. This is a noteworthy point, given that the progression from activist to

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NGO worker and possibly to government official remains incredibly common in South Africa and elsewhere.

Secondly, there still exists in contemporary South Africa a normative left discourse which is strategically mobilised from time to time by a range of actors (including Government) even where their politics may tell a different story. Patrick Bond (2004b) has coined the phrase 'Talk Left Walk Right' to describe this characteristic of the Mbeki presidencies, but I think it can feasibly be applied to parts of the NGO sector, too. The fact that many of my informants were well versed in social theory, Marxist economics and (counter-)development discourses means that a critique of their NGOs' activities and structural position is always already included in their narratives.

5.4. Case Study Example: the 'neutral' NGO and 'minor gaps'

> We have always aligned ourselves with whatever the policy framework of the government is in terms of HIV/Aids. Then the Minister of Health goes to the Toronto conference and insists that instead of seeing just the ARVs at the stall she wants to see the beetroot[55] and we are at the same conference. So where do we stand, do we go on the side of Government and say, yes, nutrition is important, or do we go on the side of the TAC and the rest of the organisations and condemn what was happening? And that, I think, is a question which Mindset will have to grapple with for a long time. On the one hand, through our projects we are meant to be advocating for the change that is required, change in people's behaviour, change in people's attitude towards their sexuality and their relationships with their partners but for them also to know where to go to get the help they need. Now where do they go if their nearest clinic, through the actions of the minister, has been discredited, or there is no capacity? (T. Senne, 6 Feb 08)

Given that NGOs' work seeks to ameliorate the effects of government's partial failure in service delivery, should NGOs not hold Government accountable for this failure, as opposed to delivering services in its place? During my observation at *Mindset* for instance, where partnerships are at the absolute core of the NGO's organisational

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[55] 'The beetroot' refers to the ideas of controversial Mbeki-backed former Minister of Health Tshabalala-Msimang. Internationally, she came to epitomise South Africa's inadequate response to the HIV/Aids epidemic by prescribing eating a healthy diet, such as beetroot and garlic, over anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs as a protection against the virus.

model, I felt that it was easily discernible how the relationships, demands, accountabilities and strategies that the various partnerships required all interacted, sometimes counteracted each other and essentially compromised the integrity of the organisation. At the same time it was these overlapping responsibilities that gave individuals in the organisation considerable agency in circumventing technologies and processes employed by their partners. It also allowed 'piggy-backing' – where staff used information that had to be produced for their own purposes such as increased financial autonomy.

Regarding their relationship with Government, the Health Channel Manager Claire Stevens explained that theirs is 'a more subtle alignment':

> When we align ourselves we align ourselves with guidelines on a theoretical level so we never say in our videos there are not enough ARVs, we just say this is how ARVs work, so it is a very medical/theoretical side. We don't get into the politics of it [...] we just stick to the facts, the medical facts, the social facts (C. Stevens, 6 Feb 08).

Mindset's self-declared mission is to provide information that is as 'high-quality, up-to-date and accurate' (K. Greenop, 1 Feb 08) as possible. The allusion to factual medical information indicates a self-portrayal by the NGO as value-free, technical and specialised. Medical information is assumed to be neutral, as is the way in which such information is packaged and delivered (in this case mainly through ICTs). To bring forward a positivist and biomedical discourse by reference to medical facts then makes this information difficult to critique. Claire gives the impression of the NGO as an apolitical and objective provider of scientific facts, therefore somehow being exempt from questions of how to position oneself in relation to the state. However, in my time spent with the organisation, it became clear that in some cases the information disseminated was not accurate or up-to-date. This is because health and education content is intentionally left incomplete, as the NGO wanted to comply with the South African Government's framework. Claire explains:

> The other area that we get restrictions from is the fact that we partner with the Department of Health. So there we sometimes find a bit of incongruence when you follow recognised guidelines by the WHO which the whole world is following, but our Department of Health haven't yet adopted those guidelines. It becomes a restriction in terms of content. I can give you a specific example. With the [Prevention of mother-to-child transmission], the WHO

recommends Nevarapine, single dose, blablabla, it's not in our guidelines. So when we were creating content on PMCTC we couldn't talk about Nevarapine, so there is a gap in our content.[56]

Natascha: 'So you just don't talk about it?'

Claire: 'We just haven't made that content' (C. Stevens, 6 Feb 08).

This not only makes *Mindset*'s content inconsistent with the internationally recognised recommendations as advocated by the WHO, it also means that there is no information in *Mindset's* materials on the preventability of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in a country where well above a quarter of pregnant women are HIV-positive[57]. This is certainly not a technicality or a matter of 'minor gaps', as Claire put it: a recent study found that the premature deaths of 365,000 people earlier this decade could have been prevented if the Government had provided ARVs to Aids patients and administered prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) drugs (Dugger 2008). Another example of gaps in *Mindset*'s content is that they cannot show footage of anyone wearing the well-known red TAC T-shirts that read 'HIV-positive'.[58] Such disparities prompt the question of what else gets left out in the NGO's educational material. Other partnerships may call for other issues to be downplayed or excluded altogether. On the basis of this example, *Mindset*'s self-positioning as neutral and purely technical has to be rejected - this is certainly not a 'subtle alignment'. But by offering what are billed as technical fixes or simple medical facts, they can maintain close relationships with a number of different partners. The example of Mindset captures well how a supposedly de-politicised and neutral NGO offering technical solutions is ideally suited to a partnership model.

I also observed that each of the people I worked with had their own creative ways of negotiating the dilemmas *Mindset*'s partnership model generated. Claire for instance was very aware of the different and often competing demands of partners. She was able to negotiate these because she was very clear about what each of these partners stood for and what their motivations were – although she could not

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[56] Nevirapine is an antiretroviral drug that reduces the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Antiretroviral drugs were only made available to all South Africans after the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) successfully sued the South African Government in 2002. The organisation now campaigns and mobilises for universal access to ARV treatment.
[57] 29.1% of pregnant women in South Africa tested positive for HIV in 2006 (SA Department of Health statistic, from the TAC website http://www.tac.org.za, last accessed 20 February 2009).
[58] This is because of the historical conflict between the TAC and Government over ARVs (see footnote above).

resolve the dilemmas that such competing demands posed for the integrity of *Mindset* content. Partnership demands and conditionalities by a corporation, the national Government and a critical civil society organisation vary greatly, each affecting the scope and content of the messages *Mindset* produces and broadcasts. Partnership requirements and constraints had a subtle but perpetual impact on how content was developed, and which focus areas were chosen. Yet, in the absence of an organisational policy on how the NGO ultimately aligns itself and where its accountabilities lie, the quality, consistency and relevance of its activities are threatened.

Mindset in many ways exemplifies my ideal-typical model of multisectoral relationships and illustrates how, in seeking partnerships with anyone working in the same field, the organisation tries to be all things to all people and may well spread itself too thinly in terms of its objectives. Partnering began to pose a problem whenever disparities between the partners became apparent, as was the case around service delivery or PMTCT. Moreover, with these issues being voiced by parts of civil society which are themselves subject to Government marginalisation and repression, the positioning of this NGO to the state determines its positioning to the more activist sections of civil society. Clearly, *Mindset*'s particular configuration and sustainability model cannot be generalised across the NGO sector, but I feel that it serves to bring into focus challenges and effects of partnerships that are relevant to other NGOs in this research. The constantly shifting alliances in partnerships have real implications for organisational values and accountabilities.

This overall tendency towards mainstreaming however does not imply that there is a single determinate outcome of the partnership mode in other organisations, or indeed that there are no other effects of this discourse within *Mindset*. The relative autonomy of NGOs is both increased and restricted in cross-sectoral partnerships: they involve commitments to more parties and intensified reporting demands, but also allow the development of strategic temporary relationships, such as with the private sector. The observation research thus serves to underline the difference between how participants position themselves in relation to partnerships or auditing and what work is actually undertaken – or neglected – in an organisation.

5.5. Partnerships with the private sector: one foot in the boardroom

> As a truly South African company, we believe in nation-building and the development of a strong economy. It is our responsibility to help improve the lives of the people from this country - a duty we embrace, as our Corporate Social Investment brings a double return. Investing time, skills and money in improving the quality of life for all South Africans is the right thing to do. Secondly, it means relief of poverty through an investment in the very community we form part of, an investment in South Africa's next generation of economically active people - our future client base.[59]

Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate sector funding accounts for about a quarter of all civil society assistance in South Africa. Currently, an estimated R4.1 billion is spent on CSI programmes (Seokoma 2009). In 2004, corporate sector funds were mainly directed to education and training (46%) and health and social development (24%) (Kuljian 2005a). Given the decrease in foreign donor money and the rising reporting requirements to access such donor monies, partnerships with the corporate sector are vital to the sustainability of many NGOs - and will likely become more so in the future. The way such relationships were understood was contingent on whether organisations were quite corporatised and configured to partnerships, or mostly donor-based. Some organisations welcomed corporate partnerships as more flexible and less bureaucratic than their relationships with donors or the state. Their benefit was also seen as enforcing corporate obligations towards communities. The majority, despite their pragmatism in seeking corporate funding, viewed them with scepticism. They saw them as based on corporate needs as opposed to 'real' community needs, driven by a need for high visibility of output rather than actual developmental impact. Besides, corporate budgets are often so small that many of the bigger NGOs found the requirements and conditionalities to outweigh the benefit to their organisation.

NGO-corporate partnerships are typically part of a corporation's social responsibility mandate. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), according to Blowfield and Frynas, is

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[59] From the Corporate Social Investment section of the Sanlam website, last accessed 27 October 2008. Sanlam is a South African financial services and insurance corporation and the 5th largest company in Africa (Forbes 2008).

an umbrella term for a variety of theories and practices all of which recognize the following: (a) that companies have a responsibility for their impact on society and the natural environment, sometimes beyond legal compliance and the liability of individuals; (b) that companies have a responsibility for the behaviour of others with whom they do business (e.g. within supply chains); and that (c) business needs to manage its relationship with wider society, whether for reasons of commercial viability, or to add value to society (2005: 503).

The latter point underlines that CSI is 'good for business' – development goals and profitability are linked because CSI improves the welfare of citizens, increases social capital and deflects criticisms of unsustainable practices.

There has been a huge growth of ethical concern and the language of ethics on the part of businesses worldwide in the last decade (see for example Barry 2004). Nonetheless, due to Apartheid's ongoing social and economic legacy and the adoption of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), the private sector was forced to adopt socially responsible policies and practices that are more advanced than those in many of the richer economies; the country is ranked 6th worldwide in the area of CSI (Pennington 2007). The 2002 King II report urged companies to embrace the 'triple bottom line' – 'the economic, environmental and social aspects of a company's activities' in addition to the financial bottom line alone – as a preferred way of doing business (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa 2002: 9). This is particularly the case in relation to HIV/Aids where corporations such as Anglo American began education and prevention programmes to employees, and now fund voluntary testing and counselling as well as ARV therapy (Kuljian 2005a).

CSI, as the 'merger of profits and morals' (Charkiewicz 2005: 78), effectively marketises social responsibility. There is a connection between a (post-)neoliberal project and CSR, in that the latter 'responsibilises' companies to '[enact] and [perform] such a neo-liberal programme on themselves and others' (Thompson 2007: para. 19). The notion of the economically active people in the quote at the start of this section speaks to the concern of creating entrepreneurial citizen-subjects. Empowerment and agency are at the core of this liberal rationality, in that the practices and aspirations of the citizenry are meant to be constructed through governmental technologies. There is a parallel between the work of NGOs that seeks

to build more economically prudent subjects, the responsibilisation of NGOs through M&E, the responsibilisation of companies through CSI and the responsibilisation of states through the good governance paradigm. Partnerships between these different actors are thus arrangements through which accountability is produced and managerial norms and neoliberal values are circulated.

For companies, there are clear advantages to channelling their social investment through well-established NGOs, as I discuss below. Accordingly, CSI assumes specific ideal roles for NGOs that are predicated on NGOs' function as service providers. As South African businesses begin to engage, however superficially, in development issues, there is a growing interest in NGOs as partners and the use of a language of partnership. On one occasion, an investment banker with Citigroup in South Africa, upon hearing what had brought me to Johannesburg, swiftly handed me his business card, exclaiming that of course Citigroup must establish relationships with NGOs and can I please contact him. Yet, this corporate interest in NGOs is not only an expression of the rise of ethical corporatism but also overlaps with the nation-building project of the new South Africa and the harmonisation of development objectives.

NGO-company relations

As with partnerships with Government, NGOs often distanced themselves from their collaborations with private sector actors when they were actually central to their sustainability strategy. Most interviewees addressed the gulf between corporates and the non-profit sector in terms of basic principles and values, pointing out that they were separated by 'completely different language' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07):

> So the board has said we should be getting more corporate funding and we should be looking at the CSI handbook and identify people. I think for me it's a values issue. It's a values issue, so much so that we're dissenting because I am not prepared as the organisation's director to go off to British Tobacco and say can you give me a full year's salary for my editor and five desks? (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07).

Whilst NGO-company alliances may have been viewed as impractical or unethical, they were nevertheless not seen as a danger to the NGOs' autonomy; unlike in their

relationships with donors or government, NGOs did not think themselves the weaker partner.

NGOs usually referred to CSR programmes as Corporate Social Investment, reflecting the common usage in the country; Fig argues that this is because corporate citizenship or CSI are concepts 'that ask no questions about legacy, memory, history, justice or moral and ethical responsibilities' (Fig 2005: 601). In the following, Dom Marshall-Smith describes the aims of Corporate Social Investment in a blue-chip NGO such as his own:

> It's a condition of funding, if we are working with CBOs whose families have members that work in [South African Breweries] or depots, suppliers, or glass manufacturers, top makers, if those communities represent SAB in any way, they want to be in those communities fixing their HIV issues, caring for the orphans of that community. To drive reputation, yes, but to drive employee loyalty, to drive staff retention, a healthy work force (D. Marshall-Smith, *Starfish*, 23 Mar 07).

This extract raises three key issues. Firstly, CSI is a way for corporates to fulfil their CSR obligations, as agreed to in King II (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa 2002). Secondly it provides a possible avenue for increasing the reputation of a company. Many people I interviewed focused on this aspect of CSI, treating it as a mere cynical marketing drive. William Bird:

> What a lot of South African companies call Corporate Social Investment isn't Corporate Social Investment, that's bull-shit. It's offensive to call it that because what it is in most of those companies' cases is feel good marketing, which is we're giving this much money away to an Aids orphanage. Aren't we just fantastic! It's got nothing to do with it, in fact. And all of it is driven by what kind of extra good branding they can get in and media-buy in. So if you can't deliver on that level then they are not interested. Unless if it's an overtly feel good kind of thing, then they would say sorry (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07).

This assessment gives clues as to the type of organisation and the kind of activities that can be suitable for corporate partnerships. Such partnerships overwhelmingly contain projects that have a high visibility and short-term gains, thereby automatically disadvantaging NGOs whose work is longer-term or not immediately tangible. Corporates want to 'go in' and 'fix' things, as was expressed in one of the above extracts. I was told by a number of informants that large South African companies want to be able to put up signs with their name and logo in front of a clinic they have

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helped building, whereas it is much harder to point to a single tangible result when it comes to human rights or monitoring work.

Corporate funding often seeks prestige projects that can be marketed. Because of their involvement in policy-oriented activities, many NGOs in my research found it quite hard to secure stand-alone partnerships with corporates outside of multisectoral partnerships. Imraan from the *CPP* voiced some of these difficulties:

> Corporates think that CSR is somehow about doing some relief work. It's about contributing to a soup kitchen. That seems to be their simplistic understanding of it. And when an organisation like CPP in the democracy and government sector has to say to a corporate: "but we want to create spaces for communities to engage in policy processes", they do not see value in that. That's an abstract policy (I. Buccus, 26 Jun 07).

Many of the interviewees found the private sector's philanthropy to be one-dimensional and clumsy, not least for not being able to see the link between NGO work, a stable democracy and long-term business sustainability.

The third and related point is that CSI is often concerned with a specific population's health and welfare, for instance by improving nutrition or health provision in a community from which they draw their workers. There is little incentive for a corporate to try to build a citizenry that engages in policy spaces whereas, for instance in the case of HIV, biopolitical issues of individual sexual and reproductive behaviour interconnect with the concerns of capital ensuring a healthy work force is critical to the health of the corporation. It follows that corporations favour projects in the area of health, HIV, welfare and community care. As Christa Kuljian writes, '[Absa Foundation's] HIV/Aids programmes represent some of the most creative and forward-thinking elements of CSI, but they hardly amount to social justice grantmaking' (2005b: para. 6).

CSI, even outside the context of PPPs themselves, is one way of 'linking a company to one of the priorities of Government' (C. Podetti, *Valued Citizens Initiative*, 21 Jun 07). Socio-economic development is one of the seven pillars of BEE, enabling companies to collect points on their BEE scorecard for CSI. Often, multisectoral linkages that involve NGOs facilitate further capital gains for corporates: if an NGO already has a presence in communities which geographically fall into the Government's priority areas for development, the corporation can get

more points on their scorecard than working in an urban community. These links between CSI and BEE are one reason for why there is, amongst corporates, a preference for NGOs with good relationships with Government; personal relationships and the myriad connections between the political and the business world in South Africa are another. Therefore, endorsement by Government often secures access to corporate funding.

This argument also sheds light on why NGOs seeking corporate funding have a vested interest in maintaining an image of being close to communities and their needs. NGOs ought to play the role of an intermediary or interpreter that translates what happens 'on the ground' into a manageable solution for a corporation. This positioning as social capital middle man moreover involves the practice of translation. Dom for instance argued that this ability to translate is what *Starfish*'s value had historically consisted of:

> We can travel, we can take the language, we can make that cross-over into the board room easily and now we are putting our foot into the shanty town shack and the other foot in the boardroom and kind of creating a bridge in that way which I think is quite a subtle thing but it is what has added a lot of value to the Starfish brand. That you can talk the boardroom speak and then are learning more and more about meaningful development speak, too (D. Marshall-Smith, *Starfish*, 23 Mar 07).

NGOs then enable the linking up of communities with government or corporations. As Dom puts it, their function is to create a bridge, ostensibly where there was none before.

The type of NGO best suited to corporate partnerships is then an organisation that has existing linkages to government and to communities, is non-political and government-aligned, as Ahmed explains here:

> I think some of the corporate sector maybe concerned about seeing an NGO like CSVR as critical of the Government and therefore does not want to be seen to be supporting a critic of the government (A. Motala, 14 Mar 07).

The fact that the Government has promoted public-private partnerships - and that companies' participation in development partnerships gains favour with Government and gives exposure - makes it unlikely that companies will either openly criticise government policy or fund organisations that are critical of government.

In addition to not being critical of Government, an NGO entering corporate partnerships cannot be critical of corporate malpractice in South Africa. Reliance on corporate partnerships raises concerns about NGOs becoming a vehicle for a corporation's specific objectives, therefore coming to represent private company interests. These NGO-company alignments then leave it to social movements to challenge the effects of the privatisation of basic services such as water or electricity.[60] The failure of NGOs to take a stand against privatisation is particularly grave given the reinforcement of socio-economic inequalities after 1996, when the ANC adopted a neoliberal macroeconomic programme. The conflicts between communities and the state that have emerged in the 2000s' over the adoption of a cost-recovery model for the provision of basic social services represent a failed opportunity for NGOs to support the constituencies many of them claim to represent. The fact that many NGOs do not officially align themselves with the grievances of the majority of the population has further contributed to setting a de-politicised and neutral organisation as a standard for the whole sector.

Corporate sector organisations want to work with NGOs that are established, that they have perhaps worked with before and that are financially accountable. A track record is needed not simply in terms of previous work but also in terms of the ability to monitor previous work in a way suitable to the corporate requirements. As Dion from *Connect Africa* puts it:

> They are not interested. Not in start-ups. They all want tick boxes, they all want somebody who is established, someone they have worked with before. And the other thing about CSI, it takes you ages to get involved, you have to get into their budgets at the right time 'cos then they are allocated, and it is an annual cycle, but if you miss it you're out of it (D. Jerling, 16 Mar 07).

It should be noted that monitoring and 'ticking boxes' here does not refer to the stringent M&E requirements from donors that I will describe in chapter 6. Rather, businesses usually seek high visibility projects, reporting thus being a question, for example, of producing photographs 'with Mandela outside the school they just paid for somewhere in the Eastern Cape' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07) for their annual report. It is a question of what type of organisation can deliver, in Will's words, 'feel good marketing' and 'media buy in' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07). Whilst reporting to a

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[60] Exceptions are the more radical NGOs such as the *FXI* who have in fact been engaged in litigation against South African corporations.

corporate funder is usually more flexible and negotiable than to agencies, corporate partners tend to aim for glossy annual reports that sum up an NGO's developmental contribution in a few sentences and in terms of predefined entities such as numbers of hospitals or schools built.

Starfish provides an example of an NGO whose organisational model is based on corporate partnerships:

> One of the value-adds that we give a corporate is that, prior to that reporting period, if we hear a story on the ground, we'll take a photo, we'll record it, put it on a CD or put it in an email and swing it into the corporate and do with it what you like, newsletter, up to you, but we kind of know what your platforms are, we'll give you some content, because those guys they always look for content, it's the value that Starfish brings to the funder-grantmaker relationship (D. Marshall-Smith, 23 Mar 07).

For an NGO like Starfish that is able to 'deliver' on these corporates requirements, project orientation and targets have been impacted on. In the following example, a corporate partnership was set up on the basis of a visit to a specific project site. The partner then insisted on funding only this project, disregarding the targets and priorities that Starfish itself had determined:

> We have a huge push by Virgin to do project visits and particularly the one project close to Gauteng that is accessible to them from a logistical point of view, that they like and know [...] And we are going 'hang on, these guys are just coming into our training programme, we don't want to rock their boats over this time at all, so no, you can't do a visit'. And they are going, fuck you basically, we are doing visits because we have paid for this thing. [...] That's where the partnerships are starting to become complicated [...]. Our partners are chucking funding into very specific restricted areas that are overfunding, certain areas that are supporting 300 children, and we are saying we need to support 700 children in that area so don't restrict the funding to that particular project, bring other projects on board (ibid.).

The practicalities of project visits point to an important unevenness of corporate funding: its urban focus. In 2003, two-thirds of CSI spending was directed towards urban and semi-urban areas despite the high levels of rural poverty (Kuljian 2005b). Moreover, communities that are not connected to corporate South Africa as employees or customers – arguably the most marginalised - are usually not targeted by CSI.

As Dom's account strongly suggests, whilst NGOs themselves may not see corporate partnerships as a threat to their autonomy, they in fact impact strongly on

NGOs' activities and their identity. With there being less donor money available and partnerships becoming the norm, it is likely they will have to depend on partnerships, and change their activities in line with the requirements of corporations who demand high visibility and marketability. But the example of *Starfish* also raises issues concerning the measurability of developmental impact, how it is framed by different development actors and how these actors struggle over definitions of development. Impact measurement is a site where the inherent contradictions of the partnership model become visible. The following chapter will expand on this point.

5.6. Conclusions

This and the previous chapter were concerned with what type of NGO the partnership modality produces in South Africa. This concern is linked to the question of what roles are 'allowed' and appropriate for NGOs in Post-Apartheid democracy. Partnerships seek to produce appropriate, modern NGOs that can be included into government or corporate agendas as partners through responsible self-governance. But they also operate to make corporations and public authorities responsible.

As I have argued, alignment with governmental priorities may well make NGOs structurally unable to challenge particular aspects of Government policy such as its approach to service delivery, given that they assist with implementation. Likewise, partnering with corporates means they are structurally not in a position to conduct a critique of privatisation. To form these relationships means that a more corporate approach to development is adapted, as was evident in the language of management and efficiency that was largely employed by NGOs and in the organisational structures and funding modalities they adapted. Ideologies of development thus tend to be reproduced even as NGOs are often in disagreement with development institutions. NGOs often police themselves to try and be good partners, therefore beginning to organisationally resemble other sectors. I contend that these similarities do not just indicate the lack of an alternative vocabulary of development, but also of an alternative vision. Because NGOs tend to have to work within a particular discursive formation that entails a level of coherence, there is a tendency of producing similar outcomes. In other words, the flexibility that characterises the new NGO also implies that it is less likely to have an independent

vision of development or of the shape of democracy. Importantly, this tendency to homogenisation is then transferred to the rest of civil society, as I will argue in subsequent chapters.

The more the NGO sector becomes similar to other sectors – both in terms of how it organises and how it speaks about what it does – the more important the manner in which it rhetorically situates itself becomes. NGOs purposefully use claims about their identity to gain power and activate agency. These may be conflicting or essentialised ideas such as being close to the poor and being able to speak the language of corporations. One of the key claims by NGOs that have emerged from my analysis in this chapter is that of authenticity. Authenticity was constantly evoked, both by reference to organisational independence and through personal pedigree and struggle credentials. In this way NGOs can emphasise their legitimate role in development. This becomes necessary due to the paradox that NGOs should arguably be supporting the struggles of those marginalised by government and corporate practices in areas such as service provision and yet, in order to remain sustainable, are aligning themselves with these very actors hence endorsing policies that are anti-poor.

It is this very legitimacy that it is bestowed upon donors, corporations or the government by their partnering with NGOs. Conversely, NGOs in turn often seek legitimacy from their more grassroots counterparts in civil society, such as CBOs or social movements. Of course the NGO sector itself is not homogenous and has a number of roles it can fulfil in South Africa. So it is indeed appropriate for an NGO not to focus on 'toyi-toyi-ing with all your friends to your local community centre' (C. Stevens, *Mindset*, 6 Feb 08). Yet I believe there is, at least in South Africa at this present point in time, no middle-ground position that allows NGOs to partner with everyone without this affecting their minimum commitment of supposedly uplifting and empower the poor.

Chapter 6
NGOs and Impact Measurement

Message to Africa: if you don't count, you don't count.
(Lehohla 2007)

You must then be able to account for each person; you must have a report back against each person and so it's a kind of language of efficiency. But it's efficiency not in terms of human development; it's efficiency in terms of financial management.
(Lenny Gentle, ILRIG, 24 Apr 07)

6.1. Introduction

It is the weekly meeting of the health channel. There are 14 of us in the big conference room at *Mindset* and we are discussing sample sizes, base line data and mixed methodologies. Claire has prepared tables of indicators which are projected on the wall as the channel manager is giving a run-down of the new M&E guidelines required by one of the NGO's major funders. Funding mechanisms have just changed, and alongside so has impact assessment. Most people's eyes are glazing over as soon as Tuki starts talking of heteroscedasticity. I'm struggling to keep up, although I have had research training in the first year of my Ph.D. and have since worked in applied research. Members of the research team sit in on these meetings and occasionally speak up to clarify variables. Kirston, Danielle and Monika of the Research Team have backgrounds in psychology or economics, with high-level analytical and numerical skills. But, judging by their facial expressions, most of the other staff members find this both incomprehensible and annoying. Still, as Kirston tells me later, 'sometimes people with money prefer numbers and graphs'. Later in the kitchen, John, the head of the schooling channel, complains that funders just do not understand that education is a process. He used to be a teacher.

NGOs in South Africa and elsewhere are challenged more than ever before to demonstrate relevance and results. This is due to a development environment of

increasingly scarce resources. Impact measurement is becoming an ever-bigger priority for donors, some of which now stipulate that a certain percentage of the budget is spent on M&E. In the case of USAID grants to South African NGOs for example, M&E is to make up 9% of total project expenditure. Other donors supporting South African NGOs may not specify a percentage to be spent on M&E but have in place particular systems for reporting which demand considerable NGO resources, such as the provision of extensive narrative reports, budgets and financial audits. At the opposite end of the funding cycle, grant applications are likewise regarded by many staff as increasingly lengthy, elaborate and resource-intensive.

It is not only funding scarcity that has precipitated these changes however. Transformations in public management have put pressure on NGOs to prove good governance, accountability and cost-effectiveness. New Public Management, the philosophy guiding public sector reform, has impacted on every kind of organisation, dismantling the public-private divide and forcing them to 'organize their activities as if they were little businesses' (Rose 1999: 152). By the 1990s, what Power (1997) has called the 'audit explosion' had also spread to the world of development. The need for the production of impact statistics has spawned a growing number of data collection instruments and indicators, and in some cases experimentation with different methods. In order to secure future funding NGOs must show that they are able to apply a range of techniques that are evidence of good governance and efficiency.

This chapter analyses the impact of intensified reporting requirements on the NGOs in this research. Systems of monitoring and evaluation play central roles in shaping NGOs' everyday activities and the discursive strategies they employ to think through these activities. This has profound implications for the projects they carry out, their organisational make-up and their structural positioning. A central argument put forward in this chapter is that apparently mundane techniques like M&E are technologies of governing in the development domain, and as such constitute and produce specific forms of knowledge and expertise. Audit is a relationship of power between scrutiniser and observed (Shore and Wright 2000). Rather than NGOs being merely at the receiving end of such practices of governing though, I understand them to be intermediaries between the national/ global level of donors and the level of communities they claim to serve. By acting as expert and broker,

they actively circulate meanings and practices of development and shape what organisational forms civil society can take in Post-Apartheid democracy.

Following on from the analysis in the previous chapters, monitoring is shown to be a key demand of partnerships for which capacity has to be created, requiring specific sets of skills. An audit culture is thus further reinforced through the partnership mode, with cross-sectoral interaction providing a context for its circulation. Partnerships for development also have structuring effects because, by attributing particular roles or types of expertise to each sector (for the non-profit sector to be informal and flexible or the private sector to be highly efficient, for example), they prescribe how the different sectors ought to interact in the field of development. This then also allows the identification of a lack of expertise or capacity – for instance to count, manage or audit – which has to be corrected. An appropriate hierarchy of authority and expertise is established in this way. Once institutionalised, such NGO expertise becomes a channel for governmentality.

I have chosen the term 'impact measurement' for the title of this chapter to address the various and divergent auditing, monitoring and evaluation practices that are mobilised through NGOs' reporting and fundraising requirements. I also use the terms 'audit society' or 'audit culture', again to capture the ubiquity of practices of evaluation, assessment, checking and account giving (see Power 1997, Strathern 2000). This terminology also emphasises the importance of the issues raised for a wider context beyond the study of NGOs, highlighting the role of calculative practices in constituting particular economic spaces and linking them to global economic spaces (see for instance Larner and Le Heron 2004).

6.2. The significance of monitoring and evaluation for NGOs

Demonstrating impact, being accountable

The principal evaluation criteria of M&E programmes, as set by the OECD and adopted by the majority of development agencies active in South Africa, are effectiveness, impact, relevance, sustainability and efficiency (Molund and Schill 2004, European Commission 2005, PEPFAR 2006, USAID 2008). Although monitoring and evaluation are usually presented in tandem, they describe quite separate processes. Monitoring refers to the routine and continuous tracking of

information about a project, often with a focus on outputs. The information collected is used for the purpose of management control and decision-making. Evaluation consists of a periodic assessment of the outcomes, efficiency and impact of a project in terms of its stated objectives and is undertaken with a view to drawing lessons that may be more widely applicable.

Donors are keen to emphasise M&E as beneficial to organisational change, arguably not least in an attempt to counteract perceptions of it as a donor requirement or conditionality. Besides encouraging organisational learning, donor claims on behalf of M&E include that it provides NGOs with tools to measure programme effectiveness and efficiency, that it fosters public and political cooperation, supports information needs for target audiences and promotes skills development and adaptive management (Bakewell et al. 2003). In short, better information - as derived from solid M&E techniques – is to lead to results-based management and ultimately greater impact. NGOs themselves acknowledge the need to develop better systems that assess and evaluate social development activities, having led calls for M&E of social development in the 1980s as a challenge to the large-scale development approaches of the major agencies (Mebrahtu et al. 2007). It is accountability, however, that has been the most important reason for extending impact measurement.

The push for greater accountability and better governance of development NGOs is connected to the rise and global spread of New Public Management (NPM). This public sector reform agenda assumes that public services will be more effective if organised according to the principles of market economics and that the management of such marketised public services will be more efficient the more it resembles private sector management practices (Awortwi 2006).[61] NPM emphasises the importance of targets, incentives and punishments as a way to force public sector workers to behave in the interests of consumers.

Audit describes an 'independent, objective assurance activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations' by 'bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to assess and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes' (OECD 2002). During the early 1990s, 'audit' began to be applied to a huge variety of contexts beyond purely financial matters: 'a

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[61] See Shore and Wright (2000) for a history of managerialism in Britain, Awortwi (2006) for an African persective on NPM and the volume edited by Minogue et al. (1998) on NPM and governance.

growing population of "auditees" began to experience a wave of formalized and detailed checking up on what they do' (Power 1997: 3). A new financial rationality was applied to organisations and their practices, with accounting providing a technology for 'acting at a distance upon the actions of others' (Rose 1999: 152). The re-organisation of public institutions and formerly extra-economic domains according to such a financial rationality is enabled by constructing calculable spaces that are then made governable through experts and expertise (Miller 1994). New calculable spaces require new forms of expertise, but importantly experts are both objects and channels for calculations – the rendering governable of experts is changing expertise itself (Rose 1999).

Power (1997) draws attention to audit as actively shaping the activities it controls and representing a particular conception of accountability. In the development domain for example, it is often understood in narrow financial terms and represented as a technical issue. At the same time it is assumed that the implementation of specific audit procedures will produce legitimacy. Accordingly, accountability is one of the key concerns of neoliberal development, linking the discourse and practices of good governance on a global level with those of corporatist governance of NGOs. Critical accounts maintain that 'coercive accountability' (Shore and Wright 2000) in fact does not contribute to greater transparency or democracy. Audit demands that its efficacy is trusted, thus co-opting management systems into the monitoring process and may therefore replace the monitoring of quality with the monitoring of systems to monitor quality (Power 1997). Audit society, according to Power, is one which has come to understand the solution to many of its problems in terms of audit; audit is a normalised style of analysis, and a way of categorising and breaking down objects, tasks and needs.

The bulk of literature on reporting in NGOs is technical in focus, including tool kits and user manuals aimed at day-to-day management or providing targeted information for 'development partners'. It lacks a theoretical perspective on the broader implications of M&E and its effects on organisations and development projects. Amongst the more critical commentators, one study of M&E practices of British NGOs in Ethiopia states that 'the pronounced preoccupation with NGO effectiveness on the part of international donors and aid agencies has had a very real impact on INGOs' (Mebrahtu 2004: 87). The author identifies a lack of shared meanings of M&E: the further away from the field individuals were located, the more

likely they were to emphasise the potential of M&E to feed into organisational learning. Conversely, field staff was found to emphasise accountability to donors.

Mebrathu et al (2007) report back from INTRAC's series of international workshops on evaluation. According to the participants, it is usually accountability to the donor, rather than evaluation with a view to stakeholders, that dominates M&E practices of African NGOs. The authors also note a recent trend to revert to quantitative M&E systems and an increasing blurring of effectiveness and efficiency, which they argue is particularly troubling in the context of the revival of state-centred approaches to development.

Bryant's (2007) research likewise identifies a gap between assertions that M&E is necessary, and evidence of good quality M&E in practice. She finds that those NGOs with the least donor funding were the ones doing the most about evaluation – possibly because in the case of donor funding, the evaluation is treated as part of contract compliance and donor needs must be met, as opposed to meeting the learning needs of the own organisation. There is also a danger of donors confusing the outcomes of project evaluation with actual NGO performance (Ebrahim 2003). The afore-mentioned studies focus on INGOs – as of 2008, there exists no academic literature specifically focusing on M&E in South African NGOs, although 'grey literature' by development practioners can be found online, for instance on SANGONeT/ NGO Pulse (http://www.ngopulse.org/, also see Mebrahtu et al [2007] on M&E in African CSOs). The INGO focus is significant; INGOs seem to be more likely to experiment with different methodologies. Whilst M&E practices become more sophisticated all the time, it would appear that only particularly 'capacitated' organisations are in a position to employ more innovative indicators.[62]

Some of the critical literature understands M&E practices as modes of managerialism that are transforming SNGOs towards conforming to working practices associated with the corporate sector (for instance Roberts et al. 2005, Ebrahim 2003). Managerialism has four major elements, according to Roberts et al. (2005). These are accountability, institutional form (the way in which contemporary managerialist discourses tend to stress a specific approach to defining an

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[62] This is not to argue that smaller or community-based organisations cannot develop innovate methodologies. On the contrary, as my interview data shows, it is often in the context of reporting back to community stakeholders that alternative ways of documenting and measuring impact have emerged, such as storytelling and outcome mapping (also see Mebrahtu 2007 on documenting and oral culture in African development organisations). My point is that these are unlikely to be accepted by donors, certainly on their own, and that there is more bargaining power for formalised NGOs to negotiate and indeed educate funders.

organisation), capacity building (e.g. leadership) and spatial strategies and discourses. Managerialism should certainly not be assumed to be homogenous or to necessarily always flow from donor to NGO but, as Roberts et al. argue, 'mainstream northern managerialism has become a fairly entrenched and institutionally developed set of knowledges and practices in the NGO sector' (1849). The fact that auditing and monitoring culture usually goes upwards to donors and bigger organisations, rather than donors also being monitored by smaller organisations or communities, has also been criticised (Mawdsley et al. 2002, Mebrahtu et al. 2007).

Drawing on these critiques, I understand the above-discussed techniques of auditing, accounting, monitoring and evaluation as driven by the economic and political imperatives of neoliberalism, enabling the linking up of NGOs to other national and global actors. Partnerships as a preferred development mode necessitate multiple levels of accountability that become relays for audit, management and evaluation practices. However, information systems also constitute one of the mechanisms by which individual donor influence is exerted, thus reproducing geopolitical and cultural inequalities. Moreover, the staff of formalised South African NGOs themselves constitute a specific demographic with their own projects and interests that further circulate these practices.

M&E, the necessary evil?

M&E and reporting take up a large, and ever-increasing, proportion of NGOs' time and resources:

> It's about extensive reporting requirements. Those things have increased about 15 times since I have been running the organisation. I now have to submit very often independent auditor's reports. Which is fine, I do not have any principled issue with it, but it's the time and admin that it takes up (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07).

This is not to claim that development projects were not assessed in the past (see Cracknell [2000] for a history of aid evaluation, for example). Development practice has consistently dealt with concerns of how the impact of projects can be more accurately evaluated. Participatory Action Research and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) constitute such projects to improve research practices and develop

new methods of impact measurement that seek to locate knowledge production with the recipients of development. Li writes:

> [PRA] was designed to foster new desires from which new conduct would follow. It simultaneously made up communities, responsibilized them, and emphasized their autonomy (2007: 225).

This argument draws attention to the fact that research methods like PRA necessarily constitute specific ways of framing poverty - for instance in local rather than in political economic terms - that correspond to specific forms of governance.

What has changed is firstly that reporting, monitoring and evaluation have become primary focus areas for donors. Requirements and indicators vary considerably from donor to donor, but there are general observations that can be drawn from the considerable variety of NGOs in my study. Secondly, there now exists an industry of M&E training in South Africa, offering workshops, short courses and even degrees in monitoring and evaluation which further underlines the ubiquity of M&E in the development sector. The same applies to proposal and tender writing. The appointments section in the back of the weekly *Mail & Guardian* regularly listed reporting workshops and monitoring seminars alongside the advertisements for positions in the development sector (incidentally, these posts took up almost the entire appointments section, ranging from work at development banks and international institutions to international and local NGOs). Developing successful proposals is understood in this thesis as a skill and domain of expertise, as *CEPD*'s director John clearly articulated when he told me they were now 'churn[ing] out those tenders like we are a factory. A tender factory' (J. Pampallis, *CEPD*, Interview, 23 Feb 07). The metaphor of the factory is particularly striking, evoking not just commercialisation in the broadest sense, but also efficiency, automation, measurable output and regulation.

Another contact who was working for a funder and had considerable international experience felt that there were many more workshops around proposal writing than anywhere else (M. Roll, *FES*, Interview, 27 Feb 07). Their sole purpose, he said, was to learn the vocabulary of participation, citizenship and democracy – and this showed in the uniformity of language employed in grant applications to his organisation, which were full of 'senseless keywords' (ibid.). He saw this industry as

particularly relevant to development practioners in South Africa because there is a 'neo-Marxist vocabulary' (ibid.) that is always drawn on, and that they needed to learn this other language for communications with their funders.

Turning to perceptions of M&E next, the vast majority of the interviewed NGO staff experienced it as 'burdensome', 'fixed' and 'rigid'. Pragmatic concerns for sustainability and pressures from donors were cited as the main reasons for implementing M&E systems. Reporting requirements were perceived as a 'bureaucratic exercise' on the part of donors that put a strain on the organisation and diverted important resources away from development projects rather than being motivated by a genuine interest to bring about change. Sitting in on the meeting at *Mindset* I described earlier I was struck by the disdain with which staff below senior management greeted discussions about targets, indicators and measurement. Donors and their requirements were ridiculed: 'if we can't give the numbers we don't get the money'; the language of M&E was often used ironically or in speech marks: 'what do you call it, mixed methodology'. At best, people were uninterested, staring distractedly out of the window as the content manager outlined the new reporting criteria.

The metaphors used by interviewees often drew from the language of modernisation, industrialisation, mechanisation, automation and so on, as was apparent in the image of the 'tender factory' above. The following extract is fairly typical of the sentiments expressed and language employed by some of the more political organisations:

> They're making us more uniformalised. It's a lot more literally that this is the form in which a proposal must fit and if it doesn't, it gets automatically rejected. Five, ten years ago, our funding partners that sourced the money through the EU had a lot more scope to themselves take the initiative and in a sense act as the intervening authority that would say the project in South Africa is an appropriate project. Now they're much more nearly transmission valves for a bureaucrat in some EU department who wants this thing set out in a particular way (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07).

This perception of M&E as a 'tick-box exercise' and as a mechanism for uniformity conveyed a disempowering sense of a vast impersonal development apparatus. NGOs are caught in this 'machine', unable to challenge or negotiate its rules:

> And often what I found is that when you speak to the funders, it is not them; there's some kind of a system that because they're international they're being

given by somewhere upstairs with people who are out of touch with reality completely (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07).

NGOs were, in this construction, portraying themselves as weak and dependent with no power in a 'hierarchical reporting structure' (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). As noted in a previous chapter, this raises the question of what an NGO might gain by characterising itself as having no agency. Their portrayal can be contrasted with data gained from observation research and also from interviews: NGOs are constrained by funders in certain ways, but they are also actively involved in the circulation of development concepts and regimes, whilst perpetuating specific organisational forms, especially in relation to their community-based partners. Their own terminology drew on a number of discourses that include but are not limited to neoliberalism, African empowerment, participatory development and 'EU-ese'. As such, while constrained by increased and homogenising auditing technologies outcomes appear to be far less uniform and secure.

Whilst one of the effects of increased reporting may be a degree of uniformalisation then – I will return to this argument below – there are significant differences between individual funders' requirements and approaches to reporting (also see chapter 4). Bi- and multilateral donors such as the EU or USAID were described as having the most 'unreasonable expectations' (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07), demanding extended paperwork and exact adherence to formalistic demands. Some NGO directors have taken conscious decisions not to engage with this set of funders at all, arguing that the bureaucratic effort is not worth the relatively modest grants that they may receive. Other funders, for instance the Ford or Mott Foundations, were characterised as more flexible, approachable and amenable. Some grant-making Northern NGOs were also portrayed as very supportive by interviewees. Some interviewees highlighted that their funders are 'funders of solidarity' that 'tried to consciously make our lives simpler' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07); others that funder NGOs in particular were able to give 'informed suggestions' and advice in the proposal writing process.

Concerns were also voiced about the paternalism of (foreign) donor-led M&E, which seems to imply that 'Africa is unable to evaluate' (K. Greenop, *Mindset*, 1 Feb 08). The fact that development indicators are set by donor agencies which are situated outside of the country does indeed raise questions about what comes to constitute development knowledge and how it is measured. More generally, these

arguments are a reminder of the fact that M&E is necessarily shaped by relations of power. The global North-South hierarchy is just one example of such inequalities in the domain of measuring. Decisions about what and how to monitor reflect the power relations that underpin other development activities as well. Relatedly, some took issue with the unilateralism of measuring, accounting and reporting and with the lack of feedback:

> You submit these things to funders or whatever and reports, and the audits. And once you've submitted it you never hear from them again [so] it's more and more like a commercial exchange, rather than a thing about let's see how we can keep this going and make it better, which again enforces the kind of inequality of that relationship (W. Bird, MMP, 13 Jun 07).

Whilst reporting was by all interviewees identified as increasing staff workload, it was nonetheless welcomed as positive by some. Rather pragmatically, Sam saw M&E not as burdensome but rather as part of his job and absolute necessity. He argued that without reporting, there would be no *Mindset*, thus illustrating the extent to which monitoring and evaluation has become part of this NGO's core activities. The increased donor emphasis on M&E was further positively associated with financial accountability, sound budgeting, project management skills and organisational learning, taking the NGO through a 'budgeting exercise' (J. Bright, *Teboho*, 19 Jun 07) that 'encourages rigour' (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 27 Jun 07). Jane Zimmermann made a point that was repeated by others:

> Given the history of mismanagement of funding and corruption and all of that stuff in this country, I think the more they call for accountability the better. I absolutely do not have a problem with that (J. Zimmermann, *Siyazisika*, 4 Jul 07).

This set of interviewees accepted the donor claim of M&E systems improving efficiency and effectiveness of their organisation. Efficiency might be improved in an indirect way, too: compliance with strict reporting requirements presents a virtuous spiral for an organisation as it can demonstrate financial accountability to other future donors, as this statement conveys:

> We have our checks and balances firmly in place. Having a German funder, the audit and the accounting is very strict. So especially the EU funders and other embassy say we could go with DDP because they know the money is safe (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07).

Conversely, an organisation without a track record with a well-known donor will find it more difficult to access any donor funds at all. The more bureaucratic a donor, the better it is for an organisation's sustainability.

The link between monitoring and sustainability is an important one and accounts for why some NGOs understand monitoring practices to be productive despite the added strain on organisational capacity. In addition to establishing a track record, continuous assessment of one's own impact can ensure that an NGO remains competitive:

> And so the kind of ability to learn from what we're doing, monitor exactly what we are doing and incorporate that into, not only reporting externally but into our own operations [...] that's a key part because we need to constantly better ourselves. Because we may be unique today, tomorrow we're not unique (V. Naidoo, *Mindset*, 9 May 07)

The sentiment about improving oneself that is expressed by *Mindset*'s CEO firstly points towards organisational learning as a key aspect of donor-led M&E. Secondly, the phrase 'to better oneself' echoes neoliberal thinking on individual and organisational obligations of self-government and responsibilisation. M&E is portrayed as beneficial for the NGO, in that it affords NGOs the opportunity to use for its own purposes data initially collected in the interest of reporting back to a donor. NGOs have adopted this understanding; the opinion expressed by the director of *Agenda* is typical of the majority of NGOs in this study:

> [Reporting] is not a constraint, I think it has a critical learning process built into it. It's not a conscious thing, but we use it as a learning opportunity. So the rigour with which we had to do the HBS accounts in some ways has contributed to the rigour of our financial systems (M. Oyedan, 27 Jun 07).

Framing learning in this way raises a number of issues. In this case, what an organisation learns through continuous monitoring is financial accountability. Auditing techniques or project management strategies were often highlighted as outcomes of organisational learning processes though interaction with funders. Whilst these are undeniably important organisational skills, they only address the managerial aspect of an NGO's work. How organisational learning is constructed here is solely in technical, administrative and financial terms. Accountability itself is understood as a technical or managerial issue, a tool with which certain outputs can

be achieved. It has been noted that the automatic preference of an audit form of accountability often goes at the expense of evaluation as learning (Gasper 1999). Arguably, audit systems may impede genuine learning, since their main function is to highlight the short-term success of a project. Ebrahim (2003) accordingly understands organisational learning as structuring practice in the NGO community.

NGOs that are already better equipped to deal with stringent donor requirements are certainly also in a better position to exploit the potential for learning on their own terms. Within *Mindset*, there was constantly an effort to 'piggy-back' off research for funders. For instance, over and above existing research, the organisation measured socio-economic indicators that were not required by their donors in order to seek further funding at a later stage. Piggy-backing was an attempt to bridge the gap between their donors' needs and whatever they may be able to gain from collecting that information. Whilst this practice undoubtedly has the potential of securing more funding, I do not read this as necessary evidence of 'resistance tactics', as for instance Ebrahim (2003) has claimed, arguing that funders have enhanced learning by introducing NGOs to new ideas and technologies.

On the contrary, I contend that organisational learning itself is part of a government rationality linked to NGOs' capacities to govern and reform themselves. Sitting in on meetings where M&E strategies were planned, it sometimes seemed as though measuring was done for measuring sake – the capacity to collect data was available so the data was collected even though it wasn't always clear to what end and how this would contribute to the evaluation of a project. This does not imply that NGO staff did not negotiate the impact of donor requirements and M&E regimes in different ways – many individuals did not report according to set guidelines or would creatively negotiate the constraints of partnership demands for auditing.

Personal relationships and networks operate as additional disturbing factors for the regimes governing fund-raising and reporting. At the most basic level, 'unless you know the people that you are dealing with, you are not gonna get that funding' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07). But grant managers of long-term funders were seen to have a better grasp of an organisation's areas of expertise, and regular exchange of information beyond formalised monitoring requirements occurred: 'they came to three or four workshops, and understood what we were trying to do. And after that it was very easy' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). There is then an element of mutual trust although requirements still have to be met. Yet, established personal ties can lead to

increased pressures on projects because, as William put it, 'they think that because they then know you, it gives them a right to impress on you a specific goal and context' (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07). The central importance of personal relationships and networks is probably not unique in mediating NGO-funder relationships but in Post-Apartheid South Africa they appear particularly significant due to a shared history of the struggle. The 'will to improve' also plays a part in the NGO-donor relationship as some NGOs want to reform their donors, for example by bringing their own processes of organisational learning or modes of accountability upwards.

Another striking point about NGO staff's perception of M&E is that no one I spoke to portrayed M&E as part of their work in a holistic sense. Whether judged as positive or negative, M&E was constructed as external to projects and respondents made little connection between measuring impact and having impact. Given these observations, the references to organisational learning may then be understood in terms of a necessary reflexivity. The willingness of individuals and organisation to such self-reflection can be seen as integral to governance through accountability.

6.3. Structural impact: 'the format influences the source which informs the practice'

Impact on the level of data: four issues surrounding measurability

As was noted above, stricter monitoring requirements were sometimes experienced as productive. Reporting for purposes of financial accountability was mostly welcomed and the desirability of the outcomes sought by funders' requests seems common sense - who could disagree with the importance of demonstrating impact and being accountable to stakeholders. Viewing the issue from within the logic of M&E however neglects an analysis of power: in constructing impact measurement as commonsensical, what can be overlooked is how such assessment is measured and who determines these measurements. Ebrahim's (2003) distinction between 'product' data and 'process' data is useful with regards to different types of impact data produced by NGO. Product data is generated about physical and financial details, focusing on easily measurable indicators and quantitative analysis; process data about qualitative dimensions of their work is context-specific and interpretative in nature (2003: 78).

Four interconnected issues can be identified in relation to measurability. Firstly, case NGOs excluded certain data because it did not fit into what was perceived as overly rigid reporting or research frameworks. For instance, log frame analysis (LFA) is mainly geared towards collecting quantitative data. The log frame matrix was introduced by USAID, and became the standard approach for planning and monitoring development work as part of the shift towards results-based management (see for example Bakewell and Garbutt 2005, Mebrahtu et al. 2007). This 'managing for results' is now a key principle of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Appendix 5 shows both a typical log frame as identified in the report for SIDA (Bakewell and Garbutt 2005) and an example of a case organisation's log frame for the purpose of a grant application with the European Programme for Reconstructing and Development.[63]

Donors assure grantees that the complexity of development projects is not limited in scope by employing LFA since a log frame is not intended to include every detail of the project, being intended as a 'convenient, logical summary of the key factors of the project.' (BOND 2003). Both the sentiments expressed by interviewees and the data gathered in observations contradict this assertion. The summing up of such 'key factors' was seen to lend a bias or specific focus to a project, even when there was no intention to reduce the project to these key factors. Log frames were seen as 'uniform' (passim) and 'literally prescrib[ing] every step along the way' (L. Gentle, ILRIG, 24 Apr 07). Much of what NGOs conceive of as being at the core of their work, such as participatory work with communities or education workshops, cannot be expressed in this format. Participatory monitoring addresses some of these limitations, but none of the case NGOs assessed in a participatory manner alone (also see footnote below).

The short-termism of development grants further exacerbates the problem of the exclusion of data, since developmental change – if it can be measured at all – does not happen within a one-year budgetary cycle. Funders, particularly those from the corporate sector, want to see the rapid implementation and success of projects they support, whilst developmental change is clearly a complex and often slow

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[63] Mebrahtu et al. (2005) distinguish between the logical framework, the four by four matrix (see Appendix 5) that summarises the main elements of a programme, and the logical framework approach concerned with the wider planning procedures of problem analysis, the development of objectives and indicators. The latter should ideally incorporate stakeholder analysis or other participatory methodologies. In practice, the two notions were used interchangeably by respondents, although depending on the individual's positioning towards M&E, one or the other aspect would be emphasised more.

process: 'it's long-term work, it's not work that you can monitor and evaluate to put into reports. It's working with process' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). Consequently, donor-initiated project evaluation and performance monitoring tend to over-emphasise quantitatively measurable outcomes. For instance, development projects often deliver predefined products such as a certain number of computers or schools. Having to fit proposals into fixed grids appeared not only to prescribe how results are reported but also to predetermine results, with little space to evaluate secondary or unexpected outcomes. The question then poses itself whether and how developmental needs may differ from predefined quantitative outcomes.

Secondly, and very much connected to the above, another effect of the reductionism of reporting is that it excludes 'values'. Since many respondents defined NGOs as value-driven organisations, these were seen as integral to the work of an NGO and as unique to the voluntary sector. Dom works for *Starfish*, which is mainly supported by corporate funding. He illustrates the tensions between NGOs and funders in terms of type of data:

> It just comes back to the whole issue of actually [articulating] what is of value, like dignity, confidence, empathy, compassion, these kinds of intangibles, these immeasurables, over and above the hard facts. I think [that's] seen as tick-box stuff. Let's get it out there, let's get it measured, let's report back. Done. Now what's the real business of my business (D. Marshall-Smith, 23 Mar 07).

This statement chimes with the findings of Ebrahim's study that M&E systems 'impact NGOs [...] by promoting positivist and easily quantifiable valuations of success and failure' (2003: 78). The focus on quantitative data by funders can be contrasted with the preference for qualitative data expressed by many interviewees. However, if there is already an organisational focus on product information, as is structurally the case with new-generation NGOs, there are greater consistencies between funder and NGO and less of a need for the NGO to redefine its understanding of success based on funding requirements.

Thirdly, reporting requirements lend themselves to the production of discrete NGO 'products' as opposed to more complex development processes. This clearly applies to producing something that can be sold in the market place, such as media 'solutions', publications and so on. As was outlined in the previous chapter, commercialisation can be a sustainability strategy that involves the establishment of

a for-profit arm. But commercialisation is also encouraged by donors in other areas, such as NGOs charging for capacity building work shops or training. Such product output is better suited to partnerships and service delivery contracts with the public sector in South Africa. For example, *Mindset* explicitly frames its development project as the 'Mindset solution', which very much speaks to Li's (2007) related practices of problematisation and rendering technical: the identification of a problem is linked to the availability of a solution, confirming expertise and setting up boundaries between expertise- and capacity- haves and have-nots. More broadly, it also exemplifies the commodification of the social sphere, transposing entrepreneurial forms onto extra-economic domains (Miller and Rose 1990, Lemke 2001).

.   NGOs' continuous production of data for M&E purposes may also be sold for commercial use, for instance in market research:

> We are in the field, we can actually the research market potential of a product or service or whatever quickly, very efficiently, and we are doing that right now for ourselves just as a demonstration of just how efficient it could be (D. Jerling, *Connect Africa*, 16 Mar 07).

Connect Africa aims to provide a mobile communication and public service network for rural areas in South Africa, and eventually across Africa. The organisation is part of a cross-sectoral partnership, in that it delivers bundled services on behalf of multiple suppliers in the private and public sectors. Alongside providing services for Government, community surveys (Connect Africa Community Survey, February 2007) were also carried out, ascertaining 'where does your income come from, which grants would you need, which Government services are you looking for?' (D. Jerling, *Connect Africa*, 16 Mar 07). The organisation also gained funding for its 'community mapping exercise', whose purpose is:

- To identify existing services in the community
- Track changes to these services change over time
- Identify available resources which will assist in building a community
- Use it as a tool to gather information for the Connect Africa village case study

- Use it as a tool to check on needs and services Connect Africa can provide (Connect Africa, Guidelines to the Community Mapping Exercise, February 2007)

Lastly, the exclusion of particular data impacts not only on how the success of development projects is measured. M&E techniques such as log frames also exert influence on the level of project implementation and future strategies. The sheer availability of 'product data', whether it is actually considered important or not by NGO staff, influences decision making processes about how resources for a project are spent. Data gained from interviews is not necessarily sufficient in illustrating how these processes play out in the context of individual projects. The following data gained from observation, whilst being case specific and not applicable to smaller organisations, does however provide a springboard for some broader discussion points about M&E expertise.

PEPFAR's M&E requirements and *Mindset*

PEPFAR, one of *Mindset*'s health channel partners, had always supported the Bush administration's priorities on HIV/Aids prevention – favouring the A (abstinence) and B (be faithful) of the prevention ABC over the C (condomisation). The new M&E guidelines for PEPFAR partners in South Africa were published at the time I was based in the *Mindset* offices during my second fieldwork period. These stipulated new monitoring requirements and indicators as well as 'ensur[ing] that our partner's monitoring systems are of the highest quality to strengthen program management, planning, implementation, outputs and outcomes' (USAID 2008: 5).

Under the new rules, only content production in the areas of A and B is supported. This implies that extra funds were allocated for *Mindset* to produce new video content containing only messages about abstinence and being faithful. The three areas are for the first time separated out and guidelines specify the indicators associated with each. For AB, these are the number of individuals reached through community outreach that promotes HIV prevention through abstinence, through being faithful or through being trained to promote HIV prevention programmes though A/B, each aggregated by gender. Community outreach is a potentially ambivalent term, conjuring up images of community workers teaching individuals

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about the HIV virus face-to-face. In *Mindset's* case, educational messages are broadcast to health care workers as well as the general public via a range of technological platforms. By using ICTs and satellite links, *Mindset*-produced video content is shown in waiting rooms, on public access TV channels or as interactive multi-media. *Mindset's* outreach targets are high, and have been increased with the publication of these new rules; their broadcasts with AB content are meant to reach 1.7 million viewers per month.

There have recently been changes in the PEPFAR framework, with the funder requesting facilitators in some settings to discuss the broadcasted messages. In this way, the obvious gap between the number of individuals simply being present as a message is broadcast and the number of individuals having been exposed to it is meant to be overcome. Yet, the fact that impact is still measured in terms of the number of sites to which *Mindset* can be deployed, and the number of individuals passing though these sites seems to suggest that this is a largely rhetorical change.[64] In addition, there are complex issues regarding the reception of media messages which are not necessarily addressed by selectively providing a facilitator. The existing monitoring framework does not allow for the measurement of such complexities. Likewise, an evaluative component is missing from the framework, in itself indicative of the bias towards the monitoring side of M&E that is displayed in many donor guidelines (e.g. PEPFAR 2006, USAID 2008, OECD 2002).

This example underlines the general point that M&E as it is currently carried out rarely assesses whether development projects are actually 'making a difference'. In the case study organisation, monitoring for PEPFAR merely assessed how many people had been in contact with their programme. Regarding the issue of project impact, the 2008 requirements - whilst not stipulating that no content pertaining to 'OP' will be broadcast anymore – entail that no such content will be newly produced. It was noticeable already that the focus of the organisation had shifted towards the new priorities: as this was where money was being spent, the content had to be produced and the people reached had to be counted. Should there be problems such as regularly happens, for example with the satellite downlink, organisational

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[64] For instance, in the report delivered to John Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa (JHHESA) in October 2007, all that is reported by Mindset Health in relation to the indicator 'Number of individuals reached through community outreach that promotes HIV/Aids prevention through abstinence and/or being faithful' is: 'Number of sites: 306; Activities: Mindset Health Public Broadcast - Patients and public actively viewing content in public health care facilities; Gender: Male:347,003; Female: 782,256; Total: 1,129,258' (Mindset, JHU Report October 2007).

focus is directed at fixing areas identified as monitoring priority by the funders. Discussions about the various channels and projects were more often than not framed in terms of targets and sites, especially amongst the channel managers who have to file monthly reports back to the funder. Expertise is concentrated in technical domains as well as in the research department itself.

Impact on staffing

Funders' information requirements impact on NGOs not only by favouring particular ways of measuring the success of a project, but also in terms of shifting organisational culture and structure and the types of activities or services provided. Specific capacities, resources and sets of skills are needed for an NGO to be able to fulfil the kinds of data requirements discussed above, and to qualify for further donor funding. Such capacities do not fall within the core expertise of many NGOs. For example, the Open Society Foundation, according to interviewees one of the 'easier' funders in this research, requires from its potential grantees the following:

- Comprehensive Project Proposal
- List of Board Members
- Latest Audited financial statements
- Constitution
- Recent internal/ external evaluation
- List of key measurable outputs (Open Society Foundation for South Africa, Funding Request Form 2007).

Whilst the first four to five documents have been required by funders for a decade or more, measurable outputs are recent standard requirements. In the smaller NGOs in this study, it was often the director that took care of fundraising and reporting. There are demographic issues that pertain to NGO leadership in South Africa, which I touch upon below but do not have space to fully explore in this chapter. Auditing would be outsourced as these skills were not readily available inside the NGO.

For larger organisations, changing reporting requirements usually meant that new staff was hired to cope with the added workload. Personnel with very specific, quantitative-analytical skills were therefore increasingly sought after by NGOs. The

internal balance between project staff and support staff – administrators, accountants and so on – shifted as a result. Financial management and administration expertise became just as important to an NGO as expertise in the NGO's core area. Indeed, one could argue that there has been a reversal in what constitutes core and support staff: support staff have become core staff since financial and administrative capacities are crucial to the survival of the organisation. Needing to employ people with quantitative-analytical skills, NGOs now also compete for staff with corporations and effectively have to pay higher salaries. Aside from an added strain on financial resources, there is thus a potential impact on organisational culture as certain skills come to be seen as of a higher value.

But expertise is not only required in terms of finances but also in terms of language as the following underlines:

> This is the terminology. And this comes from the OECD, so we must use this terminology. 'Note: an activity is economical when the cost of the scarce resources used approximate the minimum needed to achieve planned objectives'. [...] If you do not fit in it word for word, it is immediately rejected. I mean at ILRIG I have to write the proposals and literally have to learn this as a language, and it sits in my gut – you know with revulsion - because you almost have to write what we know to be one thing in forms that you know would pass a committee (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07).

As with any other language, failure to speak this language means being excluded from the conversation, or in this case being excluded from funding flows. Entering into funding arrangements consequently requires a high level of 'buzzword' fluency: I noted earlier the influx of training courses and workshops in the area of reporting that have made M&E an industry. NGO staff reported that they were often required by grant-makers to attend courses on how to complete tender or grant documents. Training for purposes of tendering was clad in terms of 'capacity building' or 'skills transfer', whereas it is highly specific managerial skills that are 'transferred' here. Skills-oriented learning and human resource development is often conflated with developing capacities of staff according to project or organisational needs. Such forms of shallow capacity building are central to what Ong (2006) refers to as optimizing technologies at the heart of neoliberalism.

Besides having to be well-versed in current development terminology, perfect command of English in a professional and bureaucratic context is required, for

instance in order to correctly process 100-page EU grant documents. As Will from the *MMP* put it:

> For me it's fine you know, I've got a postgraduate degree, I've got a lot of experience [...] But if you are a relatively young NGO, three years or something, and you are in an area where your focus is addressing social work or something, you're expected to read EU-ese documents, which are not written in plain English. If English is a second or third language for you, you're gonna have major problems (W. Bird, 13 Jun 07).

Anyone familiar with EU funding agreements might add that they pose a challenge even to English mother-tongue speakers. But Will's statement also gives an indication of the appropriate person to work for organisations favoured by the existing requirements: NGOs ought to be well-established and staffed by English-mother tongue speakers, which in South Africa usually means middle-class and urban. Conversely, less professionalised and/ or rural CSOs are disadvantaged by these funding regimes. Class position impacts on the ability to speak the language of efficiency and may exclude entirely from funding flows. Successful NGOs that remain sustainable are often run and staffed by middle class individuals.

Moreover, class position marginalises certain issues from the field of activity of an NGO. For instance, first-generation human rights issues connected to political liberty seemed to exercise many NGOs more than socio-economic rights. This is evident in the observation that it was seemingly only with the Government's assault on the mainstream media – in 2005, the ANC obtained a gagging order against the *Mail & Guardian* over 'Oilgate' and also threatened *Business Day* and the *Sunday Times* with legal action over articles following up on the story[65] – that many formal NGOs began to become aware of the realities of repression and of freedom of expression issues faced by social movements in South Africa.

Smaller size has other disadvantages: relatively small NGOs, not being able to spend as much resources and budget on M&E, are more profoundly affected by monitoring regimes:

> It becomes so complicated that it has excluded large numbers of CBOs from actually being able to understand and fulfil the requirements. Completing log

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[65] The *Mail & Guardian* had been banned by the High Court from publishing a report in May 2005 detailing how PetroSA, the state oil company, had secretly paid public funds to the ruling party via Imvume Management. The corruption scandal became known as 'Oilgate'.

frames, and all sorts of things. And even we have sometimes got difficulties meeting those very stringent requirements (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

This is clearly an important issue given that the vast majority of NGOs in this research rely on local partners such as CBOs. *Starfish*'s community-based partners for instance are contractually obliged to provide financial reports, narrative reports and annual financial statements (Starfish, Contractual Agreement with Vuselela Orphan Program, April 2007). PEPFAR's (2006: 12) manual for implementation partners in Southern Africa outlines the features of a successful M&E unit, indicating the types of NGO expertise required:

- epidemiological expertise
- social science expertise
- data processing and statistical expertise
- data dissemination expertise

Moreover, the funder details the infrastructural and informational resources that are required for this kind of M&E: data dissemination systems, centralised databases, second generation-surveillance and so on. Clearly, most national NGOs lack the material and human resources to attract this type of capacity, especially given the South African context of 'brain drain'. Indeed, PEPFAR trains its 'own' researchers under the PEPFAR fellowship programme. Typically a research psychologist at Masters level, a fellow is involved in designing and conducting monitoring and evaluation strategies and activities, gathering knowledge of M&E tools or evaluating psycho-social assessment tools for NGOs (PEPFAR Fellowship Programme 2007/8, Brochure and Application Form).

Mindset is exceptional in terms of research capacity, having created a dedicated post for a senior manager dealing with reporting, monitoring and evaluation, due to the organisation's size and large-scale orientation. Given that Mindset is characterised by its strong partnership model, there is an additional connection to be drawn out. Partnerships in fact require heightened monitoring capacity due to a range of accountability demands by different partners. Increased skills in terms of standardised monitoring and evaluation are in turn considered indicators of improved capacity by partners.

6.4. 'Issues of what essentially you become': organisational forms and developmental subjects

What organisational forms and development interventions are favoured by the structural changes and the focus on certain types of data production that were analysed above? Firstly, this chapter has demonstrated that calculative practices such as M&E require specific skills and capacities which produce a particular model of NGO broadly in line with neoliberal forms of organisation. This point adds another dimension to the modality of the ideal-typical new Post-Apartheid NGO that was employed earlier, in that this streamlined, flexible and self-sustaining organisation is also able to research, count and audit correctly.

Secondly, there is the question of what subjects NGOs as a primary development actor in South Africa produce. This argument, concerned with 'subject-making', has received some attention in the development literature (see for instance Postero 2007, Hart 2007, Brigg 2006, Rankin 2001), although it usually focuses on governments as 'subject-makers'. Development programmes seen from this perspective have the aim of shaping desires by setting the conditions for beneficiaries to behave in a certain way. It is human capacities that are to be understood and acted upon by what Rose (1999) has called 'human technologies'. The 'enterprise model' is thus not only extended to NGOs (or other types of organisations) but also to the individual, by creating the subjective conditions for entrepreneurship (Hart 2006).

These technologies of subjectivity rely on systems of knowledge and expertise that can be taught by NGOs. *Teboho* is a small Soweto-based NGO that offers educational resources and life skills programmes and services to vulnerable teenagers. The focus of the organisation is to 'create a mindset of learning':

> So I looked at helping to create entrepreneurs, helping to create government officials, helping to create diplomats, going into different countries [...] We actually have them create their strategic road-maps as to where they wanna go in this world. And then these are the tools that would help them to get there. So if one person wants to be an entrepreneur, we are saying do not limit yourself to the borders of South Africa (J. Bright, *Teboho*, 19 Jun 07).

The aim of this NGO's work is not to deliver pre-defined products, but rather to encourage the development of an 'enterprising self'. The objective is to instil particular characteristics in its target group, who are to become entrepreneurial, risk-

taking, ambitious, responsible and transnational citizens. These characteristics cannot be imposed but have to be promoted by encouraging people to choose to act on themselves in order to better themselves. By encouraging the creation of entrepreneurs in terms of individual subjects, an extension and reproduction of an enterprise model becomes likewise realistic:

> And I am telling them: but I don't get a salary out of this, we're helping the children, we're helping future employees, we're helping future customers of your company. [...] And I am looking at taking them to the next level; investment clubs, so create an investment company where the young people are now being able to have a say in the economy, in economic and social development in the country through investing (ibid.).

This line of reasoning clearly illustrates how, by reforming the practices and aspirations of a target group – in this case, young disadvantaged Sowetans – a particular model of society is constructed; a society composed of empowered entrepreneurs that solve their country's socio-economic problems through investment and voluntary associations. At the core of such rationalities is a logic of empowerment and self-government which develops capacities for accessing the marketplace and encourages people to find entrepreneurial solutions to their needs. At the same time, the creation and cultivation of an entrepreneurial self is emblematic of a 'culture of the self and self-improvement' that cannot be separated from the political rise of neoliberalism (Dean 1994). Going back to the example of *Mindset*, their funding-dependent emphasis of abstinence is a case in point for the argument that NGO projects also represent moral technologies. As Tuki articulated in an interview from which I cited earlier, his NGO is 'meant to be advocating for the change that is required, change in people's behaviour, change in people's attitude towards their sexuality and their relationships with their partners' (T. Senne, *Mindset*, 6 Feb 08). Likewise, the NGO's focus on technological literacy is more than a by-product of the curriculum that is taught: it seems to be central to a vision of the empowered South African citizen of the 21st century.

Technologies of optimisation may seem more apparent in the above NGOs' discourses and interventions where the entrepreneurial subject is directly addressed. However, empowerment must also be understood in non-economic ways, concerned with the cultivation not just of an economic-rational actor but a responsible and moral citizen. Taking the example of the *Wolpe Trust*, whose objective is to foster political

dialogue and public debate, educating the target population means to make them more involved citizens by participating in the public sphere:

> If you engage people like that, the youth or people from more disadvantaged areas who do not have the wealth and the status to be a powerful political elite or whatever it is, that by engaging them they become more patriotic, become more concerned about what is going on in their broader society, and become more proactive as citizens about their own needs (T. Bailey, 25 Apr 07).

In the subsequent chapter, I will pick up the related question of whether or not NGOs can be the appropriate agents to engage those excluded from political processes and to encourage criticism of the narrowing of spaces for democracy. The issue with the above-discussed programmes is not that they do something other than what they claim to do, or that there is some hidden political agenda. Rather, in the words of Li, it is the 'governmental stance that envisaged empowerment as a product that could be manufactured by technique' (Li 2007: 269). Both the project designs of *Teboho* and of the *Wolpe Trust* are – in very different ways – governmental, because they seek to set the conditions to reform desires and shape conduct. They draw on concepts such as performance that are very clearly neoliberal, but combine them with notions of participation and empowerment reminiscent of earlier alternative development approaches promoted by NGOs. Rather than taking these two strands as conflicting, I understand them to be integral parts of a reflexive neoliberal project as I have defined it in chapter 1.

As I have sought to show in this chapter, the implementation of extensive monitoring systems produces NGOs that are more streamlined and commercial. The demands for efficiency and transparency of financial management necessitate organisational restructuring and the acquisition of financial skills. M&E practices require certain organisational conditions which favour and indeed produce highly organised and professionalised types of NGOs, whilst marginalising others. Crucially, this formalisation affects NGOs' relationships with other civil society organisations. Once a formalised NGO has entered into funding and monitoring regimes, it becomes increasingly difficult to work with less formalised NGOs, CBOs or social movements. This is because such organisations are not structurally equipped to prove results-based management or adhere to complicated reporting systems. As Lenny Gentle put it quite simply, 'we only work with the ones who do

have a photocopying machine, who can account for all the money and so on' (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07). Where relationships with CBOs exist, NGOs often end up playing the role of translator: participatory processes may be used to design programmes but NGO staff repackage the stakeholder process in a log frame format for their donors. This process of translation produces a hierarchy, in that it establishes the NGO as expert, with the power to represent a CBO's activities and development objectives.

In important ways then, the professionalisation and streamlining of the civil society sector that was documented in donor-NGO relations is reproduced in the networks on which NGOs rely for service delivery and indeed for legitimacy. The need for audit expertise influences NGOs' positioning towards their civil society counterparts, exacerbating hierarchies and potentially negatively affecting solidarity within civil society. Reporting and monitoring regimes work much more as disciplining mechanisms where there is no capacity, as is the case with movements of the poor and unemployed. New-generation NGOs are set up to deal with these challenges more effectively.

6.5. Conclusions

I have argued in previous chapters that the death of the traditional donor model has given rise to an ideal-typical, streamlined NGO that can be characterised by multisectoral linkages, professionalisation and versatility. This chapter has revealed as another characteristic of the new NGO its audit expertise. NGO staff need to know how to follow monitoring and evaluation procedures and they need to demonstrate expertise of how to count, manage and audit. Increasingly, NGOs are expected to be efficient financial managers in addition to, or perhaps as opposed to, being efficient at what it is that they do as their 'core business'.

Audit regimes are clearly not limited to the development domain. Their ubiquity is paradigmatic for a particular phase of (global) governance which unites economic efficiency with demands for moral responsibility and an 'ethical' capitalism. Crucially, audit reshapes the organisations it audits into auditable commodities. It should thus also be understood in terms of its political functions as a technology of neoliberal governance. This chapter has explored some of the types of expertise that

auditing requires and produces over and above the core activities of NGOs. These include, as a minimum, language skills (including fluency in 'developmentese'), financial expertise, data processing and dissemination skills and quantitative-analytical capacities. The larger an organisation (and its grants and grant-makers), the more specific statistical and social science expertise it is required to prove.

The stereotypical understanding of M&E expressed in the NGO community is of the donor demanding quantitative data and the NGO wanting to express complex issues. Indeed, results-based methodologies such as log frames do not lend themselves to expressing complex project realities, tending to obscure project aims perceived as political, contentions or simply ambivalent; structural relations are excluded from evaluation and from future project design. It is telling that this kind of rational management thinking has found its way into the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. However, the empirical data paints a picture that is more nuanced. Firstly, M&E formats vary greatly from funder to funder – the *Wolpe Trust* for instance mostly reports back with narrative reports, whereas *Siyazisika* has been required to complete lengthy quantitative assessment templates. Secondly, the more capacity an NGO has the more it is able to use its auditing as a resource. Yet, it remains true that M&E is always a reflection of other aspects of development relations: in the absence of 'genuine partnerships' for example, it is hard to imagine genuinely participatory ways of evaluation.

The language within which projects are planned and monitored is one of managerialism and efficiency, which lends itself to an increasing commercialisation of development projects undertaken by NGOs, a process which is tied in with the logic of partnerships that was discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Moreover, specific M&E techniques are reflective of changes in aid thinking and in modalities of aid delivery. The calls for alignment and harmonisation of aid that have been brought forward in the Paris Declaration in fact give a renewed urgency to the issues discussed here. Whilst harmonisation is intended to reduce the transaction costs arising from dealing with a variety of donors, formats and procedures, it may also lead to a consolidation of mechanistic and technocratic approaches to M&E across the board. As I have discussed, the reporting requirements of NGOs in this research, although overwhelmingly experienced as burdensome, donor-led and homogenising, varied considerably from organisation to organisation. In the new dispensation, narrative

reports and participatory planning methodologies may well be usurped by log frame techniques as these are employed by most of the big funders.

As I observed earlier, it is hard to disagree both with demands for greater accountability of NGOs and with the adaptation of systems that can demonstrate transparency and reduce transaction costs of development projects. Nonetheless, it is far from clear what this accountability means given the impact of auditing practices on NGOs as they were presented here, and whether more (or more sophisticated) auditing or reporting systems result in better aid. Demands for accountability and transparency are ultimately connected to claims of empowerment and the democratisation of aid. Quite contrary to such claims, auditing was shown to produce hierarchies within civil society and to exclude certain organisations altogether. Fluency in the language and practices of evaluation and reporting displays accountability and thereby apparently transfers legitimacy. NGOs' role as a transmitter of techniques such as log frames to their community-based counterparts, and their resultant status as experts is central to this hierarchy of legitimacy.

This picks up a strand from the previous chapter where I wrote that NGOs come to act as bridge-builders or translators. The concept of the intermediary NGO comes to the fore again here: its activities encompass organisational capacity building, training and staff development, research and advocacy, collection and dissemination of information and networking. Their location is between various types of authority (often the state, but it may also be other actors in the international development system) and communities. Intermediary NGOs would be favoured by the current reporting regimes: research NGOs for instance already have the research and reporting expertise that help with M&E requirements. Auditing is shaped by and imbued with power relations, a power which is then transferred through partnership networks. Monitoring and evaluation is internalised and becomes a prime indicator of improved capacity that coexists alongside the rhetoric of partnership. From this perspective, M&E is a technology of power through which NGOs engage in problematisation and rendering technical. Given that auditing changes the very organisational structures of those required to audit, there is a danger of even progressive organisations becoming integrated in terms of their modus operandi into the neoliberal order they set out to change.

The last part of this chapter briefly addressed subject-making and NGOs' moral technologies, arguing that NGO programmes often target mindsets, attitudes

and capacities of the individuals and communities in which they operate. This parallels the processes of neoliberal optimization of NGOs that have been charted throughout this thesis. Below I develop this point further, exploring how NGOs translate such technologies into their own reformist processes within civil society. Taking as their subject not simply the individual citizen or entrepreneur-to-be, but also other organisations, NGOs come to transfer the appropriate meaning of civil society in Post-Apartheid South Africa. These reformist projects are not uncontested however, as the next chapter argues.

Chapter 7

NGOs and the
Struggle for Civil Society

When we marched – slithered – through
slimy mud past riot-shielded cops
in Alex, while children peered wild-eyed
from dark windows, for some of us
these were re-runs of earlier apartheid-
burdened days: but then it was
defiant resolution that drove our hearts,
braced our feet: now sadness at
betrayal
sat stone-heavy on our hearts, our
shouted
slogans, weighted with irony, hung
heavy
over us in grimy air, we winced
at familiar oft-repeated lies. [66]

(Dennis Brutus)

7.1. Introduction

There were 10,000 protest actions in South Africa in 2007, more than anywhere else in the world (Bond 2007c). Social movement activity has primarily arisen out of a need to confront the extreme poverty and material inequality that characterise Post-Apartheid South Africa. Many communities also feel marginalised in relation to service delivery. But there is another fundamental dimension to the prevalence of community protests: their function as expressions of profound betrayal (Hart 2008). The political freedoms of Post-Apartheid have not been accompanied by socio-economic equality for the majority population; protests are a reaction against the ANC's 'broken promises' (Gibson 2006) as well as struggles over the meaning of

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[66] Dennis Brutus writes about his poem 'Memory': 'The march from Johannesburg's Alexandra Township to the Sandton financial district - where the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development was held - on 31 August 2002, with an estimated 30 000 participants, was an important moment in the regrouping of liberation forces after 1994. I was glad to be part of it, but had to be aware of the irony of marching against the forces we had helped put in power' (Email, 05 January 2009, posted on debate@debate.kabissa.org).

nation and liberation. The social movement terrain is extremely diverse, but many movements directly or indirectly challenge the neoliberal economic project that has led to the privatisation of basic services and the increasingly narrowly defined nation-building project designed to empower a small political and economic elite. The government's lashing out at protesters both in terms of violent repression and rhetorical marginalisation has been coupled with invocations of the nation and the national democratic revolution that is supposedly being betrayed by those protesting. This appears to be at once a drive to contain popular mobilisation and an attempt to define the formal institutional spaces where political contestation is allowed.

I have argued in previous chapters that the partnership discourse frames the positioning of NGOs to popular movements and community struggles. My concern in this chapter is to examine how these politics of partnership impact on relations between different civil society actors. I particularly explore the positioning of NGOs in relation to social movements and trace the processes that allow NGOs to define and transfer what civil society should be. These processes can be summed up under the headings of NGO-isation and reformism. Whilst specifically focusing on NGOs' relationships with social movements, I am concerned more broadly with their relations to the 'civil society', which they continuously evoke and for which they may come to substitute, as I will put forward below. It should be noted that the continuum from NGO to movement is not always clear-cut; while the TAC is often cited as one of South Africa's strongest social movements, it also has characteristics of a more traditional NGO. In terms of case organisations, *Gun Free South Africa* began as a social movement but describes itself as an NGO now. I have therefore limited this analysis to data derived from organisations that both regarded themselves as NGOs and that fulfilled the definition of NGO I have adopted. In addition, the great heterogeneity of movements in South Africa involves a variety of positions in relation to NGOs, the state and political engagement. I note these differences but have no space to discuss them in detail, given that I am concerned with NGOs' discursive positioning in relation to movements.

As a context to the analysis brought forward here, it is particularly important to call to mind again Chatterjee's (2001) observation, discussed in Chapter 1, of the potential of an emerging opposition between civil society and political society. His argument is useful for the current purposes as it distinguishes between population and citizens, between the popular and the elite domains. The state under

postcolonialism has had as target of its activities the entire population in its territory, 'maki[ng] available for governmental functions (economic policy, bureaucratic administration, law and political mobilization) a set of rationally manipulable instruments for reaching large sections of the inhabitants of a country as the targets of 'policy' (2001: 173), whereas the domain of civil society institutions, if they are to conform to the normative model presented by western modernity, must exclude from its scope the vast mass of the population and be restricted to a fairly small section of 'citizens'. Chatterjee, speaking about postcolonial India, goes on to argue:

> 'the new domain of civil society [...] will long remain an exclusive domain of the elite, [...] the actual 'public' will not match up to the standards required by civil society and [...] the function of civil society institutions in relation to the public at large will be one of pedagogy rather than of free association (2001: 174).

Although I have adopted a different conception of civil society (see Chapter 1), I have drawn on Chatterjee in terms of the elite NGOs in my research having a pedagogical mission to educate popular movements which are not (yet) part of a proper public.

While I will argue I argue in this chapter that there are constantly discursive attempts – not necessarily conscious ones – by NGOs to take over the space of civil society, effectively substituting civil society for NGOs such as themselves, there are always challenges to these containment strategies by social movements. The analysis brought forward in this chapter then serves to highlight both the attempts by NGOs to govern civil society as well as the limitations of a governmentality approach. Namely, the partial failure of processes of reformism or substitutionism that are discussed here shows that NGOs' projects of rule are not necessarily accomplished in practice. Moreover, forms of state coercion are shown to co-exist with non-coercive, governmental, forms of power.

7. 2. Contextualising internal civil society relations

Civil society in Africa

South African political scientist Adam Habib, in line with the classical definition, describes civil society as 'the organised expression of various interests and values operating in the triangular space between the family, state and the market' (2003: 228).[67] I reasoned earlier that NGOs periodically refer to a generic 'we' of civil society in order to ascertain authenticity, independence or solidarity. But the notion of civil society is also perpetually evoked in the language of donors and international institutions. Civil society was 'discovered' by the development mainstream in the 1980s, reinforcing an orthodoxy that discredited the state as at best inefficient. Civil society support programmes were massively extended globally and by the mid-1990s the term had also become a fixture in debates on South Africa's democratic future. This was mainly due to the influx of international development funding and development knowledge into the country in the period between 1990 and 1994, during which global policy discourses such as 'good governance' and 'civil society' were circulated and adopted by national NGOs (Pieterse 1997).

Some may think that the heyday of civil society discourse is 'passé' (Edwards 2004b), but this is certainly not backed up by an analysis of donor priorities and institutional policy texts in South Africa, nor was it reflected in the interviews I carried out. Here, the link between a strong civil society and a healthy democracy was often emphasised: 'unless you have civil society in this country in a healthy state and being quite strong, the democracy we have could flounder' (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07). Or Richard: 'if you don't have a vibrant active civil society you are not going to have the pressure on government, the political incentives and disincentives to make government do what it should do. And probably vice versa' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07). Its plurality was also highlighted: 'South Africa is an incredibly sophisticated complex full of contradictions, very dynamic, and that's largely a tribute to its very very powerful civil society sector' (S. Isaacs, *Mindset*, 2 Apr 07).

Enthusiastic assessments of a not always clearly-defined civil society, as they are frequently found in policy texts and donor guidelines for South Africa, can

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[67] There is considerable discussion in the various civil society schools of thoughts about what is in- and excluded in civil society, and particularly whether the economy and family should be part of civil society. It goes beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss in detail the broader literature or provide a genealogy of the term. Key debates in the field can be divided into a 'alternative and a 'liberal' lineage, the former covering Marx and Gramsci and Habermas, the latter Tocqueville and Putnam. See Edwards (2004) and Elliott (2003) for overviews.

perhaps be criticised for tending to overlook the anti-democratic potential of civil society organisations. There is also a danger of assuming that civil society can be transposed to any given political, economic or cultural context. Anthropologists for instance have questioned the salience of universalised notions of Western civil society development in the context of African states. Chabal and Daloz (1999) note that the term has no purchase in a region where the disintegration of state power, related to processes of liberalisation and the debt crisis, means that there is no hegemonic state which civil society could work in opposition to. The continent, they claim, pursues its own specific form of modernisation without a functionally operating civil society (also see Bayart 1993). Following this argument, external agencies are shaping civil societies in concordance with processes of neoliberal reform. The authors therefore rightly identify the link between civil society and a Northern development apparatus.

Others highlight civil society as a governance concern, enabling a re-organisation of state and society and indicating a deeper penetration of global actors into countries' national development. From this perspective, transnational actors evoke the interests of a 'civil society' (or 'the poor') to legitimise their penetration of national political arenas such as health or education (Gould 2005a). This argument is particularly salient outside of South Africa where states are often weak and it may be argued that international development actors such as INGOs have taken over functions of government (see Mosse [2005] and Gould [2005b]). Others yet have contended that the narrative of civil society can only ever be a replay of western capitalist modernity – imagined as an autonomous space of individual freedom and the protection of the self-determining individual – neglecting the 'sorts of public sphere presumed by specifically African relations of production and exchange, codes of conduct or styles of social intercourse' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999: 23).

These critiques are clearly significant: the first set breaks with a universalised notion of what is a historically and culturally specific Western idea, the second points to the rationalities underlying neoliberal development regimes and the last emphasises the need to re-conceptualise postcolonial civil society in Africa. Yet, South Africa's civil society is unique in that the length, intensity and impact of both colonial and settler interventions undermined indigenous structures and social networks more than in neighbouring countries (Greenstein 2003). Moreover, NGOs are bound up with the Post-Apartheid state in a number of ways, as I showed earlier.

The construction of civil society in liberal theory (and many of its radical critiques) as a binary opposite to the state (or a site of struggle) oversimplifies the complex relationships and frequent collaborations between state and civil society actors. Rather, the trans-scalar character of the development domain and the dense intersectoral relationships that NGOs are involved in and produce suggest that a governmentality-inspired theoretical framework as it was outlined in chapter 2 better captures the dynamics of their interaction.

Habib's (2003) model is useful because he suggests that Post-Apartheid civil society is made of three blocs, each of which is characterised by its own set of relations to the state: formalised NGOs, survivalist community-based organisations and social movements. I have discussed the first bloc in chapter 5: relations to the state are heterogeneous but mainly engaged or collegiate. Community-based organisations essentially assist people with surviving the effects of the state's policies but do not interact with the state. Such organisations make up the bulk of CSOs in the country. The third bloc is discussed in more detail below. Habib rightly draws attention to the fact that these distinctions are not cast in stone; many 'social movements' have increasingly taken on characteristics of formalised NGOs, a process I discuss subsequently. However, whilst he emphasises the plurality of South African civil society as the 'best guarantee for the consolidation of democracy' (2003: 240) his analysis does not address the relationship among these three blocs – which is my concern in this chapter.

Community struggles and social movements in South Africa

Habermas (1987) has argued that it is social movements that are the principal actors for resistance and emancipation, responsible for generating and extending the public sphere in democratic systems. Whilst the 'colonization of the lifeworld' commodifies social life, replacing open dialogue by bureaucratic procedures and economic transactions, this commercialisation also gives rise to new social movements which construct relatively autonomous spaces for public debate about the legitimacy of the

political and economic system.[68] Similarly, Heller and Ntlokonkulu indicate that a social movement cannot be assessed simply in terms of how it impacts on the state:

> Social movements often have their most lasting effects in civil society. They can create new identities and new solidarities, they can raise new issues, they can bring new actors into public life (cited in Kuljian 2004: para. 4).

In order to understand contemporary relationships amongst the different parts of South African civil society, the transformations of the sector around the time of the transition as I described them in chapter 4, are important to recall again. The beginning implementation of neo-liberal policies after 1994 had a fundamental effect on the operational relationships between those civil society organisations that had survived the initial funding crisis by re-orienting themselves towards the new Government or international donors, and those that did not. As Dale McKinley, one of the founders of the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF), puts it:

> Because most of the NGOs that existed were orientated towards either the new government and began to access funding and supporting state programmes and all those other developmental [things]. Or they hooked up with new international big donors and began to carry out sort of more classic kinds of developmental NGO work. (Interview, 11 Jul 07).

This development resulted in a vast gap in civil society in terms of movements, social movements, and CBOs throughout most of the 1990s, which can be characterised by a demobilisation of popular organizations and a depletion of organisational capacity at the grassroots. The hegemonic project of the ANC in particular has drawn previous activists into the state bureaucracy and has significantly shaped the relationships existing today between formal intermediary NGOs – even those of a progressive nature – and social movements.

Fast forward a decade and South Africa has more protest actions than anywhere else in the world. Given that South Africa is governed by an overwhelming

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[68] There is not enough space here to bring forward a critique of Habermas' original account; see for instance Fraser (2003) and Edwards, G. (2004a). Whereas Habermas, and new social movement theorists after him, argued that the new social movements were not 'problems of distribution but concern the grammar of life', distributional issues are clearly extremely significant in the formation of movements in South Africa - although identity is also a driver (cf. Ballard et al. 2004.). Also see Harvey (2005) who contends that more attention needs to be paid to the struggles occasioned by 'accumulation through dispossession' that focus the costs of devaluations of surplus capital upon the weakest and most vulnerable territories.

one party majority with weak opposition parties, social movements arguably do not only represent marginalised communities but also operate as a watchdog to the ANC (White 2007). The government makes considerable efforts to downplay these actions and to marginalise protesters as having been agitated by the 'ultra-left'. These sections of civil society have most clearly been the target of the Mbeki administration's 'you are either with us or against us' rhetoric, through which protest (or simply criticism) of the government is habitually constructed as treason of the 'new South African' nation-building project. It is usually the bulk of protesters that are ignored in Government statements, whereas community leaders, civic organisers and critical commentators in the media or academia are variously referred to as 'coconut intellectuals' betraying the National Democratic Revolution or as the white racist elites' 'native helpers'.

During my time in Johannesburg, barely a day went by that I did not read about community protests concerning the lack of service delivery, capacity or public consultation. Protest actions comprise a whole array of issues and constituencies, and vary considerably in scale, organisational form and capacity, and reach.[69] Ballard et al. (2004), writing on South African movements in particular and paying attention to the heterogeneity of the terrain, define them as politically or socially directed collectives that tend to involve multiple organisations and networks and seek to change aspects of the socio-political and economic system in which they are located. Ashwin Desai draws attention to the background of the neoliberal project against which movements have emerged:

> The state's inability or unwillingness to be a provider of public services and the guarantor of the conditions of collective consumption has been a spark for a plethora of community movements (...) The general nature of the neo-liberal emergency concentrates and aims these demands towards the state (...) Activity has been motivated by social actors spawned by the new conditions of accumulation that lie outside of the ambit of the trade union

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[69] Reflecting this diversity, see for instance Ballard et al. (2006a, 2006b), Buhlungu (2004), Desai (2002), Dwyer (2006), Gibson (2006), McKinley (2006), McKinley & Veriava (2005), White (2007), Pithouse (2008). On social movement theories, variously focusing on resource mobilisation, political opportunity or framing processes, see Ballard et al. (2004). Sometimes South African movements are also referred to as new social movements (NSMs), although this perhaps overemphasises similarities with what are historically and culturally specific movements. See for instance Habermas (1987), Crossley (2002) and Edwards (2004a).

movement and its style of organising. What distinguishes these community movements from political parties, pressure groups and NGOs is mass mobilisation as the prime source of social sanction (cited in McKinley 2006: 418).

A number of factors have thus contributed to the growth in protest actions. These include the extremely high levels of poverty and inequality that are in part outcomes of neoliberal restructuring after the transition, resulting in mass unemployment and the commercialisation of basic services. With many residents in poor communities and townships having little or no income, an 'economics of non-payment' (Desai 2002) developed. Ballard et al. (2004) identify three types of social struggle emerging alongside the second democratic election and Mbeki's presidency: firstly, those directed against a particular Government policy (such as COSATU's opposition to GEAR); secondly, those focusing on Government's failure in service delivery (such as the TAC on ARVs); and thirdly, those challenging the enforcement of specific government policies like the cost-recovery model for service delivery (such as the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee).

Moreover, following the mobilisations around the World Conference against Racism (WCAR) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2001 and 2002 respectively that led to the formation of the Social Movement Indaba (SMI), the Government started to ban gatherings and repress movements – sparking new struggles and increasing support for existing movements. These events represented the first very public rejection of the ANC and their economic policies as well as signifying collective national action of previously highly localised community struggles (Hlatshwayo 2007). They are significant for this context also because they marked a defining point in terms of repositioning the relationships between some of the movements and NGOs: a small set of progressive NGOs and donors, both in South Africa and internationally, now began to support these movements. At the same time it showed the extent to which a majority of NGOs were either removed from the socio-economic realities, or were unwilling to align with the grievances of the majority population. Desai describes the scenario at the WCAR:

> A dramatic clarification of the cleft between representatives of 'civil society' and 'civil society' itself occurred when the Johannesburg contingent arrived at

the Kingsmead Oval to ask for the assistance of their supposed allies in the NGO movement. Having just alighted from an all-night train trip, they had nowhere to stay [...] It says a lot that their allies not only reclined in horror [at the Jo'burgers wanting to erect tents on a small patch of land], but called the police to have the Johannesburg arrivals dispersed (these people were not accredited and certainly hadn't paid the entrance fee) (2002: 133).

Some NGO leaders in this research dismissed social movements as expressing local and single issues, perhaps in line with the orthodox understanding of such movements in the literature. However, the upsurge in popular protest extends well beyond specific local grievances. These broader and deeper tensions burst into open view in 2004 when a 'second generation of new social movements' (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07) came into existence. Crisis committees and concerned residents' groups formed everywhere, protesting poor service delivery and the ongoing corruption in councils. Again, the reaction of the Government to these protests has been both brutal and framed in terms of betrayal, as Jane's account clearly illustrates:

> One of the main movements we have been supporting has been the Greater Harrismith Concerned Residents committee that took up the plight of people struggling against effectively commodification of service delivery in Harrismith. And that resulted in a march where a 17-year old youth was shot and killed, and there were 16 people who were arrested in that march and charged with public violence and sedition, which I think was the first time that people were charged with a form of low treason since '94. Simply for engaging in a protest action (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07).

Gillian Hart claims that this second wave of municipal protests in fact denotes the emergence of a 'movement beyond movements', arguing that important processes increasingly take place outside the scope of social movements due to a 'failure of the first round of post-apartheid NSMs to tap into huge reservoirs of popular anger and discontent' (Hart 2008: 8). It is certainly the case that some movements have dismissed the Social Movement Indaba as a vehicle for NGO interest, which has in turn struggled to keep a united front. I explore the tensions deriving from resource flows and other forms of capital between different civil society actors more fully below.

7.3. NGO relations with civil society: from capacity building to distancing

<u>Building capacity and bridging the gap</u>

Most of the NGOs I interviewed saw capacity building in civil society as one of their primary roles. Rama described his NGO's capacity building function thus:

> What we have tried to do very consciously is bring other NGOs on board. It's a conscious decision to build partnerships, even at great expense to ourselves. Because some partners just do not have the capacity. So you really have to spend a lot of time and effort in building and it's starting to show now, in terms of the respect, in terms of people being able to take over in certain areas and districts in the work that we do. But that is the single biggest investment we have made in building our partners and trying to get the work done most cost-effectively (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07).

This extract highlights how capacity building, even as it is understood by NGOs themselves, is tied up with claims to efficiency that were emblematic of donor conceptions of partnerships. What also emerges here is the positioning of NGOs as middle man. There are similarities to the classic donor-beneficiary model in this partnership of NGOs with CBOs, with NGOs as the senior partner holding the purse strings. The following extract speaks to the division of labour in NGO-CBO relationships:

> We often find that those [local] organisations are very important role players in regard to any success of a programme we want to provide. They already have the confidence of the community, they have established relationships with the very same group of people that we want to work with. So we work with them in terms of offering support. What we also do very often is we recognise that some of the CBOs do not have the resources or capacity to do everything we expect them to do, so we bring in the resources including financial resources, but we also help to build capacity (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

Similar ideas are expressed by Rama, whose organisation also relies heavily on community-based structures:

> We work a lot with CBO network COMBOCO in this province. And they have over 300 CBOs based on the ground, doing actual work. And we're delivering a voter education programme for this province – it makes more sense for me to work through their structures than to set up an alternative DDP structure. And so I bring them on board, we tell them listen; this is exactly how much I have, this is what we can afford to do, I am not keeping anything under the

table. The transparency which we have done has bred a lot of trust. And therefore, people come to us when they are in trouble, when they need help, when they need capacity building. And one of our focal areas is the whole area of organisational development (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07).

The values that are alluded to in these extracts – such as transparency and trust – re-iterate a normative understanding of partnerships. Mirroring what I outlined in chapter 5, the arguments for partnerships within civil society are similar: mutual benefit through pooled expertise and shared information and knowledge, as well as the potential for leverage for other partnerships. Another important aspect of non-profit partnerships is to share administrative tasks such as fundraising and reporting. The functions attributed to NGOs by the donors come to be attributed to CBOs who are just as 'essential to the success of projects' and 'know the reality on the ground'.

The above comment about CBOs 'doing actual work' is perhaps not so much a slip of the tongue as it is an accurate assessment of the role of intermediary NGOs, whose work precisely consists of organisationally developing the capacity of other organisations who then do the actual work. Organisational development as one of the primary areas of activity for intermediary organisations also involves the acquisition of expertise and an element of restructuring. Organisations are to attain administrative and financial skills and are trained in media work, research and monitoring capacity. By restructuring or streamlining CBOs in line with the requirements for expertise of their NGO partners, a particular version of civil society organisation is reproduced.

The funding crisis has led many of the blue-chip NGOs to work outside of South Africa. *CSVR* is one of them:

> We also work with communities outside South Africa: in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, and other countries. We cannot work in these countries with any amount of success unless we work with local partners, they are the people on the ground they know the area better than we do, they have established a relationship of confidence with the communities, with the authorities in these countries and they are able to bring in expertise and knowledge that is extremely valuable to the success of the project (A. Motala, *CSVR*, 14 Mar 07).

Challenges and dangers associated with this extension of activities include NGOs not being mature enough to deal with the expansion into different countries. A corollary of this is a possible dilution or scattering of the core activities of an

organisation. Whilst local partners are essential to the success of an NGO project, South African NGOs also carry out specific capacity building programmes in the SACD region. IDASA is one of the organisations that 'follow[ed] the market' (R. Calland, *IDASA*, 23 Apr 07) into the rest of the continent:

> We don't work with the NGO world to formally build capacity, although interestingly we have done that outside South Africa. We have got a, basically a product, which we have used in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola and the DRC, where we go in for a year and train NGOs and build capacity for usually 15 NGOs, and one week its advocacy, next it's admin, the next week it's dealing with the press, the next week it's whatever. And over 40 weeks, spread through a year, we help build capacity in NGOs (ibid.).

Here, the concept of what NGOs should be and what they should do is transported across the South African border and into the wider region. As becomes apparent from Richard's account, they ought to be doing advocacy, be professional and organised and be media-savvy. This certainly mirrors relations between Northern and Southern NGOs.[70] Specific practices, techniques and types of expertise are circulated through precisely such capacity building programmes and NGO networks; capacity building and organisational learning constitute strategies to (re)produce organisations with specific characteristics such as the ones mentioned above. They are concerned with a reform of civil society, with NGOs acting as experts who transfer the proper practice of development and institutionalise this expertise in civil society. NGO expansionism has thus far been neglected as an area that raises important issues about the pedagogical role of these organisations and about the role in transferring technologies and vocabularies of development.

It is perhaps ironic that capacity building, in the form of technical assistance, management training and consultancy, constitutes one approach to overcoming the traditional resource inequalities between North and South. Capacity building arguably carries the assumption that Southern organisations need to be taught and trained. There are also inherent issues of the unevenness of partnerships between more powerful South African NGOs and their local partners that must be acknowledged in any 'export' of South African NGO capacity into the wider region. Whilst on the face of it this export model makes sense since civil society capacity is present in South Africa, it is also possible to argue that an older North-South power

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[70] On NGO relations North-South, see Lewis (1998), Lister (2000), Mawdsley et al. (2002) and Brehm et al. (2004).

inequality between donor and beneficiary, or between INGO and local NGO, is merely replaced by a South-South hierarchy between professionalised South African NGOs and their less powerful regional partners. Crucially, it is donor pressure as opposed to, say, solidarity that has precipitated the capacity building activities of the case NGOs in neighbouring countries. South Africa is the region's only superpower and is often seen as 'new imperialist', for instance regarding its economic policy and military objectives. The foreign-funded civil society expansionism may well indicate that this super power status is reproduced in the sphere of development.

Relations to social movements: from support to solidarity

Moving on to how NGOs understood their relationships with social movements, their position in relation to them can be split into three categories: support/ assistance, solidarity and detachment. My research is concerned primarily with how NGO staff discursively constructed their organisation's position with social movements. However, as far as I was able to observe organisational practices or had access to them via project documentation, individuals' positioning often contradicted these or responses were at the very least ambivalent. Perhaps most significantly, virtually all the people I interviewed rhetorically marginalised or dismissed movements and community struggles in one way or another.

Some NGOs have in recent years played a supportive role to movements by providing financial or legal resources and through campaigning and publicity work.[71] The director of one of these NGOs describes their role in the following way:

> What we spend a lot of time doing is, we want to move out of what we call fire fighter mode where we run around the country and we try to sort out people's freedom of expression issues. We rather want to build capacity for social movements to solve their own freedom of expression problems. So we developed paralegal committees within social movements for instance, where movements contest the banning of gatherings themselves or can source lawyers in other parts of the country. Or they can fight with the police in order to prevent gatherings from happening in the first place, because they'll know exactly what the Banning of Gatherings Act says. So movements can handle claims against the police, restrictive bail conditions, all these kinds of things (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07).

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[71] Some Northern NGOs such as War on Want also support some the more established social movements such as the *Anti-Privatisation Forum*. This research is not explicitly concerned with INGO-social movement relations but a shift in terms of how such organisations conceived of popular movements has arguably taken place in recent years.

This then relates to NGOs' capacity building role. As I described above, the WCAR and WSSD and the increasing repression of protest by the state constituted a decisive moment in NGOs' positioning towards social and community movements. This is arguably not least because freedom of expression issues, concerned with political rights, are close to the key concerns of liberal NGOs. There are also those organisations that have traditionally been aligned with organised labour and therefore characterise themselves as close to the newly emergent movements in the country:

> Many things have changed [since the end of Apartheid]. But at heart we would still see ourselves as a facilitator as a means to ensure that activists in South Africa today, whether they are in the labour movement or community based social movements, have somehow the political tools to form campaigns, to debate, to contest political power even today. [...] What has changed is that our focus is both with the labour movement but also to work with the newer social movements (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07).

Whilst NGOs may see themselves as aligned with the values of social movements, the extent to which NGOs are able to support movements materially is clearly dependent on their own funding modalities. Staff of progressive NGOs told me that their donors had expressed concerns about support of social movements and had indicated that funding could be withdrawn: 'we have found it extremely difficult to sell that shift [towards working with social movements] to a number of funders [...] there have been a number of our donors who have raised questions around our work with social movements' (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07). The kinds of relationships that developed in the last six or so years have been between movements and a small set of NGOs and academic institutions that have managed to secure what may be called solidarity funding. Accordingly, they have made up only a very small proportion of organisations sampled for this research.

A second category of NGOs comprised those who felt that the appropriate relationship between the two should be one of 'solidarity' and 'mutual respect', yet were not actively supporting movements. As with the above set of organisations, these NGOs understood the contribution of social movements to democracy as positive: social activism and protest are signs of the 'maturity' of Post-Apartheid democracy. This position draws on an understanding of civil society as plural, collectively fulfilling diverse roles that 'sometimes assist and other times compel the

state to meet its obligations and responsibilities to its citizenry' (Habib 2003: 239-240). Some informants similarly pointed out that civil society is large enough to accommodate everyone:

> It's plural, civil society. Some parts of civil society would have a good collegial relationship with the state, and others would have a confrontational relationship. But, ya, that's a good thing. You can't have this homogeneous construction of what civil society is (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07).

Going further than this, Rama portrayed social movements as a vanguard that demonstrates the failures of NGOs in challenging the status quo: 'In Durban you shouldn't have people living in such squalor [...] [Social movements] have become that critical voice to say that's the role you should have been playing' (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07). This position is quite illustrative of NGO professionals in South Africa. It offers the ability to advance a critique of one's own position as working for a formalised NGO and the missed opportunity to take a stand for poverty reduction or failures in service delivery:

> The trouble with us, we academise everything and we try to rationalise everything. They just went and they did it. They just marched. They felt strongly about doing something, they went and they did it. They got beaten up, they went back and they did it again (ibid.).

Several points can be drawn out from these statements. Firstly, informants tended to emphasise the 'marching' aspect of social movements. This is appropriate in the sense that one characteristic of new social movements can be seen as their high degree of popular participation. Nonetheless, they cannot be reduced to it. Secondly, NGOs are aware of and have internalised the critiques that are brought forward against them. Imraan characterised his organisation as having 'fancy funding from Ford', which meant that they needed to 'construct a sort of ideological orientation about where you locate yourself' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07). The above self-criticism of 'always academising everything' also echoes common criticisms by movements of NGOs. For example, it invokes the critique by *Abahlali baseMjondolo* that academics and NGOs as outside intellectuals speak for, rather than to, the poor. S'bu Zikode, the elected President of the shackdweller movement:

It is all about numbers, it's all about masses; that's where our strength lies. But our masses are not just bodies without land and houses and bodies marching on the street. We can be poor materially, but we are not poor in mind [...] Some of the intellectuals understand that we think our own struggle. Others still don't understand this (Zikode 2008: 122).

If, as I said above, marching looms large in NGO accounts of movements, Zikode's refusal of being reduced to being 'bodies' is particularly noteworthy. This refusal seems to me to speak directly to NGOs who have a tendency to essentialise movements either romantically as spontaneous grassroots uprisings or as disorganised masses who are unable to articulate their demands themselves. This construction as being unable to 'think their own struggle' then activates NGOs' role as intermediary and bridge-builder. As such, it can translate the physicality of marching into a set of well-articulated and well-presented advocacy and lobbying demands.

Relations to social movements II: from solidarity to distancing
The following account by an NGO leader of a meeting of the Durban shackdwellers movement with a group of NGOs is worth citing at length, as it again evokes the sense of refusal I just discussed:

> The movements almost took us by surprise. In KZN we have Abahlali BaseMjondolo, and we've been working with them a little bit – trying to work with them. And it was a very good learning curve for us because we were told "we will come to you if we need help, but right now we are okay". Which was very interesting in itself. There was a movement that had a very clear issue. They had a force mobilised behind them. And they were telling us; you do not summon us to a meeting; do not give us an agenda and make us come here like beggars. You know – what can we do to help you? I mean we had about 89 big NGOs, and we called Abahlali BaseMjondolo, and the people who convened was a church organisation. I won't mention the name. And they really planned it very badly, and we just turned up because we were invited to come along. And here was this guy from Abahlali BaseMjondolo, unemployed, homeless, taking on this church organisation; saying this is not acceptable. And if you do not put it right we'll walk out of this meeting. And these big guys with their collars, this has not happened to us before. I mean they came, they wanted to give them blankets and everything else. They said no, no it's not about that. We're very proud of what we're doing and we'll do this thing our way. If you can contribute to that, that is better, if you can't we'll

say thank you and just move on. And to me, anyway, that was a great personal learning (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07).

NGOs' decision not to support social movements despite pronouncements of solidarity may be motivated by concerns about their own funding: 'quite a few NGOs [...] have shunned working with social movements because they don't want to be tainted with the aura of radicalism', as Jane put it (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07). Even progressive donors have shied away from outwardly supporting social movements via their NGO funding because they also give to the South African government. Some NGOs have already felt the consequences of aligning themselves too explicitly with movements that are seen as anti-Government. Moreover, participation in public-community partnerships and tendered-for government projects as I have described it in chapter 5, also gives little incentive to contest government policies – after all, it is usually neoliberal policies that have given rise to these partnerships in the first place. So the rhetorical marginalisation of social movements that I turn to now is certainly in part motivated by sustainability concerns. It is also indicative of the intermediary position of many formalised NGOs that want to be able to partner with anyone and everyone.

The third category comprises the perhaps surprisingly large – given their own positioning as progressive – number of NGO staff that distanced themselves from social movements. There were a few instances of straightforward criticism, such as in this interview with *Agenda*'s Michelle:

> I think we all need to have a bit more of a check in. What exactly do we want to achieve? Because I think the whole purpose of moving towards social change is everybody's business. It's not just a business of the social movements. [...] I think there needs to be some critical reflection on how some of the structural elements within the social movements in KZN or wherever, how are some of those personalities advancing it or limiting [social change] (M. Oyedan, 26 Jun 07).

But in most instances, distancing worked in more complex ways. No one dismissed social movements outright and competing discursive strategies were employed to describe how their organisation understood the contemporary role of social movements. Interviewees praised the contribution of social movements to democratic practice in the abstract, but then criticised the strategies and tactics they employ. They stressed an inherent connection or communality with movements, for

instance by evoking the 'we' of civil society, but also distanced themselves from them. This mirrors somewhat what I described in chapter 5 as NGOs' 'schizophrenic' relations with Government.

Imraan's account shows some of the complexities of NGO positioning in civil society:

> A large number of social movements have disowned official spaces of engagement. With this Gramscian idea of, this is about social control, why should we engage with the state on the state's terms? Engaging with the state, have you seen any sort of meaningful change in policy? This is about funding, and US agenda, World Bank agenda etc., in World Bank-appropriated language. So against that backdrop of the critique of official spaces, yes I mean I am very critical of this whole thing of public participation, and how it has emerged in the world. In some ways it is highly problematic. So I would, at CPP always say that we should work with social movements. And maybe say to social movements: is it strategic for you to totally disown these processes of engagement? At the same time I will fully support, from the background that we come from in this country, of burning the tyres and protesting outside. If social movements choose to do that I would support it personally (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07).

Informants also often alluded to their personal credentials as activists by way of introduction, and then led into a critique of social movements. Imraan pointed out that some of his 'closest buddies are from hardcore social movement backgrounds' (I. Buccus, *CPP*, 26 Jun 07). Michelle similarly drew attention to her biography:

> You know I have always worked at a grassroots level. So for me social movements are critical. And I think we as civil society organisations, as NGOs that might give you a different flavour from a social movement, I think there is a need for civil society organisations to put its weight and put its resources and thoughtfully move social movements to a place where it is much more credible. I think it's too disparate in KZN (M. Oyedan, *Agenda*, 26 Jun 07).

The notion of the grassroots is evoked here, again lending authenticity and groundedness to her subsequent criticism of social movement practice. I already discussed how biographical authenticity is employed to emphasise NGO's organisational independence in a previous chapter. Here, it appears to necessarily preface and thereby legitimate criticism of community activism. The above ambivalent positioning of respondents speaks to the progression of a career activist that feels at home with the practices and vocabularies of movements, NGOs, donors

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and government alike, and sees his or her role as translating uncivilised protest into orderly lobbying.

This is evident in the sentiment of wanting to move social movements to a 'more credible' place. Imraan displays a similar attitude when he wants to work with movements but ask them whether 'it is strategic for you to totally disown these processes of engagement' (I. Buccus, CPP, 25 Jun 07). These statements indicate a will to change practices of movements. Such a pedagogical drive, or 'reformism', is a central aspect of NGOs' relations to social movements. In order to be able to articulate a reformist project, social movements must first be diagnosed as outside, problematic or otherwise in need of being 'thoughtfully moved'.

Moreover, whilst such a position initially seems to be contradictory, I believe that it is in fact indicative of the habitus of being a NGO professional in South Africa (and beyond). If I were, for analytical purposes, to imagine a composite figure made up of the NGO professionals I encountered during my fieldwork, this NGO worker is as comfortable in a suit, writing reports and meeting with international funding agencies as she is aligning with protesters against the commodification of services. The NGO worker can adapt to the changing environments, languages and practices like a chameleon. How the apparent contradiction of this positioning is negotiated and how it remains productive is by keeping these two identities separate from one another, but being able to move comfortably between both worlds.

Constructing an outside

In order to establish the need to change, NGOs often pitted 'constructive' engagement with the state against 'marching on the street'. Mass mobilisation was portrayed as out-dated, making what was framed as Apartheid-era struggle tactics no longer appropriate in post-Apartheid liberal democracy. Social movements thus appeared backward, their methods archaic. Conversely, institutionalised politics, the media and the courts were constructed as the proper and legitimate ways in which protest can be registered and policy impacted on in the democratic era. If interviewees considered any movements as effective, it was usually the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) for its 'mixture of strategies'. In contrast, township-based movements like Abahlali or the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign were characterised in terms of 'burning the tyres and protesting outside'. In contrast to

whatever stance of opposition or engagement was attributed to movements by my interviewees, a study of a wide range of organisations in fact concluded that they all 'tended to practice an ill-defined mix of in-system and extra-institutional strategies' (Ballard et al. 2006b: 406). The stigmatisation and criminalisation of protest by the state has clearly shifted the terrain of legality for many movements in that they did not set out to operate illegally. But it has seemingly also informed the rhetoric of some NGOs, as I show in this chapter by highlighting how they distanced themselves from movement activity.

The distinction between being on the inside or the outside is already coupled with a notion of backwardness or progress, with being crude or being refined in one's approach. The distinction speaks about being civilised or being uncivilised – having to remain on the outside, being raw, uneducated and so on. In other words, to be civilised is to be in civil society. The inside/ outside binary also speaks to the dualism of good and sane that is constituted by that which is other and dangerous. This ties in with the observations made earlier about protesters being reduced to being marching bodies, 'the poor' or the mob. These masses are on the one hand patronised because they are unable to articulate their demands in any other way but marching. On the other hand, they still pose a danger because of being potentially unruly, explosive and uncontrollable. Conversely, what is allowed 'inside' are the polite and 'well-mannered activists who play by the rules, settle conflicts peacefully, and do not break any windows' (Carothers, cited in Howell and Pearce 2001: 42).

Furthermore, a spatial analogy concerning the geographies of Apartheid and Post-Apartheid is invoked through the inside/ outside binary. Townships emerged to house a constant supply of cheap labour for the Apartheid cities whilst avoiding a mixing of the different racial groups. Today still physically located away from city centres they very much represent Mbeki's 'second economy', their visibility and continued existence a constant reminder of South Africa's huge inequalities.[72] Townships played a huge role in the Anti-Apartheid struggle, but are now 'the eyesore that prevents the South African cities from becoming "world class"'. (Gibson 2008: 9). An example of this has been the Government's gearing up to the FIFA

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[72] Since 'the poor' have come to the city centres, new city 'centres' have sprung up in suburbia. Johannesburg's far-northern middle-class residential suburbs like Morningside or Sunninghill that serve the new 'centre' of Sandton are as example for this organisation of space in Post-Apartheid. At the same time, inner-city evictions have occurred for a long time and have intensified in preparation for the 2010 World Cup.

World Cup by mass evicting informal settlements near newly-built stadia (as well as moving communities due to the building of new infrastructure itself).

Alongside a judgement about which means are more appropriate and advanced, NGO accounts of social movement activity demarcate how a modern, liberal democratic civil society organisation ought to be and to behave:

> It then comes down to something about being effective and the impact that you are able to have. If you look at some of the protests that are going on now in South Africa about lack of service delivery; these poor people go mad and they protest and whatever – in whatever way they are able to. But the impact they are having on the national Government is, I mean, they do not have an impact on national Government. So if you are gonna engage with the major policy issues and try to shift the way your society operates, you are gonna have to have organised forms of civil society. But the best model would appear to be at this stage some kind of sensitive NGO, that this is how we operate and this is where we get our resources from (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07).

Besides the fact that Will's assessment may simply be incorrect – many people told me during the course of my fieldwork that the only language the ANC supposedly understands is people marching on the streets – it serves to identify as most effective civil society organisation the sensitive NGO. Conversely, there is the assumption that community-based movements are not part of civil society proper. NGOs' construction of movements therefore resonates strongly with a 'mainstream' understanding of civil society as a consensual arena for formal and modern organisations suited to a liberal-democratic model of society (Howell and Pearce 2001). The liberal tenet requires more civil society as a guarantor for a stable democracy, but it is not the kind of 'raw' civil society that social movements represent.

Protests against corruption, for example, are in principle tolerated and even encouraged – provided they are carried out in a responsible manner and directed at the appropriate authorities – because they link up with accountability and good governance demands and represent the targeted empowerment of civil society. Conversely, challenges of a socio-economic nature are not well received. This is also where protest clashes with other forms of authority such as that of the state, and where ruling through consent co-exists with other forms of power, in this case violent repression. Given that Apartheid was defined by such a sovereign form of power, it becomes paramount for the authorities to continuously emphasise how they differ

from this Apartheid mode, for instance through the discursive marginalisation of protest as betrayal. Movements face two sets of pressures: perpetually sought to be represented by NGO and academic elites and being criminalised and repressed by the state.

7.4. Learning how things operate: reformism and refusal

NGO-isation and Reformism

Once the appropriate civil society organisation is identified, other actors can be reformed and governed in line with their understanding of how civil society should operate in a newly-democratised system. As we have seen, the kind of organisation supposedly best suited to Post-Apartheid liberalism is an efficient and formalised NGO, staffed with middle-class activists capable of monitoring and accounting. Such NGO staff – whether they fell into the second or third categories identified above – expressed the need to change social movements' practices. Civil society relations are thus also characterised by a pedagogical drive of NGOs wanting to shape social movements 'in their image' – a process I refer to as reformism. Reformism is linked to, but different from what has been described elsewhere as the NGO-isation of movements (Lang 2000, Smith 2007, Richter 2006), given that I conceive of the former as concerned with changing behaviours and mindsets.[73] Arundhati Roy writes:

> Eventually - on a smaller scale but more insidiously – the capital available to NGOs plays the same role in alternative politics as the speculative capital that flows in and out of the economies of poor countries [...]The NGO-ization of politics threatens to turn resistance into a well-mannered, reasonable, salaried, 9-to-5 job (2005: para. 4).

In this thesis, NGO-isation is understood as the processes of formalisation that occur when CSOs obtain funding resources (often, but not always, from formal

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[73] Concerns about the NGO-isation of social movements have been expressed in a variety of settings, such as Palestine (Smith 2007), Latin America (Alvarez 1999) and India (Krishnaraj 2003), each of which attribute a slightly different meaning to the term. Also see Sangtin Writers and Nagar (2006).

NGOs). To enter funding arrangements necessarily entails the professionalisation of a CSO, for instance by having to comply with a variety of auditing procedures arising from the need for accountability. This is a result of the quantitative-analytical expertise needed for the reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices that I examined as a central aspect of NGOs' organisational form in chapter 6. Movements and CBOs begin to resemble NGOs in character and organisational structure.

The streamlining of the NGO sector that was charted in chapter 4 is therefore shown to spread to civil society more broadly:

> The trouble with [wanting to have impact] is that the moment you do that, you immediately need a clustering of skills because you can have a group of people going and marching, saying these and these things suck, and we are not prepared to accept the lack of delivery. If you are gonna do it again, you need someone to organise the meeting, you need someone to do this, you need someone with organisational skills, the next thing you are gonna need someone with financial skills, you need someone with management skills, one of these things have to come together. So you can't, it's almost an inevitable kind of thing that you have to lead towards that kind of a model (W. Bird, *MMP*, 13 Jun 07).

This extract highlights the range of skills and expertise that NGO-isation produces: organisational, financial and managerial. The channels through which an NGO-isation of movements is circulated are organisational practices and procedures that fall under the banner of accountability and are linked to the responsibilisation of civil society organisations. Such institutionalised expertise in civil society can serve as conduit for governing practices.

The character of the movement begins to reflect the character of the NGO when movements begin to direct more and more of their resources towards their relationships with the funder: 'The struggle on the ground gets replaced by meetings and workshops, reports, meetings and workshops, meetings and workshops' (D. McKinley, *APF*, 11 Jul 07) There is then a clear parallel to the processes of homogenisation that occur in partnerships of NGOs with public and private sector. Partnerships operate as channels for technologies of government, for example auditing, vocabulary, physical technologies and infrastructure. The notion of an ideological co-option of the struggle, as is often put forward by activists, arguably does not fully capture the insidious and complex practices of alignment in terms of organisational structures.

The following extract points to the power relations inherent in NGO relationships with community movements and NGOs' reformist inclination:

> And I mean we've offered them, listen, if you want to use our training manuals here, if you want capacity building, having a workshop and sandwiches and stuff, we can provide that. And we have materials and manuals that you want to use, that's fine. Or send a fax, you can come and do that. But we also, one of them came to me and said they'd smashed their car. And they came to us; you know what, can we get a car? I said no I can't do that. And in the second meeting when they brought this issue up, I said but that's bullshit! They said we asked you for help and you couldn't help. I said that is where we differ. I have to be completely accountable for how I spend the money of the organisation. You cannot just come to me and say take my car or grab this R15,000 It does not work like that. I said you also have to learn how these things operate (R. Naidu, *DDP*, 25 Jun 07).

NGOs clearly see themselves as having a capacity building role towards movements, which includes sharing financial resources with movements. However, the above extract also betrays a sense of a parent-child relationship, in which a wayward movement needs to be made responsible and 'learn how it works' from the more mature NGO. As with the interviewees cited earlier who spoke about wanting to move social movements to a more credible place or wondering whether their actions where strategic, there is a teleology to Rama's narrative of the meeting with *Abahlali*: wanting the workshops and the constructive engagement is portrayed as essentially inevitable in an organisation's path. Eventually, one is led to believe, every movement will become an NGO or perish.

Whereas the concept of NGO-isation describes the formalisation of movements in line with funders' demands, auditing techniques and global development discourses, reformism is a process I attribute to a specific NGO agency. It encapsulates the attempts by NGOs to make movements more like themselves in terms of values and mindset as well as in their organisational form. Whilst this inclination to reform movements may be purely discursive, they nevertheless serve to marginalise public protest, thereby contributing to a shrinking of political society or the public sphere. It can then be argued that the narrowing of perspectives on Post-Apartheid democracy that results from the partnership logic is mirrored by relations within civil society, the later being effectively subsumed by formal elite NGOs. At the level of individuals within a movement, this process is apparent too. In what one activist described as 'commodification of the struggle', the

activities of movement activists may become oriented towards accessing financial resources:

> The base constituency of most movements and organisations is not employed. So oftentimes the contact point with the funding and the relationship with the NGO is one not just of accessing money for struggles and everything else. But of accessing a potential job personally. So it becomes an individual thing as well for some of the activists. And they might have a self-interest in following an NGO line, in order to be able to sustain a longer term relationship that might lead to their betterment or to them getting a job, or to them hooking up. And this has happened on numerous occasions [...] during the process of carrying out a project or a campaign or whatever it is; some of the people are more interested in establishing relations directly with the NGO (D. McKinley, *APF*, 11 Jul 07).

NGO-isation and NGO reformism together have the effect of institutionalising community struggles over the meaning of development and democracy, thereby containing and civilising them. Nonetheless, the governance of movements and of civil society more generally is never a secure accomplishment or actual achievement, as some governmentality literature would have it. Governing is always only a project, and there are constantly challenges to NGO's discourses and practices within civil society. As has already been addressed earlier, movements are acutely aware of, and sometimes actively refuse, endeavours of reform or representation.

Social movements: refusing to be represented

It is important to clarify that far from seeking relationships with NGOs, many movements come from a strong autonomist tradition and would reject funding from international donors outright.[74] This is based on an understanding of movements as non-hierarchical and radically independent spaces with no formal relations to the state, institutions or NGOs. Others distance themselves rhetorically, with the

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[74] I am not concerned with social movements' understandings of NGOs, which would yield rather different arguments. Where I have included interview extracts by movement activists, this is intended to further clarify central issues underlying NGOs' positioning in relation to movements. Again, it is worth underlining how heterogeneous the social movement terrain in South Africa is. Movements such as those under the umbrella of the *APF* are often explicitly socialist, using traditional left mobilization and organisation in reference to state power for instance by competing in elections, whereas others are influenced by autonomist values and a rejection of the formal political framework.

following quote being just one example of a movement's rejection of NGOs as neoliberal agents that contain and co-opt popular protest:

> Since its inception the [Social Movement Indaba] has degenerated into a vehicle controlled by NGOs. Now it merely poses as a forum for bringing together social movements. In reality the SMI has become an obstacle to the linking up of real social movements around the country and is a source of division [...]The Western Cape Anti Eviction Campaign will not allow some NGO's [sic] and academics to further their careers with the blood, sweat and tears of communities. We despise the way they act as Trojan horses and the way they co-opt activists because of the resources they enjoy (Western Cape Anti Eviction Campaign 2007).

The issue of funding and co-option is an important factor in accounting for differences in movement building and movements' longevity. A principled decision on the part of movements not to engage with institutions that have money meant that many movements disappeared again quickly. This is especially true given the resources that would have been needed to deal with the consequences of state repression, such as legal fees or bail. Other movements such as the APF receive some funding from NGOs and work with them on a number of clearly specified projects, but likewise do not see a natural connection or political alliance with them – their relationship is at best a 'tactical temporary alliance' (D. McKinley, APF, 11 Jul 07). Many contemporary movements in South Africa theorise their ideas of development and democracy in contradistinction to NGOs, including left NGOs, for instance regarding the democratic culture of movement structures:

> Abahlali's movement structures are much more advanced in terms of gender with regard to both composition and orientation than any of the left NGOs that assume a natural (and often racialized) right to teach movements how to be progressive (Pithouse 2008: 79).

As I have indicated above, a reformist drive is not limited to NGOs that are critical of social movements; the progressive NGOs who see their task as building movements can potentially have this impact too. Here, Lenny speaks about adopting

standard leftist principles of workers' education to the context of emerging movements:

> With some of the newer formations, it's not just a straight forward case of a workshop on what is happening in Brazil. When people often do not even have experiences of a workshop and the conventions of popular education and so on. So we've got to reassess all those things, so in some ways it's an enormous challenge (L. Gentle, *ILRIG*, 24 Apr 07).

ILRIG was very aware of the possibility of institutionalising the struggles of emerging movements: as Lenny told me, there is a danger that left NGO 'in their own name pack up a campaign against whatever, have a website and produce articles and speak in the name of communities [...] They're placed like that' (ibid.). As a provider of resources to movements, there is thus a potential for NGO-isation. However, in their role as capacity-builder for movements, specific models of organising, educating or campaigning are also likely to feature prominently, as Jane's account illustrates:

> In relation to the movement work, we are in the process of networking all the social movements in the country together which is a big job, and establishing a nation-wide freedom of expression and anti-repression network. So there is a lot of organising work that is going on in the provinces, we have a co-ordinating committee that has been set up bringing all the movements together which often fight with one another but co-operate through us on these issues, its quite strange. So we work with the Western Cape Anti-Eviction campaign for instance, which is allergic to NGOs. We work with Abahlali baseMjondo whilst working with social movements in Durban, all three are fighting with one another. But we managed to somehow bridge those conflicts (J. Duncan, *FXI*, 30 Mar 07).

Their support may eventually become governmental, in that it instructs people in the 'proper' practice of politics, or seeks to speak for movements. These arguments also draw attention to the complicated relationships between the traditional left and the new left in South Africa, which provides a further explanation for tensions between progressive NGOs and movements and their fundamentally different reference points.

Conversely, *Abahlali* and other movements have consistently challenged NGOs' and others' attempts to speak for them. This may be the case in terms of how ideas of development or democracy are discursively framed; one example is

Abahlali's rejection of a discourse of 'service delivery' that NGOs employ, instead insisting their demands are about 'being human':

> It is not only about physical infrastructure', says Zikode, 'we have shifted our thinking [...] the struggle is the human being, the conditions that we live in which translates into demands for housing and land. [Through *Abahlali*] people are starting to remember that they are human beings (Gibson 2008: 8).

I claimed above that refusal is central to the internal dynamics of civil society. The refusal of being reduced by middle-class NGOs to marching bodies, for instance, and the insistence on thinking one's own struggle seem to me to sum up well the tensions characterising NGO-movement relations.

But I think they also speak to the shifting fault lines of difference and inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Many movements are also class movements, and class has, if not replaced race, then at least supplemented and sometimes deepened the inequalities inherited from racial Apartheid. The refusal to be essentialised is coupled with a refusal to be represented. The patronising assumption by political elites that poor people, shackdwellers or the unemployed themselves could not possibly organise or mobilise on their own – therefore necessarily having been agitated by some leader – is matched by the unconscious assumption by many NGOs that movements cannot articulate their demands. Both of these assumptions constitute real attempts to shift potential power away from the poor.

7.5. Conclusions

As I showed in this chapter, the kind of organisation portrayed as best suited to neoliberal forms of organising society is effective, efficient and formal, staffed by cultivated individuals who play by the rules of liberal democracy. The difference between this kind of NGO worker and a social movement activist can be captured by the juxtaposition of writing reports with burning tyres. I have argued that NGOs may come to substitute for civil society in a number of ways, for instance as a result of

movements entering funding arrangements with NGOs and other donors. Formalisation in terms of shared organisational practices potentially leads to an institutionalisation of community struggles. There is continuity between an NGO-isation of movements and the practices by which NGOs themselves become more strategically and structurally embedded in the neoliberal order, as I described them in earlier chapters. The expert knowledge that NGO-isation relies on is organisational, financial and managerial and provides governmental access to communities and their networks and associations.

NGOs' conscious or unconscious drive to reform has the potential of institutionalising community struggles, thereby containing and civilising them. Whilst some NGO accounts celebrate the pluralism of civil society, the capacity building activities of NGOs may ultimately construct less professionalised components of civil society as something to be reformed and drawn into a circle of consensus. NGOs here act as experts which transfer how effective politics are to be done. Importantly, such expertise does not flow unidirectionally: although I have argued here that NGOs become the conduit for preferred modes of operation from donors to movements, activists are also the obvious domain of expertise in civil society which can be institutionalised to govern communities. The need for reform is ascertained by discursive practices. The NGO constructions of movement practices that I cited throughout this chapter mapped interestingly onto established development binaries such as tradition/ modernity and backwardness/ progress. They also mobilised 'new South African' tropes of liberal democracy by opposing the marching masses of the Apartheid era with Post-Apartheid in which there are proper channels through which politics can be impacted on.

The fact that the constituencies of movements are rhetorically marginalised as marching bodies, uncivil or dangerous is not contradictory to this argument at all, for it is by portraying them as unable to articulate their demands in a proper democratic system that the need to speak for them and represent them can be established. Where Government has reacted to mass mobilisation with violent repression, NGOs merely rhetorically marginalise them. NGOs' discursive constructions are nonetheless significant because they narrow the range of what is considered appropriate in civil society, which in turn has important consequences for the shape of Post-Apartheid democracy. Representations are, as Escobar (1995) has noted, places of violence. Much of the reformism that I have outlined in this

chapter operates through the class relations that are embedded in civil society. Marginalisation seems to come into play more with movements of the poor that are perhaps, from the point of view of NGOs, beyond reform. On their part, such movements very clearly reject NGOs, demarcating themselves constantly from NGO practices and goals.

In an alternative reading, loosely inspired by Ferguson (2006a), one might re-interpret what were portrayed as archaic modes of resistance by unorganised masses that lack the means and education to use the proper democratic channels available in the new configuration as tactically producing powerful images that consciously resonate with previous mass mobilisations in the country under Apartheid. Social movement activism has appropriated practices used by old movements against Apartheid, for instance direct action, but they also consciously evoke specific cultural repertoires from these movements (Barchiesi 2006). This is not to imply that every South African is able to register dissent in myriad ways but chooses not to. Nonetheless, the notion of South African social movements as unorganised and primordial needs to be rejected. Instead, they can be understood as contemporary and effective forces that struggle in ways appropriate to current forms of governmental power in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Although class-based discourses and practices retain a crucial relevance for them, South African movements against neoliberalisation tend to emphasise plurality and horizontality and call into question traditional left organisation, leadership and ontology.

There is not enough space here to discuss the complex relationships of movements with organised labour and the traditional left, but it is important to note that the ANC's alliance partners, despite their continued rhetoric, seem to have accepted the party's brand of national developmentalism at the expense of, in McKinley's words,

> whatever confidence they did have in the 'leading role' of the broad working class [...] all rationalised by reference to historic liberation movement/Alliance loyalties, the necessities of completing an ill-defined 'national democratic revolution' and the 'realities' of global capitalism (McKinley Unpublished Book Chapter: 10).

There is always the danger of seeing any struggles against dispossession as progressive (Harvey 2005b), and I do not want to fall into this trap. Yet, the marginalisation of segments of civil society by NGOs runs the danger of hindering the effectiveness of interest groups that can challenge the state and its vision of democracy and development, especially in the South African context of an actual one-party system. The democratic deficit that results from such marginalisation lies precisely in the gap between a typical NGO critique of the state and that of a social movement. Whereas the former is often procedural or instrumental, for instance addressing lack of speed of delivery, the latter entails a more substantial critique of exclusion and the meaning of liberation.

It therefore seems apt to conclude this chapter by re-iterating that social movements have been born out of the deeply felt betrayal of the liberation and of freedom's promises, and are directly facing the disastrous consequences of the peculiar Post-Apartheid mix of neoliberal ideology and marketisation programme and its exclusionary nation-building discourse. The material reality that protesting communities face constitute a truth about Post-Apartheid that many elites, whether in government, NGOs or academia, do not want to acknowledge. This truth is fundamentally irreconcilable with the promises of the ANC of a 'better future for all' and makes clearly visible the cracks in the Post-Apartheid neoliberal order.

Chapter 8:
Conclusions

8.1. Introduction

Gillian Hart writes that one of the reasons that neoliberalism could take hold so quickly in the new South Africa was because of how a 'dichotomous set of meanings could be articulated [...] in a way that appealed powerfully to "common sense"' (2002a: 25). This is most obviously in the contrast of Apartheid's strong interventionist state model with Post-Apartheid's embracing of free markets. Using the development sector as a case study, this thesis has charted another set of transformations, exploring how the very anatomy of South African NGOs has changed in the Post-Apartheid era. It has done so through a combination of methods – in-depth interviews with NGO staff, observation research and various ethnographic strategies – and by focusing particularly on partnerships and impact assessment as two important elements that characterise intermediary NGOs. I have argued that such NGOs have to be highly flexible, professionalised, able to maintain a wide range of partnerships, fluent in M&E and other auditing procedures and, by ostensibly representing civil society, seen as close to the 'grassroots'.

By investigating partnerships as an essential characteristic of a new NGO model, I showed that the partnership mode constitutes a particular logic of governing development and a technology for exercising and legitimising authority (see chapter 4). Although partnerships may have been borne out of a desire to reform the power dynamics inherent in development, the partnership mode does not spell out the end of international donor power – donors continue to dominate development agendas, discourses and techniques. International donor funding for NGO activities in areas such as capacity building and civil society-strengthening necessarily allocates a key role for donors in South Africa's 'domestic' policy – especially intermediary NGOs can be a conduit for donor values, discourses and practices. What is new about the partnership mode is that it involves an increasing entanglement of a wide range of issues, responsibilities and spaces of the development domain under the banner of integration and collaboration.

Secondly, besides transferring legitimacy, partnerships were also shown to provide access to specific communities and their associated organisations. Historically the state has always relied on philanthropic or charitable structures, but this research NGOs were also shown to provide international and/ or corporate access, thereby making individuals, communities or organisations governable (see chapters 5 and 7 in particular). Thirdly, partnerships fulfil a consensus-building function that allows for the harmonisation of development objectives, techniques and vocabulary. Here, they most clearly encapsulate the essence of the Post-Washington Consensus by forging inclusion whilst making NGOs responsible for the outcomes of the projects they are involved in. But consensus-building also resonates with the nation-building project of the new South Africa, where criticism of national development policy is sometimes brandmarked as unpatriotic. Fourthly, partnerships operate as channels for the circulation of particular managerial practices, impact measurement technologies and neoliberal values (see chapters 2 and 6). The ethical norm of accountability and its associated audit chains therefore link NGOs with the state, donors, corporations, INGOs and various community-based or grassroots organisations they rely on for delivery.

This thesis has thus sought to analyse NGOs in terms of their essential form. This differs considerably from the majority of studies on NGOs in South Africa and elsewhere, which tend to focus on how to make NGOs more effective. I have instead explored what kinds of development organisations are being produced in Post-Apartheid and through which channels, practices and technologies this occurs, emphasising that development relations provide a context for governmental practices across different levels. Theoretically, I have contended that the ideas of governmentality studies can be extended to analyse modes of governance in civil society and development by investigating which types of organisations are appropriate to the technologies of M&E that partnerships require.

My usage of this theoretical framework (see chapters 1 and 2) extends beyond the effect of development projects on populations, as I argue that it is also states and organisations that are to be made efficient, entrepreneurial and responsible for their development. Government in the development domain encompasses a whole continuum of power relations between donors, NGOs, the state and civil society and is concerned with the constitution of appropriate development organisations. Whilst NGO programmes are governmental in that they

target the mindsets, attitudes and capacities of individuals and the communities in which they operate, the partnership model was itself shown to facilitate government in shaping NGOs' activities, structure and values. The governmentality of civil society produces – or attempts to produce – organisations in line with a particular understanding of democracy and of the appropriate means for social change: highly formalised and bureaucratised, but accountable and intersectorally connected. Importantly, NGOs are themselves agents of government: they perform governmental tasks by circulating norms and technologies of government and seek to reform other elements of civil society to become more like themselves – entrepreneurial and professionalised.

My research contributes new knowledge to critical political sociology and development studies by examining governmental technologies that shape NGOs' organisational behaviour, values and types of activities and has aimed to contribute to theoretical debates on governance by exploring practices of governmentality in South African NGOs and in civil society at large. This concluding chapter proceeds with a discussion of the main overarching and interconnected themes that have emerged from the analysis presented in chapters 4 to 7. I will then move on to outline implications and recommendations for further research and end with some final reflections.

8.2. Discussion of main themes

Spatialities and sovereignties

Encapsulated in the image of having one foot in the shanty town shack and the other in the boardroom, I have characterised the NGOs in this research as middle men, bridge-builders and brokers. They act as intermediaries between government or corporates and local communities; they provide links between the national, transnational and the local and connect a variety of geographical scales. However, such descriptions still carry echoes of a vertical topography of power (Ferguson 2006a). Rather, with this research I have sought to advance an understanding of NGOs as connected to, and connecting, different spaces of sovereignty that often work against each other. The role of the South African state as a key donor to the NGO sector renders these topographies of power ever more complex. Also, although

my focus on national NGOs has meant that the activities of the organisations in this research have particular national referents, they are linked with what is a globalised development realm. As Ferguson (2006) and other have argued, apparatuses of governmentality co-exist with systems of nation-states in governing Africa. My research has sought to contribute to these debates about political power's operation across different scales. The study of NGOs such as those in my research exceeded a singular scalar imagination, thus providing insights into contemporary forms of power and governance in African development.

Contradictorily, whereas the state – by effectively allowing its citizenry to be governed by such transnational powers – has partly absolved itself from the responsibility of governing, the harmonisation of development seeks to relegate the role of civil society to ensuring that the state is formally accountable, and occasionally to fill the gaps left by the market. The development domain in Post-Apartheid South Africa thus consists of intermeshing and interweaved authorities and sovereignties, where parastatal and extrastatal forms and new modalities of governance co-exist with traditional forms of state power. NGOs' entanglement in intersectoral spaces is not only heightened by the prevalence of the partnership agenda in global development policy and in the South African reconciliation project but NGO activity very much produces these kinds of intermeshing spaces.

The currency of partnerships

Most significantly then, NGO activity has been identified as strengthening the intersectoral linkages in the development sector, providing and enhancing connections between the state, corporate power, foreign governments and so on. Legitimacy is revealed to be the currency that is transferred in these partnerships. Biographical authenticity is often measured in terms of a purity of struggle and comes to define organisational authenticity. Individual and organisational planes are particularly intertwined in the South African NGO sector, although I suggest that this is characteristic of the particular location of NGO professionals more generally. The asserting of authenticity necessitates claims about the roles, functions and advantages of NGOs, such as their proximity to the grassroots. Whilst my research did not find such claims to be accurate, they serve to attribute legitimacy to state- or donor-run development projects. In fact, it is far from clear whether NGO

participation in multisectoral projects actually lends more credibility to development activities.

There are two other problems with this evoking of authenticity in order to establish legitimacy. Firstly, in order to sustain the specific claim of being close to communities, NGOs – and their donors – often (albeit sometimes involuntarily) draw on a homogenous notion of civil society which assumes that they, and the CBOs they work with, have the same goals. The problem here is NGOs' claims to providing emancipatory and genuinely democratic alternatives to neoliberal development. The processes of civil society reformism and NGO-isation are intimately linked to these claims. NGO reformism specifically refers to NGOs' activity as governmental, attempting to 'civilise' organisations by trying to integrate them into formal civil society. Both practices run the danger of marginalising the voices and interests of other actors in civil society and ultimately of reducing the spaces available for critical debate and engagement.

Regarding donors, their purporting on the one hand to support a civil society that is critical, and on the other hand to exclude all but the most formalised elements of it, is only one of the many contradictions that typify neoliberal development policy. Their uncritical portrayal of civil society as authentically representing the grassroots and/ or as limiting the power of the state is politically dangerous. It may serve to legitimise what are often undemocratic transnational politics and the penetration of national development arenas by foreign-funded NGOs.

Secondly though, such homogenisation processes are never complete. To make a claim for authenticity also involves opening oneself up to charges against authenticity and credibility. In this research, such challenges have become most apparent in NGOs' relationships to social movements. In this respect, social movement activity demonstrates the limits of neoliberalism in successfully managing and dividing the power of communities. Beyond it and in the extreme through, claims to authenticity and purity can create fundamentalisms and violent conflict, for instance along ethnic or religious lines.

The very idea of 'grassroots' is a central element of the discursive regime characterising the government of civil society. It serves to evoke a particular understanding of authenticity that emanates from poor or marginalised communities – with the language of community itself indicative of a neoliberal mode of governing development. The term is almost exclusively employed by NGOs rather than by the

constituencies, movements or groups it is used to describe. The grassroots have to be produced in order to be governed and to be allocated a particular place in the vertical hierarchy of local/ global or CBO/ NGO/ state. Thus, by labelling as grassroots what are in fact variously spatialised and sometimes transnational forces and movements, they can be constituted as localised and arguably less efficient. There is also a connotation of the term with the most basic level of activity, implying a lack of sophistication of means and techniques. This construction of being necessarily limited in terms of reach is a concrete way of managing popular democracy and belittling the material experiences of people and their struggles.

Audit and accountability

The originality and innovation of this thesis lies in its development of an analysis of transnational South African NGOs through issues of audit culture. I have shown that partnerships also function as channels for the circulation of auditing practices. Demands for greater accountability have been the main impetus for extending such impact measurement. This push for better governance of NGOs has been connected to the neoliberal public sector reform agenda, which assumes that public services will be more effective if organised according to free market principles. Impact assessment, M&E and quality assurance mechanisms – what Dean (1999) summarises under the heading of 'technologies of performance' – are clearly not limited to South African NGOs but constitute a large part of funded NGO activity globally. Indeed, this research serves to highlight more broadly the universal roles of auditing practices and target-setting in constituting particular economic domains and in linking them to global economic spaces. What is more, my arguments about accountability as a technology in the development domain clearly resonate with other areas and sectors, such as education (for example Strathern 2000).

Whilst stressing that monitoring and evaluation is negotiated in different ways by individual NGOs, measurement and reporting were shown to be core activities for all of the NGOs in this research. Fluency in the language and practices of impact assessment demonstrates accountability, but it crucially requires specific skills and capacities. Certain types of expertise, for instance in quantitative and analytical skills or in 'EU-ese', are at once required and produced in organisations. Because target-oriented development favours particular ways of measuring the success of a project,

modifies organisational structures and impacts on the types of activities or services provided, NGOs are transformed in line with neoliberal regimes of government.

Moreover, NGOs' role as a broker of techniques such as log frames to their community-based counterparts, and their resultant status as experts, establishes hierarchies within civil society that serve to exclude certain types of organisations altogether. What are described as NGOs' capacity building activities then seem to specifically build capacity for better audit or reporting. M&E becomes a technology that reconfigures NGOs and by extension the community organisations they rely on for the delivery of services. Here, the interface between partnerships and auditing is revealed: they are mutually dependent in that auditing practices are attached to the funding flows and intersectoral networks that connect actors in development partnerships. Furthermore, as I have shown, the partnership discourse works in positioning NGOs in relation to CBOs, social movements and popular struggles. Conversely, activists are also the obvious domain of expertise in civil society which can be harnessed by NGOs or the public sector in order to govern communities.

Although there have recently been attempts to reduce the transaction costs arising from M&E procedures by harmonising bi- and multilateral aid, these initiatives have not translated (yet?) into practical benefits for the NGOs in this study. More research is needed to explore exactly if and how the emerging standards for the harmonisation and alignment of aid are affecting the realities of intermediary NGOs in South Africa. It does however seem as though donors' monitoring and evaluation practices become more sophisticated all the time. This does not so much contradict the above arguments, but rather raises the question of what expertise these more sophisticated impact measurements will necessitate.

It has been a central theme of my analysis that NGO professionals were more often than not aware and critical of the consequences of this kind of impact measurement on their organisations and on the sector as a whole. For instance they voiced concern about only blue-chip NGOs being able to cope with the bureaucratic demands of monitoring and of accessing donor funding. This was also evident in their ambivalent positioning towards social movement activity – on one hand celebrating the pluralism of civil society and criticising the lack of action on the part of NGOs, on the other strongly distancing themselves from such activism. This ability to have one foot in the shanty town shack and the other in the corporate boardroom is

emblematic of the scope of the new NGO and is essentially how a neoliberal mode of development works through the figure of the NGO professional.

Moreover, showing awareness of the ambivalent nature of one's role is part and parcel of this professional location and maintains and produces relations of power within civil society. To articulate this contradiction, as many of my informants did, is an essential requirement of their position within a neoliberal rationality of government which relies on self-reflection. To reflect on the workings of power in the development domain is integral to (self-) governance through accountability.

I have argued throughout this thesis that auditing techniques and the language and funding policy of partnerships are likely to produce NGOs that are characteristic of and proper to contemporary neoliberal forms of governing development. In detail, this means organisations who spend much of their time complying with auditing procedures, monitoring particular aspects of their work, evaluating and designing projects in accordance with targets set by donors and partners and so on. By necessity and in order to remain sustainable, they end up just as preoccupied with targets and accountability technologies as they are with the aims and actual outcomes of development projects.

I referred to Power (1997) in chapter 6 who argues that audit culture may replace the monitoring of quality with the monitoring of systems to monitor quality. Going further than this, I contend that these processes supposedly making development more efficient and effective actually make NGO-led development less so. The vast amounts of time and resources that are required by auditing put such strain on organisational capacity that they actually slow down or indeed prohibit genuine NGO activity. What impact measurement then ultimately produces is NGOs that are effective in terms of management, governance and audit, but not effective at their core mission. This consequence is only enhanced by the longer-term structural impact of auditing on staffing structures by institutionalising expertise.

Homogenisation and democratic deficit

Following on from the themes discussed above and from my analysis overall, there is clearly a tendency towards homogenisation for NGOs in South Africa. This is the case in terms of both how they are organised and structured, and how they speak about what they do. Development discourses and systems for reporting were shown

to have a potentially homogenising effect on NGOs. The language of partnerships plays an important part in this process, rendering the NGO sector as a whole more like other sectors. Clearly, despite the prevalence of a ubiquitous partnership vocabulary, NGO professionals' statements encompassed many different and often contradictory policies and discourses which do not always determine the practices of an NGO. Nonetheless, the deployment of certain discourses has real material and ideological effects, even if these tended to be downplayed by NGO staff through the employment of neo-Marxist terminology or references to the struggle.

Moreover, the necessary import of techniques and vocabularies from the business sector is already resulting in an apolitical managerialism, effectively reducing NGOs' abilities to provide critical development alternatives to public and private sector. Clearly, the multisectoral model – and the legitimacy NGOs can confer – is an attractive proposition for international donors, corporations, foundations and agencies of the state, tying in as it does ideas of social capital and ethical corporatism. Yet, there are serious issues of accountability (here referring to non-procedural responsibility), where potentially no single actor is responsible for development outcomes.

One way of reading the Post-Apartheid civil society terrain is as plural (cf. Habib 2003), an assessment with which I concur. One may then ask why the above arguments should matter. Is it not simply the case that some NGOs deliver services or carry out lobbying, whereas others are more 'radical'; that some social movements formulate substantive critiques of the state and the goals of development, whereas other community-based organisations are disconnected from the state and actively support communities? My argument in this thesis has been that it does matter if NGOs employ uniform reporting systems and a uniform vocabulary, and that it matters if they begin to increasingly resemble other sectors. NGOs – in all their diversity – have different development roles to play than state and corporates, particularly given their own emancipatory claims. The marketisation of NGOs and NGO-led development is dangerous because it reduces the very role of the NGO sector as a counterbalance to other actors in society. The harmonisation of public, private and voluntary sectors leads to a damaging of the public sphere, and a shrinking of the space for dissent where alternatives to the dominant development paradigm can be considered.

Beyond the effects of audit and the partnership agenda on NGOs themselves, it is through processes of NGO-isation and reformism that this homogenisation of NGOs is translated into the sphere of civil society at large. The marginalisation of segments of civil society by NGOs runs the danger of hindering the effectiveness of groups that can challenge the state and its vision of democracy and development. This is particularly acute in the South African context of an actual one-party system. As I illustrated through the example of NGOs' positioning to social movements, the democratic deficit that results from such marginalisation lies in the gap between their respective critiques of the forms that development and democracy take. The danger of this overall harmonisation – of the practices, technologies, languages and ultimately the goals of development – is the stifling of public debate about the future of the country and an institutionalisation of community grievances into procedural forms of democracy. NGOs are one conduit in this institutionalisation of expertise and activism and are often aware of this positioning.

Pluralist accounts of civil society have a tendency to celebrate its diversity as positive for democracy. In practice, this often entails a rather narrow understanding of civil society and democracy as liberal. This is mirrored by what I have shown in relation to donor funding policy: contrary to their claims, the organisations who actually get funding are a very specific set staffed by the 'well-mannered' activists I have referred to throughout this thesis. The problem is not only that intermediary NGOs may be structurally unable to progressively engage with the grievances of the majority population, but that they often try to reform and speak for those organisations that may be able to. The danger to democracy lies in professionalised NGOs taking over civil society and excluding those that represent the interest of other groups in society. Again, the critical issue is what NGOs claim they do and how these emancipatory claims have already been incorporated into the neoliberal order.

Future(s) for South African NGOs: alternatives to depoliticisation?

Observing the processes described in this thesis has led me to argue that harmonisation and an inclusion approach in development policy are negatively impacting on NGOs and that this is dangerous for the health of Post-Apartheid democracy. However, I have emphasised throughout that processes of governmentality are never complete. The focus of my research of political

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technologies pays less attention to the reworkings of such technologies in practice, how they are resisted or what their unintended consequences may be. Whilst there are continuous attempts to produce NGOs that are accommodating of neoliberal policies and techniques, some NGOs in South Africa remain, despite the partial adoption of a particular mode of operation, fiercely opposed to such a logic. The great heterogeneity of the organisations considered in this research means that there have been variations in terms of how the impact of particular technologies has been understood and negotiated. There are also alternative readings to my arguments about homogenisation, not least from some practioners themselves.

For instance, NGOs may try to retain their relevance and consistency by choosing to concentrate on a few key activities. They may opt to become pure advocacy and lobbying organisations, thus developing specific expertise that is not likely to be provided by another sector or that will lead them to spread their expertise too thinly. Most of the time, the pluralism of civil society and of the NGO sector was seen as the best guarantor for the continued survival of the sector, although some informants called for greater leadership in the sector and for NGOs to speak with one voice. This may be a reflection of the uncomfortable relationship of many NGOs to popular movements and the destitute living conditions their constituencies face. It was certainly noteworthy that NGO professionals often seemed to advocate greater organisational reflexivity to once again find their identity as NGO. One such possible identity may develop through a rebirth of activism in the sector that would have to address the gap between the promises of development and the failures of delivery, but critical NGO voices would need to make themselves heard at the levels of political economy and national policy and of local economic development.

More generally, in some ways the prevalence of a partnership agenda allowed NGOs increased autonomy and gains, especially in terms of the information they generated and how they may employ this for the own strategic purposes. As Chapter 6 has shown, *Mindset*'s complex multiple-partnership model resulted in conflicts between different partners. Such conflicts led to restrictions in content provision, but also allowed the effective modification of auditing regimes that were in place. Although partnering seems to have contributed to the depoliticisation of the organisation, the constant requirement for auditing and data collection also provided it with resources to be used for its own autonomous purposes.

Informants were more often than not aware of the potentially dire consequences of auditing on their organisational capacity and orientation, for some prompting a range fatalistic pragmatism about the impact of the neoliberal order but in other cases giving rise to alternative constructions. Resistance to the regimes and technologies I have described in this thesis was mainly visible in little everyday refusals, for instance in terms of individuals not quite following the rules for reporting or for negotiation with funders, allowing for a degree of 'organisational slack'. While auditing has emerged in this thesis as one of the chief mechanisms by which external influence is exerted over NGOs and by which NGOs exert influence over other actors, it also offers the potential for resistance, such as through selective sharing or strategic usage of information (cf. Ebrahim 2003). Ethnographic research is necessary to explore such resistance in more detail.

Perhaps most surprising to me were the reactions to my questions about whether NGOs should still exist in 30 years' time. Clearly, it is not realistic to assume that South Africa's developmental challenges will all be 'solved' in a few decades, but I felt that this was not the only reason for why people answered the way they did. NGOs spend much of their time seeking funding to maintain themselves and demonstrating how they have done so. Their own political vision does not necessarily envisage a world without NGOs, without bridge builder or broker. Given their donor-partners' preference for 'well-mannered activism', what keeps many of these NGOs sustainable is arguably partly their disengagement with mass struggles or the grievances of the majority population. Although the silence of NGO voices on abuses of human rights and state repression in Post-Apartheid South Africa is clearly connected to an increasing commodification and corporatisation of NGOs and their drive to sustainability, it is also linked to the particular demographic and class position of NGO professionals. This observation resonates strongly with the idea that in the democratic and neoliberal South Africa, race Apartheid has been replaced with class Apartheid.

From this perspective, the awareness of critiques of their role and NGO professionals' reflexivity did allow for alternative constructions and readings of transnational development. However, I have argued that to employ a fairly uniform vocabularies and technologies (as required by their diverse partners), though not necessarily internally coherent, is a necessity for organisational survival. This working within a particular discursive formation has had real material and ideological

effects as I have demonstrated in my discussion of NGOs' positioning to popular movements.

8.3. Suggestions for future research

I have eschewed questions of how to make organisations more efficient for issues of structure and organisational form. Essentially, for things to be different would require wide-ranging social, political and economic change. It is precisely such a wide-reaching political and social vision that NGOs are in danger of losing sight of. Therefore I believe that to put forward policy recommendations for NGOs or donors would fall into the trap I have sought to criticise – seeking to improve the way in which systems are assessed or partnerships are conducted, but neglecting what they may reveal about forms of power and governance in development. A number of recommendations for research have however arisen from my project and this section addresses what the implications of my analysis for future work are.

This research has taken a discursive approach to the governmentality of South African NGOs and has explored the impact of auditing technologies and the partnership discourse primarily through interview data. I have maintained throughout this thesis that this does imply that such technologies and discourses are always successful or that their effects can be read off in a deterministic fashion. I have shown some of the ways in which partner or funder attempts to structure NGOs have been contested or unsuccessful but the nature of my research design does not allow a full exploration of these issues. Most importantly then, future research of an in-depth ethnographic nature should expand on the themes analysed here, attending to the struggles over projects of rule and charting the successes and failures of audit culture and associated technologies in practice.

Despite its rhetorical importance during the later Mbeki years, the developmental state discourse had not really impacted on the way the NGOs in this research carried out their activities and what they saw as their main challenges. Future research may look at whether and in what ways this will impact on the sector under the Zuma Presidency, and in the context of a crisis of global capitalism which has gravely affected the South African economy (also see section 8.4. below). What is more, the Mbeki era was characterised by an odd mixture of radical critique of

global institutions and the neoliberal mantra of there being no alternative to globalisation. Future discursive research might examine how the Zuma presidency will negotiate the present crisis and how it will impact on development discourses and practices in the coming years, for instance.

Further exploration is clearly needed to understand the relationships between NGOs and wider civil society in South Africa. I have raised this issue but more research, including case study research, could be done that would look at how NGOs' positioning in the sector affects the effectiveness of civil society at large. In addition, the theoretical framework I have applied here could be relevant to further research into the governance and governmentality of movements. I have discussed legitimacy as the capital of development partnerships in this thesis. Building on my research, what needs to be examined in greater detail is in how far such NGO legitimacy is accepted by the 'communities' identified by NGOs and their partners. In other words, do NGOs, taken from within the logic of participatory development, present a 'value-added' in terms of communities' grievances? Moreover, new challenges continue to emerge in South Africa alongside longer-standing grievances – environmental politics for example are likely to provide a site for alliances against neoliberal policies. The processes and relationships that will characterise such alliances, and the role national and transnational NGOs will play in them, would make an important object of research.

Future research also needs to look at the impact on NGOs of two trends in development policy: the aid harmonisation and alignment agenda and the overall trend towards entrepreneurialism. Whilst the former seems to not immediately concern civil society funding, research is needed to explore how the targets and instruments of the Paris Declaration and the intense interest in aid effectiveness through budget support impact on the way development can be thought and talked about by NGOs in the Majority World. Given that the global development policy trend towards supporting entrepreneurship shows no sign of abating, further research could employ the theoretical framework I have proposed here to analyse the technologies, discourses and forms of expertise that are mobilised in a specific NGO programme or multisectoral project.

Given the scope of a Ph.D. project, it has not been possible to include a comparative dimension in my research design. However, I believe that such work would be extremely valuable in shedding light on the sovereignties and spatialities

forged by transnational development, and how they map differently onto national policies. This would certainly constitute an important enquiry in relation to South Africa's neighbouring countries in Southern Africa. How have national NGOs developed differently in Zambia, Tanzania or Namibia for example, and how are they differently affected by auditing, partnerships and donors' other agendas and requirements?

Nonetheless, I have maintained throughout this work that South Africa occupies a unique position in the Southern African region. In many ways, the processes of transnational governmentality are more readily evident in some of South Africa's neighbouring countries, where states are weaker and it has been argued that INGOs have taken over functions of government (Gould 2005b). South Africa presents a different case in terms of state capacity, with the state constituting the largest donor to the development community. National NGOs potentially have a much larger bargaining power than ordinarily attributed to SNGOs.

I therefore think that future research might fruitfully be directed at a comparison of the South African NGO sector with that of Brazil, India or Mexico. There are many similarities between these countries: they are all middle-income economies with often similar developmental challenges (high levels of inequality and crime, for instance) and possess a similar status in their respective regions. More generally, I believe that my research allows tentative lessons to be drawn for the challenges facing NGOs in these other countries too. Future comparative research on the role of NGOs in middle-income economies may also tie in well with the trilateralist agenda that has emerged in recent years between India, Brazil and South Africa. For example, IBSA is a development partnership that seeks to coordinate South-to-South cooperation on a number of issues, including areas that are important for NGO activity such as health and education.

Another comparative angle that could be pursued by future researchers would be between the national NGOs of this research and INGOs operative in South Africa. Many of my informants strongly criticised the role of INGOs in Southern African development, noting in particular that they contributed to a brain drain from the sector. The uneven power relations between the two were also highlighted by many of the NGO staff I interviewed. It would be very interesting to compare directly how agendas of nation-building and global development impact on the INGOs

working in the country, and to investigate how far location plays a role in South Africa's development spaces.

Beyond such comparable countries, NGOs almost everywhere have been forced to commercialise and to adopt set M&E practices due to the global reach of an audit culture. From my understanding of the NGO literature and from speaking to activists and NGO staff in the UK and elsewhere, it would seem that such technologies of performance are essentially universal and affect organisations elsewhere too – although how they connect to specific national and local contexts differs, of course. This is an important implication of this research, shedding light not only on the impact of auditing on South African NGOs, but far beyond. Here, this work may contribute to a bigger research programme that assesses the impact of various types of impact measurement in development across different contexts. Alternatively, future case study research may specifically examine the requirements of one large global donor and how they are negotiated by its beneficiary NGOs in different countries.

If given the time and resources to carry out a larger research project, I would like to build on the experiences and knowledge gained during this Ph.D. and carry out a multi-sited ethnography of the carbon trading domain through the lens of an offsetting NGO. Carbon trading connects interestingly to existing concepts and practices of development and engages a transnational community, creating both new alliances and conflicts between companies, NGOs, governing bodies and Southern communities and ecological movements. Research in this field has so far not attended to the political and social consequences of the creation of a carbon market, and specifically to its trans-scalar character and the resource flows, power relations and technologies it gives rise to. This proposed ethnographic research may trace such flows across different localities and follow the diverse actors that are implicated in a specific offsetting programme.

8.4. Final reflections

It is characteristic of multi-method qualitative work to explore questions in-depth, showing the complex and often contradictory ways in which power operates. Indeed, the very setting for this research project is a place of contradictions where extreme

wealth and extreme poverty sit uncomfortably side by side and the boundaries between inside and outside continue to be redrawn and challenged. Despite my critique of NGOs' positioning in civil society, the conclusions I have drawn are far from unambiguous. Post-Apartheid development has been shown to be neoliberal and governmental, but it is also structured by a field of complex trans-scalar power relations, in which movements are neither local nor always radical-democratic and where, given a sometimes developmental state, it is far from clear whether being pro- or anti-Government is the more progressive stance.

South African NGOs have served as a case study for charting what I have suggested is a new mode of development governance. This mode of governing through integration is not limited to the South African Post-Apartheid context, although it maps onto its specificities in interesting and complex ways. However, there are also continuities with older forms of governance, as witnessed for instance by displays of state sovereignty in relation to development and to popular mobilisation.

I have certainly not wanted to conclude that NGO activities in the sphere of civil society strengthening or capacity building are entirely futile. My arguments do not imply that NGOs never carry out any progressive and worthwhile work, but rather that the space for them to do so is small and becoming progressively smaller. The processes I have charted ultimately produce ineffective organisations. Still, all NGOs I came in contact with did work that seeks to reduce poverty and inequality, and most of the NGO staff I interviewed regarded their work not as a job but as a vocation, often working long hours and being absolutely committed to bettering the lives of South Africans. Indeed, it is NGO professionals who are at the front line of the practices documented here and who most readily feel their space for action curtailed. In the new dispensation of participatory neoliberal development, it is they who are supposed to bridge the vast gulf between a shack in Alexandra and a global mining corporation's boardroom in Sandton City. I remain deeply ambiguous about the tension between my own commitment to a critical sociology of NGOs in development, and my personal relationships with people who more often than not were themselves critical of the processes I have charted in this thesis. I hope that, by having contextualised their voices and situated my analysis in the Post-Apartheid environment as I read it, I have done justice to both.

The conclusions and suggestions brought forward in this research will ultimately have to be re-assessed in the context of South Africa's changing political landscape. This research began in earnest in 2006 and was mainly written up in 2008 and early 2009. The 'Zumafication' (McKinley 2007) of leftist politics in South Africa was already showing itself when I was doing fieldwork in 2007 and I returned to South Africa around the time of the Polokwane conference. Since then, the victory of the Zuma over the Mbeki camp has seen some nods towards the left and the developmental state framework, but mainly there has been continuity with the macroeconomic framework of Zuma's predecessor. There are no signs that social movement and protest activity are diminishing. On the contrary, the impact of the world-wide economic crisis will most likely involve massive job losses in South Africa, as well as a further upsurge of challenges against capitalist and neoliberal modes of governing. However, the shifting alliances of Post-Polokwane politics are likely to impact on how popular struggles are framed and expressed. Zuma and his supporters have moreover employed their own intimidation tactics using a somewhat different but no less paranoid rhetoric of revolution or betrayal.

Not least, it remains to be seen how the 2010 FIFA World Cup will impact on the country. Evictions and the 'cleaning up' of poor neighbourhoods over the past years seem to suggest that rather than providing trickle-down development for all, the gap between the 'first' and 'second' economies will be further amplified, and 'the poors' further pushed from the 'world class cities' of the new South Africa. How NGOs position themselves in relation to these challenges and opportunities is at the very core of their future politics, identity and credibility. The fact that the liberalisation and privatisation of the economy after the transition has caused living conditions to be worse than under Apartheid for millions of South Africans makes this a task of utmost urgency. The strengths and partial successes of grassroots activism and social movements in South Africa have led many to be hopeful about the construction of a postneoliberal world – which renders the above-traced NGO reformism ever more problematic. Still, as with NGOs' claims, the identification of these forms of struggle against neoliberalism as genuinely democratic and progressive is not self-evident.

This thesis started with the view over Johannesburg from Constitution Hill. Like many of the metaphors and concepts I have employed, that view is dominated by opposites and contradictions: the wealth of Sandton and the destitution of

Hillbrow; the old prison tracts that symbolise the inhumanity of the Apartheid regime and the airy court building proudly displaying the constitutional rights. The images I kept encountering in Johannesburg are binaries: wealth and poverty, first and second economy, shanty town and board room, death and birth. The ultimate neoliberal dystopia has succeeded the utopian hope that was bestowed upon the new South Africa and the promises of freedom that so many South Africans feel have been betrayed. But these binaries cannot encapsulate the realities of life in South Africa.

Appendix 1: Details of Participants

Date	Organisation	Contact (and position)	Nature of meeting and comments
21.02.07	*Heinrich Böll Foundation*	Keren Ben-Zeev (Project Co-Ordinator)	Expert Interview - Providing access to NGOs - Overview of funding issues and the donor landscape in South Africa
23.02.07	*CEPD (Centre for Education Policy Development)*	John Pampallis (Director)	Interview
02.03.07	*CIVICUS*	Clare Doube (Manager, Civil Watch Programme)	Expert interview - Gain access to partner organisations - Gain international NGO perspective
07.03.07	*Rosa Luxemburg Foundation*	Dr Gerd Stephan (Head of Regional Office for Southern Africa)	Expert interview - Access to NGOs - Access to social movements - Solidarity funder perspective
14.03.07	*CSVR (The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation)*	Ahmed Motala (Executive Director)	Interview - Provided lots of documentary materials I will do a follow-up interview in a few weeks and there is a possibility for a short observation.
15.03.07	*The Institute for Sustainable Livelihoods*	Prof Wilna Oldewage Theron (Director)	Expert interview - Access to the NGOs the institute works with
16.03.07	*Connect Africa*	Dion Jerling (Director, Founder)	Interview - Provided grant applications and budgets Dion offered to take me along to one of the communities in Limpopo where they work.

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23.03.07	*Starfish*	Dominick Marshall-Smith (Relationship Manager – Business Development)	Interview. - Provided reports and proposals
26.03.07	*Connect Africa*	Melanie Malema (Head of Operations)	Second meeting with Connect Africa. - Provided funding proposals and log frames
27.03.07	*Friedrich Ebert Foundation SA*	Michael Roll (Project Manager)	Expert interview - Gain perspective on cooperation with ANC and other partners Michael is a fellow development sociologist so the chat helped focus on some issue areas in my work.
29.03.07	*Konrad Adenauer Foundation SA*	Dr Werner Böhler (Head of South African Bureau)	Expert Interview
30.03.07	*Freedom of Expression Institute*	Jane Duncan (Executive Director)	Interview
02.04.07	*Mindset*	Shafika Issacs (Director, Schooling Sector)	Interview I will be interviewing other people from the organisation in weeks to come.
23.04.07	*IDASA* *[Cape Town]*	Richard Calland (Director, Governance Programme)	Interview
24.04.07	*ILRIG* *[Cape Town]*	Leonard Gentle (Director)	Interview - Provided funding proposals, evaluations and other documentary sources

		Tracy Bailey (National Coordinator, outgoing);	Interviews with both
25.04.07	*The Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust [Cape Town]*	Vanja Karth (National Co-ordinator)	- Provided proposals and evaluation reports
09.05.07	*Mindset*	Vis Naidoo (CEO)	Interview

Vis agreed for me to shadow someone and also to have insight into all their reports, assessments and bids. |
| 10.05.07 | *The EDGE Institute* | Stephen Gelb

(Executive Director) | Interview

Also discussed wider political-economic issues such as BEE, the new discourse of the developmental state within the ANC's economic policy etc.

He recommended some useful contacts to speak to on economic empowerment. |
| 15.05.07 | *Mindset* | Lusanda Jiya

(Head of Development) | Interview

Since she is the fundraiser and responsible for relationships with donors I interviewed her specifically about those areas of her work. |
| 25.05.07 | *The Africa Foundation* | James Currie

(Managing Director) | Interview

- Provided proposals and evaluations |
| 30.05.07 | *Gun Free South Africa* | Judy Bassingthwaighte

(National Director) | Interview |
| 13.06.07 | *The Media Monitoring Project [now: Media Monitoring Africa]* | William Bird

(Director) | Interview

- Provided reports and proposals |
| 18.06.07 | *NANGOSA (National Alliance For Non-Goverment* | Eric Ntshiqela (Director) | Interview

He will forward membership application. Also wants to |

	Organisations)		stay in touch for 'networking'.
19.06.07	Workers Education Project	Raymond Mofolo (Education Programme Manager)	Interview - Gain perspective on sustainability crisis
19.06.07	Teboho	Jose Bright (Founder and CEO)	Interview
21.06.07	Valued Citizens Initiative	Carole Podetti (Director)	Interview
25.06.07	Democratic Development Programme (DDP) [Durban]	Dr Rama Naidu (Director)	Interview
26.06.07	Centre for Public Participation [Durban]	Imraan Buccus (Researcher)	Interview I will meet with him again and possibly with Janine Hicks, one of the founding members who I was in touch with and who last week started working for the Gender Commission.
27.06.07	AGENDA [Durban]	Michelle Oyedan (Director)	Interview
04.07.07	Siyazisika Trust	Jane Zimmermann (Director)	Interview
04.07.07	Operation Hunger	Felicity Gibbs (National Manager)	Interview
11.07.07	Anti-Privatisation Forum	Dale McKinley (Treasurer)	Expert interview - Gain social movement activist perspective
01.02.08	Mindset	Kirston Greenop (Monitoring and Evaluation Manager)	Interview during observation
06.02.08	Mindset	Tuki Senne (Health Channel Executive)	Interview during observation

06.02.08	*Mindset*	Claire Stevens (Content Manager)	Interview during observation
07.02.08	*Mindset*	Vis Naidoo (CEO)	Interview during observation
08.02.08	*Mindset*	Sam Mpherwane (Project Manager, Mindset Learn)	Interview during observation
12.02.08	*South African Civil Society Information Service*	Fazila Farouk (Founder)	Expert interview - Gain activist perspective The SACISS is to launch in April. Fazila used to work for SangoNet.
13.02.08	*CASE*	Lauren Graham (Researcher)	Interview

Appendix 2: Details of Participating NGOs

Organisation	About the organisation	Further comments
CEPD **(The Centre for Education Policy Development)**	Policy and Research NGO, sometimes acting as grant manager	- Established in transition period - Initially close to ANC
CSVR **(The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation)**	NGO working in human rights and with victims of violence Advocacy, lobbying and counselling work	- Established during Apartheid - Partnerships with range of actors
Connect Africa	'Social enterprise' but registered as Section 21 non-profit organisation	- DBSA-funded - Partnerships with provincial governments and technology providers
Starfish	NGO supporting Aids orphans through grants to CBOs for community care, feeding and capacity building programmes	- Funded by private donors and corporations - Has established partner organisations for fundraising in the UK and US
Freedom of Expression Institute	Lobbying, litigation and research NGO dealing with issues of freedom of expression	- Works with social movements on censorship issues - Evolved during transition
Mindset	Large-scale NGO, providing health and school education through information and communication technologies	- Strong and complex partnership model (with Government, NGOs and corporates) - Has dedicated research department for M&E
IDASA	Research and advocacy NGO and public policy think tank	- 'Critical ally' to Government with good relationships at all levels
ILRIG	Research NGO supporting social movements	- Strong links to labour organisations and new social movements - Evolved out of Apartheid-era service organisation

The Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust	NGO that organises public debates, wanting to contribute to critical debate on social, political, economic and cultural issues and a widening of the public sphere	- Partnerships with academic centres and research institutes
The EDGE Institute	Research NGO and policy institute	- Specialises in economic policy - Also carries out public events and lectures
The Africa Foundation	NGO working with communities surrounding conservation areas in the areas of education, health and income generation	- Working with state agencies, private donations and corporates - Seeks to forge partnerships between conservation initiatives and communities surrounding national parks
Gun Free South Africa	Lobbying and advocacy NGO	- Campaigns for a gun free society - Receives funding from private foundations and European donor agencies
The Media Monitoring Project [now: Media Monitoring Africa]	NGO monitoring the media and working with human rights issues	- In partnerships with other NGOs - Receives funding from private foundations and European donor agencies
NANGOSA (National Alliance For Non-Goverment Organisations)	CBO/ NGO umbrella organisation.	- Seeks to form partnerships with Government and lobby for policy change
Workers Education Project	Education and training NGO	- Closely affiliated with and seeing itself as serving the labour movement - Trains trade unions.
Teboho	NGO working with vulnerable teenagers in Soweto.	- Resembles a social enterprise model

Valued Citizens Initiative	Education NGO, dealing with values and citizenship	- Strong partnerships with provincial Governments and corporates
Democratic Development Programme (DDP)	NGO working primarily in civic participation and voter education in KZN and towards capacity building of CBOs	- Part of a number of NGO networks and collaborations - Works with provincial Government and has also been supported by corporations
Centre for Public Participation	Research and advocacy NGO	- Researches and educates on public participation in governance
AGENDA	Media and capacity building NGO	- Publishes a journal for academics and activists
Siyazisika Trust	Training NGO, educating and mentoring in rural communities	- Partnerships with provincial Government - Some corporate funding through CSI programmes
Operation Hunger	NBO carrying out more traditional developmental work in marginalised communities, dealing with Aids, malnutrition and poverty	- Evolved from Apartheid-era service organisation - Now working with Government but also international funders
CASE	Research NGO	- Specialises in socio-economic and policy research

Appendix 3: Standard E-mail to NGO Directors

Natascha Mueller-Hirth
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Sociology
Goldsmiths, University of London

e: n.mueller-hirth@gold.ac.uk

Dear _____

I am a doctoral researcher in the Sociology Department at Goldsmiths College, University of London (UK). I am currently based at WISER (the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research) as a visiting researcher. My work is funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council. I am writing to you as I am very interested in the work your organisation does and I would like to speak to you about your experiences and views on issues central to my research.

I will be based in Johannesburg until the end of July and am hoping to gather extensive data both from interviews and through observation. Interviews take about one and a half hours and have a semi-structured format. However I would also be interested in observing the day-to-day working practices and activities within your organisation. If I can in turn be useful to your organisation in terms of volunteering my skills and time, I would welcome this opportunity.

My research deals with transformations in the role of South African NGOs in social development. I am particularly interested in what values, organisational models and strategies characterise non-profit organisations and how their work and vision is in turn shaped by broader processes such as neoliberalism. I am situating this in the context of partnerships, both between different sectors in South Africa and between NGOs themselves. I have already carried out quite a number of expert interviews with NGO staff in

South Africa and London, and have also undertaken some previous research with a public-private partnership for development in South Africa.

I am enclosing a brief outline of research aims. However, should you prefer, I am happy to provide you with samples of my work or with an extensive research statement detailing fully my research questions and methods. Likewise, my PhD supervisors can be contacted for references. I would also welcome the chance to explain to you in person what my research involves.

It would be fantastic if you could find the time to share your expertise with me. I shall be trying to contact you again in the next few days, or alternatively you can reach me via email.

Thank you very much for your time.

Kind regards

Natascha Mueller-Hirth

Appendix 4: Illustrations

4.1. The NGO domain and funding flows
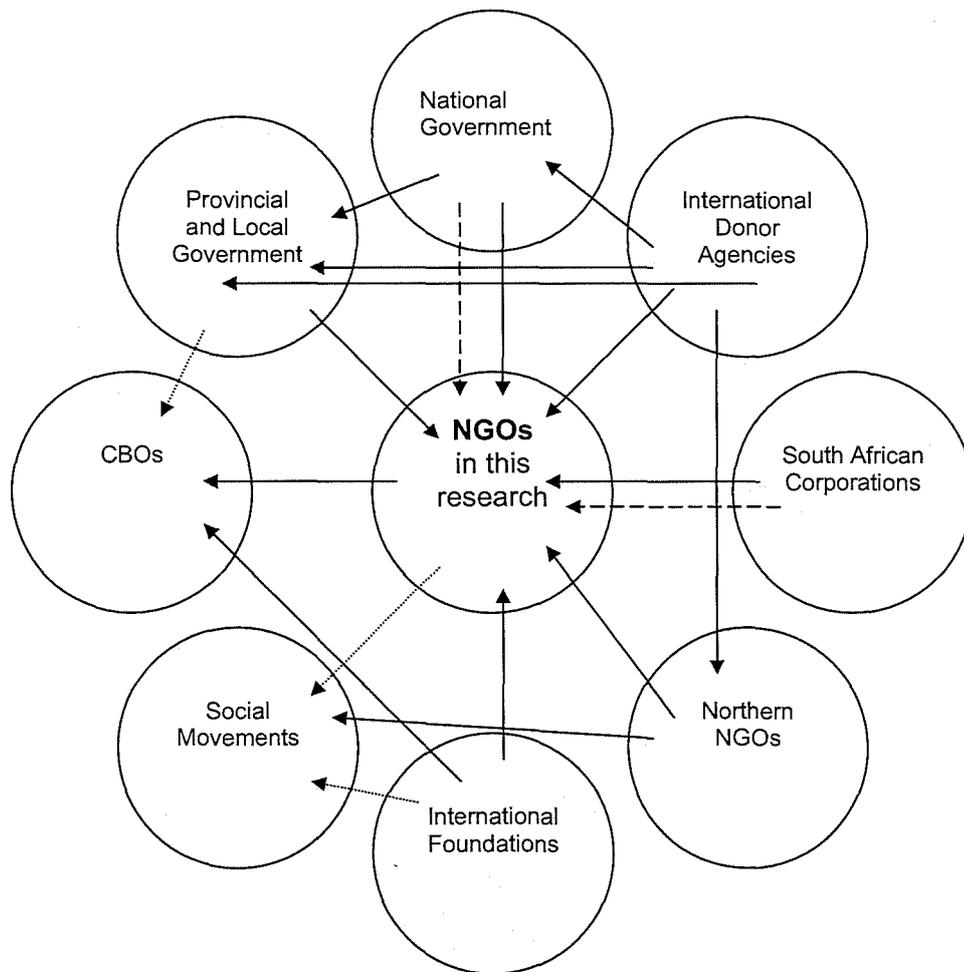
→   Funding/ Contracting
┈┈►   Funding in exceptional cases
─ ─►   Non-financial support/ Endorsement

4.2. Timeline

Year	Founding of case NGO	Historical events and changes in funding modalities
1983	*ILRIG*	Establishment of UDF
1985	*CASE*	State of Emergency
1986	*Idasa*	
1987	*Agenda Siyazisika*	Dakar Meeting
1989	CSVR	
1990		ANC unbanned
1992	*CEPD* *Africa Foundation*	Start of (official) negotiations
1993	*DDP* *MMP*	
1994	*FXI* *GFSA*	1st democratic elections
1996		Intl funding increasingly into bilateral aid GEAR
1997	*Wolpe Trust* *CPP* (out of *Idasa*)	Start of global trend towards SWAP & budget support]
1999		Start of Mbeki Presidency
2001	*Teboho Trust* *VCI*	Formation of APF ('00) and LPM ('01)
2002	*Starfish*	King II Report and increase in CSI
2003	*Mindset* *Edge Institute*	Social movement activity at WSSD and WCAR
2004		'Second wave' of protest movements Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness
2006	*Connect Africa* *NANGOSA*	Launch of AsgiSA

4.3. Sustainability strategies of NGOs in this research

- Partnerships
- Diversification of funds and funders
- Expansion into the Southern African region
- Developing profitable activities
- Grant management
- Creating endowment funds
- Developing a for-profit arm
- Social entrepreneurship model

Appendix 5: Two Log Frame Formats

5.1. A typical logical framework format

Narrative summary	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal – the overall aim to which the project is expected to contribute	Measures (direct or indirect) to show the project's contribution to the goal	Sources of information and methods used to show fulfilment of goal	Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control necessary for maintaining the progress towards the goal
Outcomes (or objectives) – the new situation which the projects is aiming to bring about	Measures (direct or indirect) to show what progress is being made towards reaching the objectives	Sources of information and methods used to show progress against objectives	Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control, which are necessary if achieving the objectives is going to contribute towards the overall goal
Outputs – the results which should be within the control of the project management	Measures (direct or indirect) to show if project outputs are being delivered	Sources of information and methods used to show delivery of outputs	Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control, which are necessary if producing the outputs is going to help achieve the objectives
Activities – the things which have to be done by the project to produce the outputs	Measures (direct or indirect) to show if project outputs are being delivered	Sources of information and methods used to show that activities have been completed	Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control
Inputs	Resources – type and level of resources needed for the project Finance – overall budget Time – Planned start and end date		

Adopted from Bakewell & Garbutt (2005: 3)

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5.2. Gun Free South Africa's Log Frame as part of a grant application for a 3-day multi-stakeholder conference

	Intervention Logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of success	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks
Overall Objectives	Enhanced safety and security of South African communities by reducing gun violence and the number of guns in circulation	Reduction in the number of firearms in crime and violence	SAPS crime statistics *NIMSS surveys*	The economic situation in South Africa will improve/employment levels will increase, addressing one of the underlying causes of violence.
Immediate Objective	Increase capacity in Government and civil society to develop programmes dealing with gun violence	Reduced incidence of youth involvement in gun violence in South Africa	Police reports, victim surveys	The economic situation will not decline such as to aggravate the
Expected results (Outputs)	1) Improved evidence base on the impact of gun violence on youth 2) Greater public awareness particularly amongst youth	1. 20 - 30 experts from a variety of fields present papers on the impact of guns on youth. 2. Major stakeholders from government and civil society identify policy and programme gaps and commit to addressing these 3. Public access to this findings is promoted as a result of various publications 4. Resources are available to youth, youth workers and schools on youth and guns	Conference report, publication of resource guide and booklet for youth	Government departments may refuse to take part in the process

		Means of Implementation	Costs	
Activities	- Three day conference held -Conference papers will be published -A directory of services will be compiled -A popular booklet for youth will be produced	1. GFSA will provide management and administrative support. An advisory committee will be set up. 2. A conference organiser will be employed 3. Office and travel expenses will be covered 4. A conference venue will be hired and will supply catering 5. 100 participants will attend the conference, air fare and accommodation will be paid for 6. The conference organiser will edit and publish the conference papers 7. The conference organiser will compile and publish a database on resources 8. GFSA will compile and produce a popular booklet	See budget template	

Appendix 6: Photographs

6.1. The doors at Constitutional Court (detail)
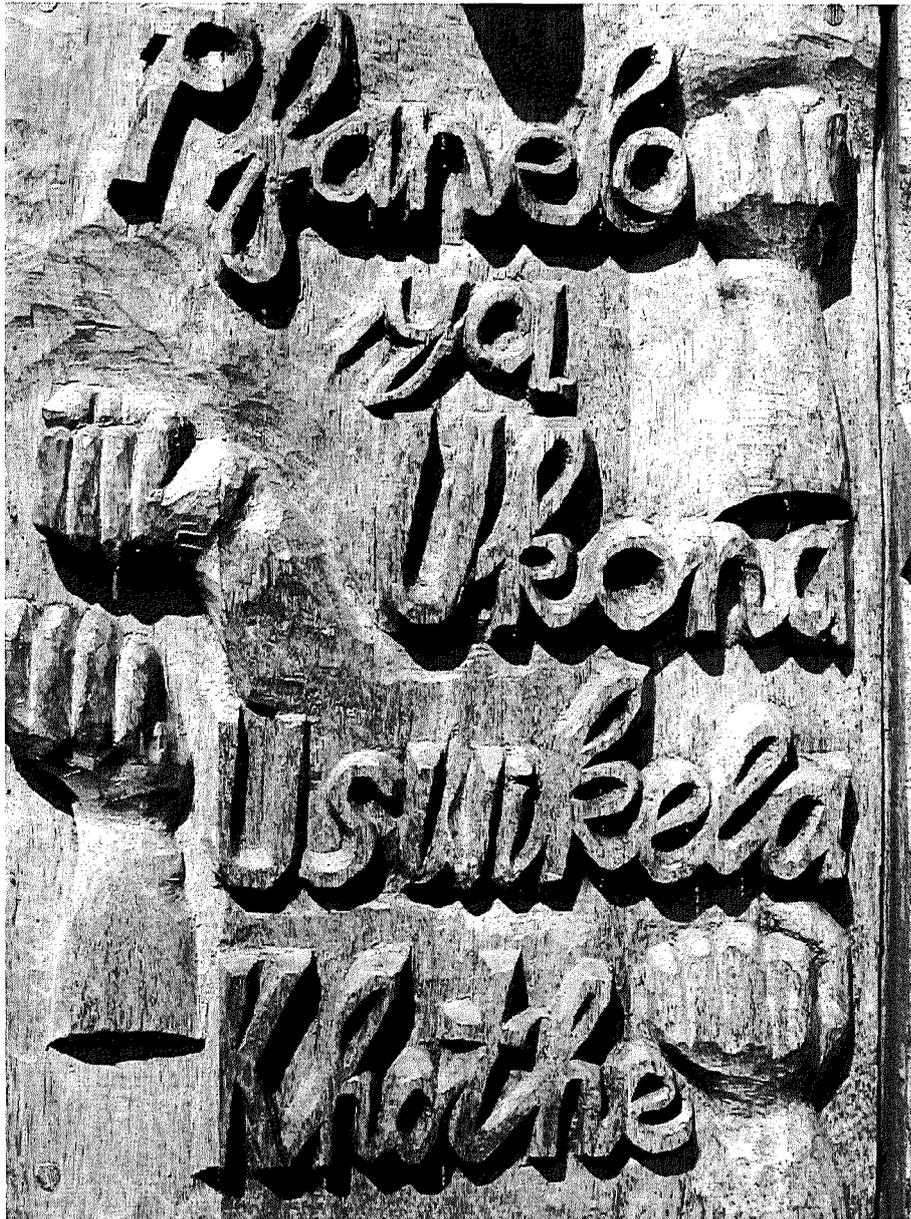
6.2. I heart Jozi

Appendix 7: Pilot Study Interviews

Date	Organisation	Contact (and position)	About the organisation
14.08. 2006	*Africa Now*	Sophie Wilcox (Programme Officer)	Oxford-based organisation that has country offices in Kenya and Zimbabwe, but also works in other African countries in co-operation with local partner organisations, businesses and state ministries. Focus on enterprise development, fair and ethical trade and microfinance.
21.08. 2006	*AFFORD*	Onyekachi Wambu (Information Officer/ Temporary Executive Director	African development through the diaspora. Primary focus has shifted in the past few years from capacity building, awareness-raising and policy-centred activities in the UK to now directly supporting small- to medium-sized businesses in Africa to stimulate job growth.
22.08. 2006	*Transform Africa*	Charles Kazibwe (Director)	Member network of eight training, research and advocacy organisations based in the UK, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Gambia. Mainly focused on training and capacity building of NGOs.
05.09. 2006	*Fahamu*	Firoze Manji (Director)	Harnessing of Information and Communication Technologies to support movements for emancipation and social justice in Africa. Publishes *Pambazuka News*, a website that receives 2 million hits per month.

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